

1. The Issue

Voluntary Assisted Dying (VAD) refers to the legal process through which a person with a terminal illness and intolerable suffering can voluntarily request medical assistance to end their life, under strict legal and medical guidelines.

2. Bene Aged Care's Position

Bene Aged Care acknowledges the right of individuals to make informed choices about their end-of-life care, including accessing voluntary assisted dying where legally available. Bene will support the older persons in navigating their legal rights around VAD but will not initiate, manage, administer, or store VAD substances.

3. Why we think this

Bene Aged Care is committed to respecting the autonomy and dignity of older persons, including their right to determine the manner and timing of their death in accordance with their values, culture, and beliefs. This approach aligns with person-centred care principles and human rights-based frameworks that underpin modern aged care.

There is growing community and legislative recognition across Australia that competent adults with life-limiting illnesses should have the option to access VAD.

Bene supports the principle that no person should be compelled to suffer beyond their wishes. However, it is essential to distinguish between VAD and palliative care. Palliative care aims to alleviate suffering without hastening death and remains an essential offering in aged care.

Our position is consistent with guidance from national organisations such as Palliative Care Australia and the Australian Medical Association, which emphasize the importance of maintaining clear boundaries between palliative care and VAD.

Bene Aged Care will support an older individual right to choose to access VAD in the community setting and in our residential care homes consistent with the 'Statement of Rights' and we will respect the person's wishes in relation to confidentiality. Workers may be involved in providing support to individuals accessing VAD. This may include, ensuring access to medical care, and providing emotional support.

4. References

Palliative Care Australia. Palliative Care and Voluntary Assisted Dying Position Statement, 2019.

Australian Medical Association. Position Statement on Voluntary Assisted Dying, 2023.

Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation. Voluntary Assisted Dying Position Statement, 2023.

5. Governance

Doc ID	Ver no.	Date	Review	Amendments	Document Owner/Approval
BD001PS	1.0	07.2025	07.2028	New Position Statement	Bene Board