



Support and promote quality of life

Information brochure



Support and promote quality of life



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 SPIRIT Foundation to help people whose suffering has become unbearable, so they can have the opportunity to apply for an assisted voluntary death with the SPIRIT Foundation, after becoming a member of *lifecircle*.

SPIRIT | The Foundation

live self determined – die self determined

SPIRIT is committed to promote the legalization of assisted voluntary death in all countries.

SPIRIT will analyze the applications for assisted voluntary death, which are made towards SPIRIT by members of *lifecircle*, and it will realize them when they are approved.

SPIRIT supports *lifecircle*, as well as other institutions that promote self-determination as part of the foundation's statute.

More about that subject on page 11 and 12

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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 Basel, Switzerland

lifecircle works closely together with the associated SPIRIT Foundation. 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 2014 are chosen:

Presidency:	Erika Preisig
Vice Presidency:	Moritz Gall
Accounting / cash:	Markus Lüthi
Observer:	Ruedi Habegger
Protocol:	Andreas Lüthi

Auditors

Brodard Trust
Brühlmattweg 1
4107 Ettingen
info@brodard.ch



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 SPIRIT Foundation).

Cooperation

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

Together with the SPIRIT Foundation, 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.

Living will – to be
responsible for your own will.



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 SPIRIT.

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.

Often, suffering people realize
an unaccompanied,
sometimes tragic suicide.



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.

If the patient wishes, that he or she does not want to be aware any more of the suffering, also palliative sedation may be asked for. This means that he or she will receive an intravenous drop of morphine and a sedative, which will lead to a coma-like state.

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.

Palliative Care –
when accompaniment reaches
its highest standard



1. Name and domicile

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

2. Intention

lifecircle campaigns for self-determination in any aspect, 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. Organizations who offer prevention of suicide are assisted by *lifecircle*. *lifecircle* assists palliative medicine to do justice to 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 solely by that particular life, and by that person him or herself, and never by consideration through community, government or a religious institution.“

Therefore *lifecircle* also has to accept assisted voluntary death (AVD) as an important part in respecting selfdetermination. Should a member consider an AVD, he/she can make inquiries about an AVD and can apply for an AVD to the SPIRIT Foundation, whom *lifecircle* is working closely with. The foundation will then analyze the application and will organize an AVD if need be.

lifecircle offers a living will. The association consults and assists people to write their individual living will, so that in case of mental incompetence,

this will shall be honoured and applied by the physicians, nurses and relatives.

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

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. 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.

5. Expiry of membership

The membership expires:

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

6. 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.

7. Organs of the association

The organs of the association are:

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

8. 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.

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

9. 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.

10. The financial controllers

The general assembly elects every year two financial controllers, who are to check the bookkeeping, who make an analysis at least once a year and who summarize their findings to the general assembly by a report.

11. Signature

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

12. 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.

13. Change of the bylaws

These bylaws can be changed, if two thirds of the attendant members accept the proposal of change in the condition of a general assembly.

14. 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 case of annulation of the association, the fortune of the association must be donated to an institution who follows the same goals.

15. Legal validity

These bylaws have been accepted during the foundation assembly of November 27th 2011 and are in order as of that date.



**The annual membership fee is 50 Swiss francs,
The membership fee for a lifetime is 1'000 Swiss francs.**

As a member of lifecircle you can benefit from the following:

- Advice and support on demand for palliative care
 - Living will and its enforcement in the event of lack of mental competence
 - Advice for suicide prevention in risk of suicide
 - Possibility of application for assisted voluntary death (AVD) to the SPIRIT Foundation
 - Attendance at the annual general meeting
 - Regular updates on events
 - Newsletter
- ☐ 50 Swiss francs a year
- ☐ 1'000 Swiss francs for a lifetime
- ☐ I take note that my membership is valid only after payment of the bill that I will receive, and after filling in and sending my Living will to lifecircle. The payment period is 30 days after receipt (postmark).
- ☐ I wish to receive a newsletter (sent by e-mail)

Contact

Title (Mr./ Ms.)	<input type="text"/>
First name	<input type="text"/>
Name	<input type="text"/>
Address Line 1	<input type="text"/>
Address Line 2	<input type="text"/>
ZIP/Town	<input type="text"/>
Country	<input type="text"/>
Date of Birth	<input type="text"/>
Place of Birth	<input type="text"/>
Profession	<input type="text"/>
Citizenship	<input type="text"/>
Nationality	<input type="text"/>
Private phone	<input type="text"/>
Business phone	<input type="text"/>
Mobile / Cell phone	<input type="text"/>
E-Mail	<input type="text"/>
Preferred language	<input type="text"/>

Our address:
 Association lifecircle
 P.O. Box 29
 4105 Biel-Benken
 Switzerland



live self determined – die self determined

SPIRIT | The Foundation

What is SPIRIT fighting for

SPIRIT is committed to promoting the legalization of assisted voluntary death (AVD) in all countries.

