

## Education and Health Communiqué # 4 – August 27, 2018

**Sharon Mayor, Diocesan Education and Health Chairperson**

### Health

#### Palliative Care

#### **Bill C-277 Framework on Palliative Care in Canada Act was passed on December 12, 2017**

On December 12, 2017, the federal government passed a bill calling for the Minister of Health to create a framework for palliative care in Canada. The Act (formerly, Bill C-277) says that the Minister must develop a framework that will support improved access to palliative care across Canada. The Minister must also consult with provinces, territories and palliative care providers. The Act says the framework should focus on important issues facing palliative care. The Minister will report on the framework to Parliament by the end of 2018. (Framework for Palliative Care in Canada)

British Columbia has completed a framework for Palliative Care. (See framework for BC Palliative Care.)

Winnipeg Health Region has developed a framework for Palliative Care. It states that the WRHA Palliative Health Program is not connected to Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID) (MB framework for Palliative Health Care)

#### Dying with Dignity

Contrary to our belief of Dying with Dignity, we have viewed the video, *The Euthanasia Deception*, filmed in Belgium. This has become a slippery slope where even children are offered assisted death in Belgium. As a follow-up to this video, the director Kevin Dunn went to the Netherlands to film stories of people who in some way were adversely affected by legalizing assisted death. The end result is the video *Fatal Flaws*, along with the pamphlets, entitled *Fatal Flaws: Legalizing Assisted Death* which can be ordered on line at [fatalflawsfilm.com](http://fatalflawsfilm.com)

#### Mental Health

Five hundred Canadians could not work because of mental health issues in the last twelve months. One hundred ninety-eight billion dollars have been lost over the years due to physical or mental absenteeism at work. The reason this occurs is because we are afraid to admit we are suffering from a mental illness because of the stigma attached to it, afraid of not being accepted, so we dismiss and avoid it.

Nine out of ten times families are not aware that one of their loved ones is suffering from a mental illness. Is someone close to you, who is normally social active, withdrawing from friends, relationships, recreation, etc.? Note if there is a sudden weight gain or weight loss or lack of attention to personal hygiene. You may have observed that the person is disengaged or is acting out aggressively, lashing out at people they love. On the other hand, a person may be overly elated. Every person's baseline is different.

We are made up of a physical, mental, spiritual and emotional well-being. If we have a physical ailment we see a doctor, but we ignore a mental illness because we do not want to be labelled. A mental illness does not define who we are, but it is a part of who we are, e.g. schizophrenia is one part of a person. This person may also be a daughter, a student, a friend, etc. Give people the time to talk about their mental illness, i.e. Schizophrenia, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD), Bipolar etc. without labelling them insane. Listen withholding judgment. Summarize by saying, "Is this what I am hearing?" Encourage them to continue, or share your own experience. If you notice a change in behavior in anyone, start by saying, "Are you okay? I noticed that.... I am here when you are ready to talk." A support system is important and so too, is a safe haven upon arriving home.

Unfortunately, an appointment to see a psychiatrist involves an 18 month wait. Sometimes employees can see a counsellor through work. There is also a site Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) with worksheets, handouts and self-help resources online for adults and adolescent, all free for the taking. There is not a lot of support in the rural areas. However, there is a Farm Support Line. **24/7 Help Lines: Call Farm Help Line or Walk-In - 1646 11th Ave Regina, Sk, Mobile Crisis Helpline - (306) 757-0127, Crisis Suicide Helpline - (306) 525-5333, Email Us Online Help**  
Let us help raise awareness of mental health.

## Environment

Canadians are blessed as this country is usually considered to have plenty of fresh **water**.

Then how is it?

1. That 73% of First Nations communities have water systems at medium to high risk.
2. That nearly 2,000 communities in Canada live under boil water advisories.
3. Why has the number of protected lakes and rivers dropped dramatically in recent years?

\* Endorsed by Pope Francis, the United Nations Sustainable Goals (2015) for people and the planet lists clean water and sanitation.

How fitting it is for our new National President Anne-Marie Gorman announce the new theme at the 2018 National Conference, **Care for Our Common Home**, which becomes effective Jan.1 2019

Another focus for the CWL mentioned in a communique from the National, is **homelessness**

**References:** \* Presenter for the Breakout Session on Mental Health at the National Convention

\* Framework for Palliative Care in Canada

\* Framework for BC Palliative Care

\* MB framework for Palliative Health Care

\* <http://www.fatalflawsfilm.com/>

\* fatalflawsfilm.com

\* Endorsed by Pope Francis, the United Nations Sustainable Goals (2015) for people and the planet lists clean water and sanitation