

“Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide for Psychiatric Patients: A Rising Worldwide Ethical Crisis”

presented by

Mark Komrad, MD

Mark Komrad MD is a practicing psychiatrist and medical ethicist for over 30 years in Baltimore, MD. He chaired the Ethics Committee for the Sheppard Pratt Health Systems, the largest non-profit mental health care system in Maryland, for two decades. He is a clinical professor of Psychiatry at Johns Hopkins, the University of Maryland and Tulane. He has lectured, taught and consulted in the U.S. and internationally on topics in psychiatric ethics, and published numerous articles in the field. He is a member of the American Psychiatric Association (APA) Assembly and previously served 6 years on the APA Ethics Committee. In these two capacities, he helped craft and pass the new APA Position Statement finalized in December 2016: “...a psychiatrist should not prescribe or administer any intervention to a NON-terminally ill person for the purpose of causing death.”

He has been lecturing widely through the U.S., Canada, Scandinavia, South America and Europe to address the ethical concerns that several hundred suicidal psychiatric patients in Belgium and the Netherlands are being voluntarily euthanized each year with lethal injections, typically by their own treating psychiatrists. He has consulted to policy makers in several countries trying to dissuade them from legalizing assisted suicide and euthanasia or to prevent extending existing laws to include psychiatric conditions.

Dr. Komrad maintains a private practice and has a special interest in helping families convince a troubled loved one to get a psychiatric consultation, using ideas from his book [You Need Help: A Step-by-Step Plan to Convince a Loved One to Get Counseling](http://YouNeedHelp.com). He gives workshops on these ideas to mental health advocacy and support organizations throughout the country. For this work he was given the National Alliance on Mental Illness’s (NAMI) “Exemplary Psychiatrist Award” and its “Mental Health Professional of the Year Award.” He was also host of the national radio call-in talk show about psychiatry, “Komrad On Call,” which broadcast to 43 million listeners throughout the U.S and he continues to appear regularly on TV, radio, and podcasts to discuss topics in psychiatry. He has also consulted to Hollywood to help develop more ethical portrayals of psychiatrists in the movies.

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<https://hartfordhealthcare.zoom.us/j/97198644773>

Learning Objectives: *As a result of participating in this Live Activity, participants should be able to:*

1. Review data concerning legal assisted-suicide and euthanasia of non-terminal psychiatric patients that has been occurring in The Netherlands, Belgium, and is impending in Canada.
2. Understand the ethical arguments that have been deployed to support this practice, and the ethical arguments against it.
3. Clarify the essential ethos and core values of what it means to be a psychiatrist and practice psychiatry.
4. Prepare for the likelihood of this practice being legalized in the U.S. under the banner of “parity”, and how to handle that with patients.

Accreditation Statement: In support of improving patient care, Hartford HealthCare is jointly accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME), the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE), and the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) to provide continuing education for the healthcare team.

Credit Designation Statement: Hartford HealthCare designates this Live Activity for 1.25 AMA PRA Category 1 Credit(s)TM. Physicians should only claim credit commensurate with their participation. This activity is approved for 1.25 ANCC contact hour(s).

Social Work: As a Jointly Accredited Organization, Hartford HealthCare is approved to offer social work continuing education by the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) Approved Continuing Education (ACE) program. Organizations, not individual courses, are approved under this program. State and provincial regulatory boards have the final authority to determine whether an individual course may be accepted for continuing education credit. Hartford HealthCare maintains responsibility for this course. Social workers completing this course receive 1.25 other continuing education credits.

Financial Disclosures:

- **Nothing to disclose:** Ellen Blair (Nurse Planner); Michael Dewberry (Course Director); Erica Iyamu-Osagie (Social Work Planner); Mark Komrad (Presenter); Paula Rego (Activity Coordinator); John Santopietro (Sponsor); Javeed Sukhera (Co-Director)

