

Adventist Senior Living

Disclosure Statement: Voluntary Assisted Dying (VAD)

The Voluntary Assisted Dying Act (NSW) (**VAD Act**) was passed on 19 May 2022 and will commence operation in New South Wales from 28 November 2023.

Under the VAD Act, aged care providers can choose whether or not to participate in the New South Wales voluntary assisted dying system (**VAD**).

Adventist Senior Living (**ASL**) – which operates Avondale House, Alton Lodge and Alstonville Adventist Aged Care Facility – has the entrusted privilege of caring for older Australians in the later stages of their life and takes this trust placed in us seriously. Those who are living in our aged care facilities are reaching the end of their life and are vulnerable and require the utmost compassion and care. This includes caring for their physical, emotional, social, cultural, and spiritual needs, and providing comfort and alleviation of pain and suffering. ASL is committed to responding with respect and support to any aged care resident who wishes to explore or consider VAD. This includes respecting a resident's wish to seek consultations with an external practitioner who can provide the resident with information and advice about VAD.

While ASL does not provide voluntary assisted dying services including coordinating, consulting or administering VAD practitioners at any of its facilities, ASL deeply respects each individual's right to make an informed decision about their care, including the decision to choose VAD, provided they have capacity to do so and provided the decision is in line with the VAD Act.

ASL understands that if requested by a resident, authorised VAD-care navigators may attend ASL facilities to provide information and advice to residents seeking VAD support. Adventist Senior Living honours the privacy of any consultations with VAD navigators and external healthcare providers with residents.

Consistent with ASL's decision not to offer VAD Services in any of its facilities, ASL will not:

- Initiate a conversation with an ASL resident about VAD or suggest VAD to an ASL resident.
- Induce an ASL resident to make a request for access to VAD or to access VAD, or to self-administer a VAD substance.
- Hinder a resident's right to access information or their right to make a request about VAD.
- Hinder a resident's family member from accessing information about VAD.
- Hinder access by an authorised VAD practitioner or VAD Navigator Service to another facility to provide information or advice to an ASL resident, where the access is requested by that resident or otherwise required under the relevant legislation.

As a faith-based organisation, ASL's ethos does not support measures which unnecessarily prolong life for those who are terminally ill, nor does ASL support measures which hasten death. Therefore, ASL does not knowingly provide VAD services, but honours consumer choice.

If VAD information or services are requested by an ASL resident, ASL will:

- Notify the resident that the information or services are not available at ASL facilities and give the resident details of the VAD Navigator (or similar) that may assist them; and
- Provide support and assistance to the resident and every reasonable measure to help alleviate the underlying reasons for their request. Support options – as appropriate to the consumer needs may include social workers, palliative care, counselling/psychological care and spiritual care.
- Treat any resident seeking VAD with the utmost dignity, compassion and privacy and respond to their request for information in a timely manner.
- Provide support and assistance where they require transfer to another service to access VAD services, in accordance with the requirements of the VAD Act.

We acknowledge the suffering and deep anguish of those who face terminal illness. While residents remain in our care, we commit to upholding the core principles of everything we do, as we strive to meet the physical, spiritual, social, and emotional needs of our consumers through Christ-centred care. This care is anchored in our core values of Respect, Commitment, Leadership, Courage and Honesty and underpin our mission to serve people.

If you have questions about Voluntary Assisted Dying in your personal circumstances, we encourage you to speak with your doctor in the first instance. For more information about Voluntary Assisted Dying in New South Wales please visit <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/voluntary-assisted-dying/Pages/default.aspx>.