



lifecircle

Support and promote quality of life

Information brochure



lifecircle | The Association

Support and promote quality of life

lifecircle is committed to the dignity of mankind as well as to self determination in difficult circumstances and at the end of life.

lifecircle informs and supports people in case of a crisis, a physical disability, a need to be nursed at home and in case of palliative care.

lifecircle is an association regarding Swiss law regulations. It is open to mature people who live in Switzerland or abroad.

lifecircle offers broad assistance with living wills and makes sure that these are respected by physicians and nursing aids.

lifecircle is committed to suicide prevention and to improve the life-quality of severely ill persons or persons in need of nursing care.

lifecircle affirms life and therefore offers no assisted suicide. *lifecircle* works together with the association Life-End to help people whose suffering has become unbearable, so they can have the opportunity to apply for an assisted voluntary death with the association Life-End, after becoming a member of *lifecircle*.

Pages | Contents

3	<i>Who is lifecircle?</i>	7	<i>Palliative care</i>
4	<i>What is lifecircle committed to?</i>	8–9	<i>Bylaws of the association lifecircle</i>
5	<i>Why do we need a Living will?</i>		
6	<i>Suicide prevention</i>		



Who is *lifecircle*?

The association

lifecircle is an association which is led according to the rules of Swiss law. It was founded on 27.11.2011 in Basel. The association is open not only to mature people living in Switzerland, but also to all people on this earth. *lifecircle* is committed to human dignity and self-determination especially in difficult circumstances of life.

The association is located in Biel-Benken, Switzerland

lifecircle works closely together with the association Life-End. All investments of association and foundation funds will be recorded and checked openly. Donations are used consequently in accordance with the statutes.

lifecircle is applying for membership of the «World Foundation of Right to Die Societies» (WFRtDS).

The Board

The board consists of at least 3, shall not exceed seven *lifecircle* members. These are to be elected for a term of 3 years by the general assembly.

For the term until the next general assembly in 2023 are chosen:

Presidency:	Erika Preisig
Vice Presidency:	Rosmarie Zipfel
Accounting / cash:	Markus Lüthi
Observer:	Moritz Gall
Observer:	Annelies Herzog
Actuary:	Yvonne Mischler
Material manager:	Christian Wessendorf

Auditors

Straumann Trust
Reinacherstrasse 17A
4106 Therwil



What is *lifecircle* committed to?

Quality of life and self-determination

Quality of life stands above duration of life. If a member quotes his/her life as unbearable, he/she should first be helped to improved quality of life. Being nursed at home, creates often more quality of life. The quality of life can also be improved by technical aids. In some cases, quality of life can be promoted through financial assistance.

Every person should be able to make use of self-determination in every way, starting from the beginning of legal competence and going on right to the limit of loss of mental competence. A person cannot decide when, where and how he enters this world, but his self-determination allows him, as long as he is competent to decide, to determine for himself how, when and where he wants to leave this earth. *lifecircle* supports the members in this ability, the association stands up for allowance of self-determination particularly in difficult situations.

If quality of life cannot be improved in any way, the member shall be supported to minimize or shorten his or her suffering by palliative care or an assisted voluntary death (to be applied for at the association Life-End).

Cooperation

lifecircle supports palliative care institutions, nursing homes and individuals who nurse their relatives at home, with own funds and with funds from the association Life-End. Collaboration with hospices, home care, special oncology care and private organizations for nursing at home is very welcome.

Together with the association Life-End, the association *lifecircle* supports the legalization of assisted voluntary death in all countries. In addition, close cooperation exists with the «Right to Die Societies».

lifecircle informs about the Swiss concept and is committed to self-determination especially at the end of life.



Why a Living will does make sense

In every stage a sudden incapacity of discernment can occur by accident or acute illness. This is why every mentally competent person should have a living will, regardless of their age. A living will is valid only if a person is incapable of discernment. In this case the will of the person concerned is expressed by the Living will. The living will shall be considered until the person is competent to judge again. The Living will is a big relief for family members, because it reflects and confirms the will of the incapacitated person in a state of complete mental capacity.

What does the LW of lifecircle offer to you?

It offers the member a chance to set his will so that in case of mental incompetence this will shall be honoured and applied by the physicians and nurses.

