



Newsletter

January 2013

Dear Member of life circle

With the second newsletter of our association I would like to inform you again about the recent events.

All members who have paid the annual fee should have received their membership card by now. With the data on the card every physician immediately will be able to read the living will of the patient concerned by Internet. This gives you the possibility to print your living will at any time, day or night, as well as abroad. Members whose living will is not yet uploaded on the Internet should send this to us as soon as possible, if they cannot upload it by themselves.

The annual membership fee is payable for 12 months. It will not always be due in January, it will therefore be billed in the month you joined, being valid for the 12 months to follow.

The activities of the Association are very diverse. The help by giving advice, especially with difficult health issues, is very much appreciated by the members. I could advise members as a doctor also by arranging a visit in the hospital or at home. A second opinion without time constraints can often create new perspectives and may find solutions that are tailored to the specific case. Again and again it shows that members find new energies to go on living when they know they have the green light for an assisted voluntary death

In November, an information session on lifecircle was held in Allschwil. Likewise, there was a discussions evening in Allschwil organized by the EVP ("Evangelische Volkspartei Switzerland"). After some short lectures and a panel discussion, the needs of people requiring care were discussed very competently. I would like to congratulate the EVP for the courage to talk about such a delicate subject in public, with a panel of two nursing home managers and a voluntary death accompaniment favorable doctor.

In December, three families have met in Biel-Benken. These three families all have recently accompanied a family member, going into an assisted dying with my help. They have agreed to a redactor of a Bernese newspaper to tell him about their experiences. It was amazing how these members spoke openly about their feelings. Feelings which they experienced before, during, and after the assisted dying of a dear family member. During the course of the conversation it turned out that the saying "a shared ache hurts only half



as much" still has its meaning. During the talk, all participants emphasized that they can withstand the loss better, because they have seen how great the suffering of their relative was, and how much he/she was longing for the end of his/her suffering. In the beginning of this year, a detailed article about this meeting will be published in the newspaper of Bern. We will probably publish this article on the website. This meeting showed me that it can be useful to have about three or four families share their experience with each other, help each other by talking about what has happened. The pain of having lost someone is always very great after someone has died. Accompanying the family could be completed, with a workup of the experienced feelings in this context.

A particularly moving experience for me, was the reaction of a policeman who was called to an assisted dying. He gave me a clear impression of being angry, as he entered the room for assisted dying by Eternal Spirit. During the discussion, he was abrupt and rather repellent. When he saw the elderly lady with the strikingly pale face on the bed, as if she'd just sleep peacefully, he said something snippy "what did she suffer from?" As if he was thinking that she wasn't ill at all. In the end however, along with the other members of the authority, he watched the movie on which you can see the extreme disability and the infinite joy of the old lady at the moment when she was finally allowed to open the intravenous drip with the deadly NAP. Then the policeman understood the decision of the deceased member so much, that he wrote an email to the son of the lady telling him that he did not know his mother, but that he will never forget her smile.

I hope very firmly that there are more and more people, especially within authority members and doctors, who not only respect palliative care, but also accept assisted voluntary death as a human right.

Now we wish you all a peaceful New Year during which again members can join, be helped in any way that fits all their specific needs and fulfills their wishes.

Yours sincerely

Dr. med. Erika Preisig