



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

Alistair MacGregor

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October 6, 2020

The Honourable Patty Hajdu
Minister of Health
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

Dear Minister Hajdu,

I am writing to you in your capacity as Minister of Health, on behalf of constituents, physicians, and the many Canadians who are suffering from end-of-life distress, regarding medically supervised psilocybin-assisted psychotherapy.

As you are aware, tens of thousands of Canadians are currently suffering from end-of-life distress due to a combination of anxiety, depression, hopelessness, and demoralization experienced through a diagnosis of an incurable illness. Psilocybin-assisted psychotherapy has been proven to be an exceptionally effective measure in providing compassionate care to critically ill patients.

In recognition of your ministry's August 4, 2020 announcement to approve four patients to receive a legal exemption from the *Canadian Drugs and Substances Act* to access psychedelic therapy, I would like to bring another facet of this issue to your attention.

It has recently been brought to my attention that two of my constituents, Dr. Valorie Masuda, and Dr. Crosbie Watler, along with 12 other doctors and therapists across Canada, have submitted section 56 (*Controlled Drugs and Substances Act*) applications so they may use psilocybin for their own training. It is also my understanding that Canada currently does not have enough trained clinicians to meet the demand for patients seeking section 56 support and psilocybin-assisted psychotherapy. It is my concern that further unnecessary suffering will continue while clinician applications await processing.

As you may recall, I recently contacted you regarding my constituent, [REDACTED] emergency section 56 application for psilocybin-assisted psychotherapy. I am grateful for your ministry's prompt response, and I am pleased to inform you that the procedure was a remarkable success. Within 24 hours [REDACTED] experienced a significant reduction in pain resulting in a rapid reduction in pain medications. Furthermore, she was calmed enough by the procedure to engage in meaningful conversation with family members, even exhibiting some humour. Her family was astounded by her change in disposition.

Minister, I truly believe that we are at the cutting edge of now being able to treat what was previously untreatable existential suffering. As such, I ask that you, in cooperation with your provincial counterparts, consider committing the resources required to escalate Section 56 applications to allow clinicians the ability to legally provide compassionate care to their patients who so desperately need it.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alistair MacGregor". The signature is written in a cursive style and ends with a horizontal line.

Alistair MacGregor
Member of Parliament
Cowichan-Malahat-Langford