The Living will considers the new adults law which is valid in Switzerland after the 1.1.2013.

In case of non-observance of the Living will, *lifecircle* will talk to physicians, nursing staff and relatives in order to realize the wishes of the member according to his or her Living will.

Through a login code, the Living will of a member of *lifecircle* can be accessed by physicians also on the Internet. Login and password are on the members card.

How often should the LW be renewed?

A living will should be checked every 2 years and confirmed by signature. Since life changes and sometimes also the member's attitude, the Living will should be checked and adjusted regularly. A Living will that has not been confirmed by signature for a long time, can be rejected by physicians and lawyers.



Switzerland has an extremely high suicide rate with about 1'300 people annually going into unassisted suicides. The fact is, that over half of these people go into death through a violent suicide, which means that they jump in front of a train, jump from great heights, shoot or hang themselves. By these kinds of suicides, people who have seen these images are permanently heavily burdened. Every year in Switzerland more than 300 train conductors somehow have to cope with the experience of having run over a person...

All these people go with their suicide into an uncertain, sometimes brutal death in loneliness and without a goodbye from their relatives and loved ones. Perhaps these people could not have been brought to go on living, but they would have had a chance to go into death quietly and in a state similar to sleep, accompanied by understanding people. Their relatives and friends would have had the opportunity to be prepared for the coming farewell. Maybe the family would even have been able to accept their wish for the termination of their life.

With *lifecircle*, suicidal wishes can be expressed openly without taking the risk of a deprivation of liberty by placement in a psychiatric facility. Openly expressed suicidal wishes are the best suicide prevention. They can open a path back to a happy life, but also lead to a request for an assisted voluntary death with the association Life-End.

These consultations, free of charge for members, can be held either with a pastor, a physician or with any other specialized person. Members can also get information concerning self-help groups and they can be instructed in initiating self-help groups.

lifecircle gives no information concerning unaccompanied suicide methods.



If a member suffers from a serious incurable disease and this disease has led to a massive reduction in quality of life, so that the member decides against any further life-sustaining medical procedures, palliative care provides a life without pain or shortness of breath until death occurs in a natural way. Here analgesic and sedative drugs are used in a dose that allows the member to wait for death without suffering.

If pain and shortness of breath can be made bearable only with extremely high doses of medicine, a dose can be applied through which life is shortened as a part of palliative care. But in contrast to the assisted voluntary death, in palliative care a deadly dose of any drug will never be applied.

In this unconsciousness the person then glides within a few days slowly into death. Before the palliative sedation is applied, he or she can say good-bye to the relatives. Usually the patient does not reach awareness until he or she dies. This type of accompaniment can take place at home with the assistance of home care and the family physician, or in a hospice.

lifecircle offers advice on palliative care clinics and palliative therapies at home.

1. Name and domicile

lifecircle is an association in the sense of Art. 60 ff ZGB, with domicile in Biel-Benken, Switzerland. *lifecircle* is independent and neutral, regarding politics, religious beliefs and affiliation to any country. *lifecircle* has no commercial purpose whatsoever, but exclusively charitable aims.

2. Intention

lifecircle campaigns for self-determination in any aspect, in any situation of life, but mainly in the case of severe illness, and at the end of life. Members are assisted and given advice by the association to accomplish their right for self-determination professionally.

lifecircle attaches importance to maintaining and conveying life-quality. The association ameliorates life-quality in psychological, physical and spiritual ranges. «In doing so, the individual perception of life-quality shall be respected, as any individual is a person with his/her own needs and does not have to correspond with our own cognition of indigence».

An important concern of the association is the prevention of suicides. *lifecircle* offers not only preventive events, but also personal consulting to members and non-members. Furthermore, Swiss Organizations who offer prevention of suicide are supported by *lifecircle*.

lifecircle assists palliative medicine to also support the wish for natural dying in dignity. This relates always to the consideration of self-determination at the end of life. «Whether life is life-worthy or not, is to be measured only by that particular life, and by that person him or herself, and never by consideration through community, government or a religious institution».

lifecircle is offering a living will to all members without any costs. And it gives advice to fill in the living will if needed. Also, *lifecircle* will make all efforts to push through the living will with doctors, nurses and family members in case of complete or partial loss of mental capacity, or in case of death of the member concerned.

lifecircle credits each member with CHF 700 per active year of membership towards the costs of assisted assisted voluntary death (AVD) until the amount of CHF 4'900 is reached. An active year

begins on 1.1. of the current year. The credit will be issued if the membership fee is paid by 30.9. of the current year. An AVD can only be carried out via the Life-End Association. The costs for an AVD at Life-End are currently CHF 4'900 for Swiss nationals living in Switzerland, and CHF 10'500 for all others. Additional costs for travel, hotel, meals etc. are not included in this amount. If the costs for the AVD are exceeded by additional services or by inflation, the member shall pay the difference.

