

Palliative Care: Optimizing the Quality of Life through Strengthening the Legal Regime of Bangladesh

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Abstract : The concept of palliative care in Bangladesh largely remained limited to the sympathetic caring of patients with a life-limiting illness. Quality of Life (QoL) issues are rarely practiced in Bangladesh. Furthermore, palliative medicine, in the perspective of holistic palliative care service, does not have its proper recognition in Bangladesh. Apart from those socio-medical aspects, palliative care patients face legal issues that impact their quality of life, including access to health services and social benefits and dealing with other life-transactions of the patients and their families (such as disposing of property; planning for children). This paper is an attempt to articulate these legal dimensions of the right to palliative care in the context of Bangladesh. The major focus of this paper will be founded on the doctrinal analysis of the constitutional provisions and other relevant legislation on the right to health and their judicial interpretation, which is argued to offer a meaningful space for the right to palliative care. This paper will also investigate the gaps in the said legal framework to better secure such care. In conclusion, a few recommendations are made so that the palliative care practices in Bangladesh are better aligned with international standards, and it can respond more humanely to the patients who need palliative care.

Keywords : Bangladesh, constitution, legal regime, palliative care, quality of life

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