

# A NEW FRONTIER: CONJOINING EUTHANASIA / ASSISTED SUICIDE WITH ORGAN HARVESTING

Conjoining assisted suicide and euthanasia with organ harvesting, a concept once thought ghoulish and inconceivable, is now being painted as responsible and enlightened. This adds pressure to vulnerable patients who could be led to feel selfish for continuing their lives.

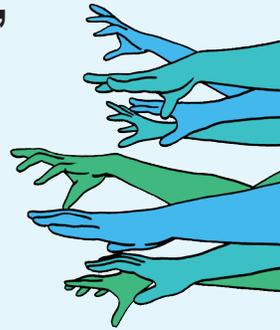


## CANADA

In just a short period of time since Canada legalized assisted suicide and euthanasia in 2016, Canadians have succeeded in conjoining euthanasia with organ donation.

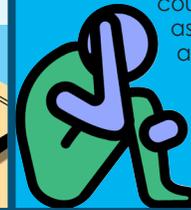
## 'YOU'VE GOT IT, WE WANT IT'

Patients who have been approved for euthanasia are then contacted by organ donation organizations. Trillium Life Network, which administers Ontario's organ donation program, became **"the first jurisdiction in the world to proactively reach out to those who had been approved for assisted death to discuss donation."**<sup>1</sup> Quebec soon followed suit.



## THE NETHERLANDS AND BELGIUM

In the Netherlands and Belgium, individuals with mental illness who could live indefinitely, are asked to donate organs after being euthanized. Their instability makes them a most vulnerable population for organ harvesters to prey upon.



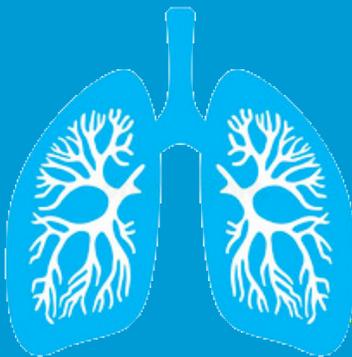
## 'DYING IS CARING'

Euthanasia and assisted suicide are given new status by creating an altruistic motive to ask for death. "Ontarians who opt for medically assisted deaths (MAiD) are increasingly saving or improving other people's lives by also including organ and tissue donation as part of their final wishes."<sup>2</sup>



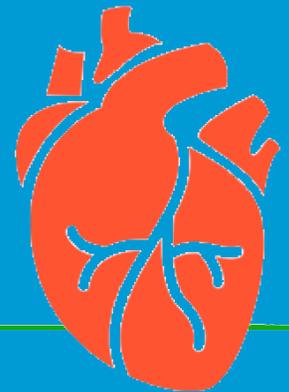
## IN THE UNITED STATES

Proponents of assisted suicide in the United States claim that organ harvesting is not occurring in our country. This has not prevented major medical publications from publishing articles advocating for the practice.



## DEATH BY HARVESTING

In the *New England Journal of Medicine*, three bioethicists argue in favor of changing homicide laws to **permit euthanasia by organ harvesting**, allowing the act of euthanasia itself to be the instrument that causes the person's death, not lethal injection.<sup>4</sup>

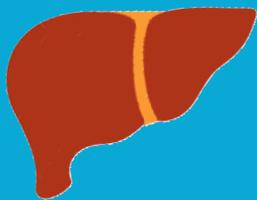


## LIVER PROCUREMENT

The August 5, 2020 issue of *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)* discussed procuring livers from people who were euthanized: **"Organ donation after euthanasia could help alleviate the current organ shortage."** A retrospective study found that 10% of patients who underwent euthanasia could have been a suitable organ donor. Especially for patients for whom organ replacement therapy options are limited, including candidates for a liver transplant, the use of organs donated after euthanasia could reduce waiting-list mortality.<sup>3</sup>

## A BEATING HEART

The *Journal of Heart and Lung Transplantation* in 2019 published an article advocating that **removal of a beating heart** should be used to accomplish euthanasia in order to preserve organs slated for transplant.<sup>5</sup>



1 <https://ottawacitizen.com/news/local-news/medically-assisted-deaths-prove-a-growing-boon-to-organ-donation-in-ontario>  
 2 *Ibid.*  
 3 <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamasurgery/article-abstract/2769118>  
 4 <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMp1307220>  
 5 <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1053249818315663>