3. Financial means

To fulfill the aims of the association, the association works with the membership fees, which are to be fixed every year by the members meeting. The annual membership fee is at least 50 Swiss francs, the membership fee for a lifetime is at least 1000 Swiss francs.

lifecircle is authorized to accept benefits of any kind as well as aids of other private or public judicial persons respectively institutions.

Members who are in a difficult financial situation, can apply for exemption of costs. The board will decide about the application for this exemption of costs.

4. Use of means / Projects

lifecircle supports organizations and institutions located in Switzerland, who's aims are the same or similar to the ones of *lifecircle*. In particular, it especially supports projects which help to promote life quality within all situation of life as well as all stages of age.

lifecircle also supports single persons who need nursing or any other help. Besides this *lifecircle* is offering aids to seniors and handicapped people such as walkers, wheelchairs, electric wheelchairs and so on.

It is not compulsory to be a member of the association to get help by information or by financial means.

5. Membership

Every mentally competent person who is interested in the pursuit of the association's aims, can become an active member with a right to vote. Applications are to be directed to the president. The board will decide about the acceptance.

6. Expiry of membership

The membership expires:

- a) for natural persons in case of retirement, disqualification or death.
- b) for judicial persons in case of retirement, disqualification or cancellation.

7. Retirement and disqualification

Retirement from the association is possible at the end of each calendar year with taking into account a cancellation period of 6 months.

A member can be excluded from the association at any time without indication of any reason. The board will make the decision irrevocably. A redress to the general assembly is not possible.

8. Organs of the association

The organs of the association are:

- a) the general assembly
- b) the board
- c) the financial controllers

9. The general assembly

The supreme organ of the association is the general assembly. An annual general assembly is taking place every year during the first half year.

The convention will be announced by invitation of the members through the board at least three weeks prior to the general assembly, indicating place, time and agenda items. The invitation will be carried out by mail or if there is no mail address, by post. The general assembly has the following duties:

- a) Election respectively deselection of the board as well as of the financial controllers
- b) Agreement and change of the bylaws
- c) Certification of the annual account and of the report of the financial controllers
- d) Decision about the discharge of the board
- e) Agreement to the membership fee
- f) Agreement to the annual budget

On the annual meeting every member has one vote. The decision is made by single majority of all members who are present.

The bylaws and the protocol of the general assembly are to be read in the internet www.lifecircle.ch

10. The board

The board is elected for three years and consists of at least three persons, at the most seven persons, who fill the following charges:

- a) chairman
- b) vice chairman
- c) cashier

The board represents the association externally and leads the current dealings. The board is competent when more than half of its members are present. In case of equality of votes, the chairman decides.

11. The financial controllers

The General Assembly will annually appoint an accounting firm to audit the annual accounts and to provide the General Assembly with an appropriate report.

12. Signature

The association is obligated by the collective signature of the president together with a member of the board.

13. Liability

For outstanding debts the association's sole liabilities are the association's assets. A personal liability of members respectively of the board is excluded.

14. Change of the bylaws

These Articles of Association may be amended if two thirds of the members present approve the proposed amendment at an Ordinary or Extraordinary General Meeting.

15. Annulation of the association

The annulation of the association is carried out by single majority, as long as at least three quarters of all members are taking part in the assembly.

If there are less than three quarters of all members attending the assembly there must be held a second assembly within one month. During this assembly the association can be annulated with single majority even if less than three quarters of the members are present.

In the event of dissolution of the Association, the assets of the Association shall pass to the same or similar institutions, domiciled in Switzerland.

16. Legal validity

These bylaws were adopted at the Extraordinary General Meeting of 15.12.2022 and are in order as of that date.