



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF LAW

Mary and Philip Seeman Health Law, Policy and Ethics Seminar Series

SUICIDE PREVENTION AND MAiD FOR MENTAL DISORDERS: **THE CONCEPTUAL CHALLENGE**

Thursday, October 20, 2022 | 12:30 to 2:00 p.m.

Speaker:

- Dr. Marie Nicolini, MD, PhD, Senior Researcher, Centre for Biomedical Ethics and Law KU Leuven, Belgium and Visiting Scholar, Georgetown University

Commentator:

- Professor Isabel Grant, Faculty of Law, University of British Columbia

Abstract

One of the challenges for the practice of MAiD based on a mental disorder is the conceptual distinction with suicide prevention. Previous research has shown that persons receiving MAiD for mental disorders have similar clinical profiles as those who are suicidal. As things stand, we lack clear parameters to distinguish conceptually between the two situations. This talk will discuss a core problem, i.e. the lack of clarity about how we should define autonomy and informed consent in a way that allows for a clear distinction between MAiD and suicidality. This lack of clarity poses two distinct types of errors, presenting a serious challenge for policy.

Biography

Dr. Marie Nicolini, MD, PhD is a psychiatrist and ethicist whose research interest focus on autonomy and decision-making capacity in mental health practice and policy. She trained as a psychiatrist in Belgium, received a PhD in bioethics and was a postdoctoral fellow in bioethics at the National Institutes of Health (USA). She is currently a senior researcher at KU Leuven (Belgium) and a visiting scholar at Georgetown University (USA). She has done extensive original research on the topic of MAiD for mental disorders and has presented at numerous international conferences and top institutions on this issue. Her research has been published in leading academic journals such as the British Journal of Psychiatry, Psychological Medicine and the American Journal of Bioethics.



ABOUT THIS SERIES

The Mary and Philip Seeman Health Law, Policy and Ethics Seminar Series brings guest speakers to the University of Toronto Faculty of Law to stimulate the discussion of issues related to the intersection of law with health care and further ethical and social issues.

For more information, contact

@ events.law@utoronto.ca

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