



News Release

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Death with Dignity participation rises slightly in Washington

More than half of participants receiving lethal dose of medication are women

OLYMPIA — It's been six years since Washington's Death with Dignity Act went into effect and since that time, 725 adults with a terminal illness have chosen to end their lives with a physician-prescribed lethal dose of medication.

There were 176 terminally ill patients in 2014 who received a prescription to help them end their lives. The prescriptions were written by 109 different physicians and were filled by 57 different pharmacists. Of the 176 people who received these prescriptions, 170 are known to have died. Death with Dignity participation rose less than 2 percent in 2014 compared to the previous year, although more than half of those who died last year were women — up from 48 percent in 2013.

Those who died after receiving the lethal medications were between the ages of 21 to 101. As in previous years, many patients choosing to receive the medication listed the loss of independence as the reason for participating.

The state Department of Health monitors compliance with reporting requirements and produces an annual report using information collected from patients and providers who participate.

The [2014 Death with Dignity Act Report](#) and information about [Washington's Death with Dignity Act](#) are on the agency website.

The [Department of Health website](#) (www.doh.wa.gov) is your source for *a healthy dose of information*. Also, [find us on Facebook](#) and [follow us on Twitter](#).

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