



Release of Information Regarding the Death with Dignity Act

The Death with Dignity Act requires the Washington State Department of Health to collect information and make an annual statistical report available to the public. RCW 70.245.150.

The law also states “The department of health shall adopt rules to facilitate the collection of information regarding compliance with this chapter. Except as otherwise required by law, the information collected is not a public record and may not be made available for inspection by the public.” RCW 70.245.150(2). Consistent with that statutory mandate, the Department of Health will not:

- Disclose information that identifies patients, physicians, witnesses, or other participants, in activities covered by the Act; or
- Release a report when the first death occurs.

The Department of Health will publish the types and quantities of forms received under the Death with Dignity Act on the web at www.doh.wa.gov/dwda. This information will be updated weekly.

The Department of Health will also publish an annual report which will include at least information on how many prescriptions are written under this Act and how many people ingest the prescribed medication. The specificity of released data will depend on whether there are adequate numbers in a reporting field to ensure confidentiality.

The first annual report will include data from March 5, 2009 through December 31, 2009. Statistical reports will be completed annually thereafter.