

## **Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU) Center for Ethics in Health Care:**

### 1. Convened the first POLST Task Force in 1991

POLST originated in Oregon, and is now a national program.

### 2. Produced (1998) *The Oregon Death with Dignity Act: A Guidebook for Health Care Professionals*

This is guide to implementation of the Oregon Death With Dignity Act. Patrick Dunn, MD, Chairs the Task Force. Patrick Dunn is also credited with developing POLST in the early 1990s, and is presently head of the national POLST Paradigm program headquartered in Oregon.

### 3. Visited the Netherlands for pointers on implementing physician-assisted suicide in Oregon

As reported by International Task Force on Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide (Rita Marker; Wesley Smith)

<http://www.internationaltaskforce.org/ia12.htm>

#### **" Learning from the Dutch**

It is because of the Dutch experience with assisted suicide and euthanasia that a self-appointed delegation of Oregon health professionals has announced plans to visit the Netherlands on a fact-finding mission. "We want to see what we have in common and where we have differences," explained Joseph Schnabel, a Salem Hospital pharmacist and Oregon Board of Pharmacy member. Other members of the delegation include right-to-die activist Dr. Peter Rasmussen; Dr. Bonnie Reagan, chairman of the **[OHSU] Task Force** subcommittee which produced the DWDA guidebook; and Kathleen Haley, executive director of the Oregon Board of Medical Examiners.

"The delegation's itinerary has been planned by Dutch anesthesiologist Dr. Pieter Admiraal, often called the father of Dutch euthanasia. Admiraal, who has taken part in well over 100 euthanasia deaths, has been very critical of the Oregon law, warning that deaths under the DWDA may be lingering and difficult for family and friends to witness. According to Admiraal, the doctor should be present to give the patient a lethal injection if death does not occur within 5 hours — an action prohibited by the DWDA. (See Update, 8-10/97:1.) Admiraal has arranged for the Oregon delegation to meet with the Dutch Justice Ministry, the Royal Society of Pharmacy, the Royal Society of Medicine, medical faculty of Amsterdam's Vrije University, and the Dutch Society for Voluntary Euthanasia. Reportedly, the hope is that the delegation will gather needed information to develop more PAS practice guidelines to help doctors, pharmacists, nurses, state officials, and others to interact appropriately. [AP, 3/6/98] "

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NOTE from LifeTree: members of the delegation were:

- Barbara Glidewell ("patient advocate" and Chair, OHSU Ethics

Consultation Service; Associate Director of the Center for Ethics in Health Care)

- Kathleen Haley, executive director of Oregon Board of Medical Examiners
- Ann Jackson, MBA, head of the Oregon Hospice Association
- Joseph Schnabel, member of Oregon Board of Pharmacy
- Terri Schmidt, MD, emergency room doctor
- Peter Rasmussen, MD, oncologist (lead plaintiff in the Death with Dignity Center's legal proceedings against Attorney General John Ashcroft)
- Bonnie Reagan, MD, RN — chair, Subcommittee on Guidelines for the Oregon Death with Dignity Act

#### 4. Currently provides Consultation Service:

The "Consult Service" is headed by assisted-suicide proponent Barbara Glidewell.

- A) The following is reported by the International Task Force on Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide (Rita Marker; Wesley Smith):

<http://www.internationaltaskforce.org/orexp.htm>

##### **"Lethal drugs do not need to be taken orally**

Barbara Glidewell who educates **Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU)** patients and their families about "the need for a dying plan and to rehearse the plan" said that patients who cannot swallow would "need to have an NG tube or G tube placement." Then, they could "express the medication through a large bore syringe that would go into their G tube."

Oregon's 2005 *Guidebook for Health Care Professionals* states, "It remains unclear whether the Oregon Death with Dignity Act allows an attending physician to prescribe an injectable drug for the patient to self-administer for the purpose of ending life."

Discussing a case in which a man said he helped his brother-in-law take the drugs, Hedberg said that "we do not know exactly how he helped this person swallow, whether it was putting a feed tube down or whatever, but he was not prosecuted.... "

- B) [http://www.internationaltaskforce.org/rpt2006\\_1.htm#40](http://www.internationaltaskforce.org/rpt2006_1.htm#40)

"Euthanasia, Assisted Suicide & Health Care Decisions: Protecting Yourself & Your Family"

by Rita L. Marker

"Patrick Matheny received his lethal prescription from **Oregon Health Science University** via Federal Express. He had difficulty when he tried to take the drugs four months later. His brother-in-law, Joe Hayes, said he had to "help" Matheny die. According to Hayes, "It doesn't go smoothly for everyone. For Pat it was a huge problem. It would have not worked without help." (40) The annual report did not make note of this situation.