



Newsletter December 2019

Dear lifecircle Members,

I promised you all that I'd keep you up to date on my trial so I'll be sending newsletters more frequently, but unfortunately there's nothing new to report. It's been almost five months now and we continue to wait for the written judgement; we need to exercise patience. Apparently, it is not uncommon for the written judgement to take many months before being released. Only when we have the verdict in writing will there be a decision by the prosecution as plaintiff whether to appeal the acquittal. We will, as I already indicated in our last newsletter, definitely appeal the part that led to a conviction in the next court. So either way there will be a "second round" of proceedings. However, I can report that another Swiss physician, Dr Pierre Beck (Vice President of Exit in French-speaking Switzerland), was sentenced to a heavy but conditional fine for breach of his duty of care and the laws governing medicines and narcotics. As both cases are quite similar, the arguments in each will be very interesting. I hope it will lead to something positive happening in Switzerland.

Additionally, the conference on Geriatric Voluntary Death, organized by Exit in German-speaking Switzerland, took place in Zurich on 11/16/19 and proved controversial. According to the conclusions of the meeting, it should be possible to simplify processes in Switzerland, but it will take a long time. An account of the conference can be found on Exit's website. www.exit.ch

Regarding my health, I can tell you that at least some hairs are growing back, and I sense that I am recovering slowly. We have to continue for a while the halt on admitting new members, in place since May. We still don't have any free appointments for VAD until the end of February but we do want to enable Members to escape unbearable suffering quickly if they deteriorate significantly. To be fair to existing members, we will only accept new members again once we have appointments available at short notice. At present we can give dates for a VAD at short notice only in exceptional cases of emergency. But I would like to emphasize yet again that lifecircle and Eternal Spirit continue to work unrestricted as they have done so far. We are also still in the fortunate position of having a psychiatrist available whose involvement is ideally only in cases where the existing physical disorder has led to depression.

Unfortunately, misunderstandings keep cropping up about my brother's newly formed organization, Pegasos. Exit International (Australia) keeps repeating that lifecircle is no longer in operation. **This is false** and I have to keep reassuring worried members. **lifecircle will not give up.** We're continuing our work, despite headwinds and legal proceedings, for the same thing as all the other assisted death groups in Switzerland. All six associations are working towards access for suffering people to VAD; with foreigners coming to Switzerland for as long as they are unable to undergo a VAD in their home country. The population of New Zealand will vote next year on whether that country will allow VAD. In addition, other states within Australia and the United States are also well on the way to legalizing VAD. The time will come when no one will have to travel to Switzerland for a peaceful death.

As you will have been able to read in the press, we are negotiating with Flüh's council for a property at the far end of the village, which could be bought if the village accepts that VADs will take place there. We would be enormously pleased if we could work closer to Biel-Benken and the property would be large enough for us perhaps to offer our members bed and breakfast, too.

I'd like to inform you at this point that next year's Annual General Meeting will be held on Thursday June 4, 2020; please save the date; we look forward to lively participation.

Now I wish all our members and non-members a happy end to the year and many enjoyable events. Maybe in the next newsletter I can report on the progress of the legal proceedings if we should happen to receive the written judgement as a "Christmas present".

With best regards,

Erika Preisig, General Practitioner and
President of the lifecircle association