



NEVADA CENTER FOR ETHICS & HEALTH POLICY

PROMOTING SHARED HEALTH CARE DECISIONS

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Director

February 1, 2006

Dear Senator/Assembleyperson:

We would like to introduce you to the Nevada Center for Ethics & Health Policy (NCEHP) and offer our services on a variety of issues including the use of living wills, ethical issues surrounding pharmacists and patients, and community-based research programs.

We are a resource for policy development to assist government at all levels as they address the health needs of Nevadans. We will be presenting additional information about our organization and its research at the Legislative Committee on Health Care meeting on February 9, 2006 in Las Vegas.

Our mission is to promote ethical and appropriate health care for all Nevadans through education, research and outreach. As a statewide program located at the University of Nevada, Reno, NCEHP, a non-partisan educational resource provides information to consumers and professionals about the benefits and burdens of critical issues and options in health care decision making. In 1999, we formed a statewide coalition composed of the Office of the Attorney General, UNR/NSHE, Nevada State Medical Association, HealthInsight, Division for Aging Services, hospitals, hospices, state agencies, cultural, religious communities and some 70 partner organizations. In 2001, the state legislature provided permanent funding to the NCEHP. Some of NCEHP's accomplishments include:

- Trained volunteers in 12 rural sites to provide better care for the dying
- Established a multicultural end of life care coalition in Southern Nevada composed of some 25 organizations
- Presented ethics seminars to over 21,000 consumers and professionals including the National Association of Attorneys General, American College of Health Care Administrators and the United States Coalition of Aging, Inc.
- Developed and presented formal ethics education to students, health care providers and state employees

Should you need additional information about the NCEHP or background on any of the issues we have addressed, please do not hesitate to contact us at 775 327 2309.

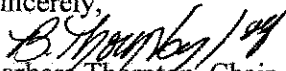
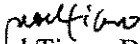
Sincerely,

Barbara Thornton, Chair

Noel Tiano, Director



EXHIBIT K Health Care Document consists of 2 pages

- Entire document provided.
 Due to size limitations, pages _____ provided.

A copy of the complete document is available through the Research Library (775/684-6827 or e-mail library@lcb.state.nv.us). Meeting Date: February 9, 2006

Nevada scores poorly in End of Life Care (EOLC)

While our combined efforts have raised public consciousness of the seriousness of end of life care issues, we have a long way to go to educate professionals and the citizens of Nevada. The nation's first state-by-state EOLC "report card" was conducted by Last Acts, a national coalition to improve care near the end of life, and released on Nov. 18, 2002. For a full report, including press releases and articles, see links at: <http://www.unr.edu/ncehp/EOLArticles.htm>

Nevada scored high (B) on *State Pain Policies*, but scored very low in all other areas. *Palliative Care-Certified* physicians and nurses, and *Pain among nursing home residents* were rated "D" while *Hospital EOLC services* received an "E." Only 29 % of people over 65 who died in Nevada used *hospice care*. And so, many of our loved ones do not receive the physical, emotional, social or spiritual support they need during their last few months, days and hours.

On the positive side, this data helps us assess where we are, and directs our efforts towards improving specific services in our state.

Some of the important activities for 2003 include:

- ◆ **Bill Draft #135** sponsored by Assemblywoman Dawn Gibbons regarding the inclusion of an Advance Directive code next to the Organ Donor designation for new/renewed state licenses.
- ◆ **"Coping with Public Tragedy"** a national teleconference sponsored by Hospice Foundation of America on April 30, 2003, 10:30—1:30 p.m. Sites: Reno, Las Vegas, Fernley, Elko
- ◆ **Nevada Advance Care Planning Day** a statewide project featuring free seminars on advance directives, and living wills on May 1, 2003. Call for locations.

We have much work to do to make dying a more humane, compassionate and pain-free experience. Creating consumer demand for quality services is an important first step.

Now is the time for state legislators, schools of medicine, nursing and social work, boards of medicine, pharmacy and nursing, as well as state associations for hospitals, nursing homes, HMOs, faith communities, colleges, families, and adults to become actively involved and accountable in improving care for Nevada's residents.

For more information on Advance Directives, Palliative Care, Health Care Ethics and Health Policy, please visit: www.HealthEthics.org, or call (702) 257-5537 (LV); 775 327 2309 (Reno).

NCEHP OUTREACH Improving Care at the End of Life in Nevada 1999 to 2002



Other NCEHP Programs and Resources:

- ◆ Minor in Health Care Ethics beginning 2002
- ◆ Applied Research (ER transfers from nursing homes)
- ◆ Community Health Care Ethics Committee
- ◆ Pamphlets, videos, training materials on health care ethics, end of life care, & caregiving
- ◆ Speakers Bureau
- ◆ Applied Research
- ◆ Outreach to Faith Communities
- ◆ Outreach to Seniors
- ◆ Continuing education for physicians, nurses, social workers, and Consumer Engagement (*Ongoing*).