



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES  
*Aging and Long-Term Support Administration*  
*PO Box 45600, Olympia, Washington 98504-5600*

February 8, 2024

**AL TSA: AFH #2024-004**  
**AL TSA: ALF #2024-003**  
**AL TSA: ESF #2024-003**  
**AL TSA: NH #2024-004**  
**DEATH WITH DIGNITY MEDICATIONS**

Dear Provider/Administrator:

This letter is to provide information about the [Death with Dignity Act](#) (DWD), as it relates to residents in long-term care facilities. The DWD allows terminally ill adults seeking to end their life to request lethal doses of medication from physicians. These terminally ill patients must be Washington residents who have less than six months to live.

Individuals who qualify for DWD receive medications they self-administer to end their life. Qualified residents in long-term care facilities may face challenges obtaining and storing the medications, as facility providers and administrators seek to comply with facility regulations. Even short delays can result in a resident no longer being capable of self-administering their life-ending medications, making them ineligible. Facilities may have questions about how to ensure residents rights while adhering to the medication requirements for their facility type.

Specific to facility type, Adult Family Homes (AFH), Assisted Living Facilities (ALF), Nursing Homes (NH), and Enhanced Services Facilities (ESF), providers and administrators must follow the Washington Administrative Code for labeling, administering, recording, and storing medications when residents require assistance. It is possible for providers and administrators to maintain these regulatory requirements when residents in their care have chosen DWD. Knowing the medication rules for your facility type and your residents' assessed ability with taking medications can help avoid delays for residents who choose DWD.

On March 29, 2023, the department filed a CR-101 (WSR [23-08-038](#)) to notify the public of a rulemaking project to consider changes in resident medication rules as they relate to the implementation of DWD. The project will address Chapter [388-76](#) (AFH), Chapter [388-78A](#) (ALF), Chapter [388-97](#) (NH), and Chapter [388-107](#) (ESF). You can find more information about DWD here: [Department of Health](#) and [RCW 70.245](#).

Thank you for your continued commitment to resident health and safety. If you have any questions please contact Colleen Jensen, Policy Program Manager, at (564) 999-3182 or [colleen.jensen1@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:colleen.jensen1@dshs.wa.gov).

Sincerely,

Amy Abbott, Director  
Residential Care Services

DSHS: "Transforming Lives"