New Jersey Hospice and Palliative Care Organization

Resolution on Assisted Suicide

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Hospice and Palliative Care Organization is considered the voice of New Jersey’s hospice community; and,

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Hospice and Palliative Care Organization is often requested to provide comment to the state legislature, the Administration, the Courts, the media and the general public; and,

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Hospice and Palliative Care Organization is on record as supporting a patient’s right to choose palliative care and a patient’s right to refuse unwanted medical intervention including the provision of artificially supplied nutrition and hydration; and

WHEREAS, there has been increased public attention and focus on the issue of voluntary euthanasia and assisted suicide; and

WHEREAS, the proponents of change in the legal status of these practices often paint a stark picture in which a patient’s choice is between painful existence devoid of value on the one hand and voluntary euthanasia or assisted suicide on the other; and,

WHEREAS, we believe hospice care is a better choice than voluntary euthanasia and assisted suicide; therefore,

RESOLVED, that the New Jersey Hospice and Palliative Care Organization reaffirms its commitment to the value of the end of life and to the philosophy that hospice care neither hastens nor postpones death.

RESOLVED, that the New Jersey Hospice and Palliative Care Organization does not support the legalization of voluntary euthanasia or assisted suicide in the care of the terminally ill.

RESOLVED, that the New Jersey Hospice and Palliative Care Organization supports improved access to hospice care for terminally ill patients and their families, including those who have expressed a desire for assistance with suicide.

*Adopted by the NJHPCO Board of Trustees*

*January 16, 1997*