

## **Position Statement on Assisted Dying**

At Overgate Hospice, we value the life of every patient and are committed to providing care that supports dignity, comfort and quality of life. We never act with the intention of hastening death.

It is currently illegal in the UK to provide medication intended to end someone's life, or for healthcare professionals to offer advice or support with the intention of helping patients end their own lives. However, patients have a legal right to decline treatments that may prolong life. Respecting this right is not assisted suicide, as in these circumstances, patients die from their underlying illness, rather than from an action designed to shorten life.

We recognise that public attitudes towards assisted dying have evolved in recent years, and that this is the subject of national discussion and parliamentary debate. It is possible that legislation may change in the future to permit assisted dying in certain circumstances.

We understand that assisted dying is a complex and sensitive ethical issue, and that people hold a wide range of views. We acknowledge and respect these differing perspectives. This statement makes no value judgement about assisted dying, about those who support or request it, or about those who oppose it.

At Overgate Hospice, we respond to requests for assisted dying with sensitivity, compassion and empathy. We seek to understand the reasons behind such requests, so that we can make every effort to relieve suffering and enhance quality of life. Suffering can arise from emotional and spiritual distress as well as physical symptoms, and our teams are highly skilled in providing holistic care in all these areas.

We will however continue to monitor developments in the law while continuing with our mission to provide expert palliative care that focuses on the relief of suffering and the improvement of quality of life for all those we support.