SPIRIT will consider the applications for AVD, which are addressed by members of *lifecircle* to the SPIRIT Foundation. SPIRIT realizes them, if they are approved.

SPIRIT supports *lifecircle*, as well as other institutions that promote self-determination as part of the foundation's statute.

Legalization of assisted voluntary death (AVD)

AVD should be legalized in the countries where it is still banned today. SPIRIT works worldwide in as many countries as possible for the legalization of AVD.

AVD for people living outside of Switzerland

Persons from abroad should not have to travel to Switzerland in order to redeem them from incurable diseases. They should have that right in their home country. As long as this is not ensured, SPIRIT offers AVD not only to Swiss citizens, but also to persons from abroad, according to Swiss law.

Improving quality of life

SPIRIT supports *lifecircle* financially in order to insure quality of life for as long as possible and as high as possible.

What does AVD mean

As the word itself says, this is someone going into an assisted voluntary death. Voluntary means that the person decides without any influence (or even pressure) from anybody, but their own conviction, to end their life personally. Assisted means that the member applies the drug in a lethal dose in the presence of an employee of Spirit, who has experience in AVD. AVD very often takes place in

the presence of relatives, friends or acquaintances, always according to the wishes of the member. No one ever goes alone and lonely into death with an AVD.

How does an AVD take place

The Member of *lifecircle* represents a request for AVD to the trustees of the SPIRIT Foundation. They will decide whether the reason for the application meets the guidelines of the foundation and they eventually forward the documents for further assessment to a Swiss physician. This Swiss physician will assess the request on the basis of medical reports enclosed, and after two personal discussions with the member.

For a person from abroad two detailed discussions with a Swiss doctor are compulsory, during which will be clarified whether the death wish meets with Swiss guidelines. A person from abroad must therefore expect to stay in Switzerland for at least 3-4 days before an AVD can be realized. Swiss citizens are ideally assessed by their general practitioner, or if this is not possible, by a consulting physician of the SPIRIT Foundation.

As soon as the Swiss doctor gives the o.k., an appointment can be scheduled for an AVD within one or two days. For Swiss citizens the AVD takes place in their homes or on the premises of SPIRIT, for persons from outside of Switzerland the AVD takes place in general on the premises of SPIRIT.

The member signs his/her wish for dying once again, the day the AVD takes place. The member takes a drug that prevents vomiting, then he/she can either drink the lethal medication or take it by an intravenous drop. The supply of the drug will be filmed. This is the only reliable evidence that proves that the member has executed the application himself/herself and in full awareness. Falling asleep occurs within a few minutes, death usually follows within half an hour. For the attending relatives and friends the whole process is not very stressful and they are supervised as required by the accompanying employee of SPIRIT.

After determination of death, the accompanying person reports an extraordinary death to the police. This is required by Swiss law. A forensic scientist and a person of the public prosecution may also be called. Their task is to ascertain whether all the requirements of Swiss law were met. Witnesses can be interviewed, but this occurs rarely.

If the authorities have released the deceased, he/she is then taken over by a funeral service. Persons from abroad are advised to accept a cremation, the urn can easily be transferred home.

Who is eligible for an AVD

There are diseases which are not curable with all medical procedures and which sometimes cannot be stopped in their progression. People who suffer from such an illness, can be severely disabled and in need of nursing care over a long period of time. In this situation, some people do not want to continue to bear their fate because they see no sense in a life in complete dependence and without their own activity. Some people feel the need to be nursed as not dignified, they do not want to be wrapped and washed like an infant. Some diseases cause pains that can be made bearable only with such high doses of morphine and sedatives that the patient is unconscious. Those who do not accept to be nursed without hope of improvement, may be eligible for AVD.

Also people with a disease which is incurable and clearly leads to reduction in quality of life, although it does not lead to death in the near future (such as dementia, multiple sclerosis, motor neuron disease, quadriplegia, to mention just a few) are eligible for AVD.

Who is NOT eligible for AVD

- Minors
- Incapable of discernment
- Mentally ill people without serious physical suffering

Membership and AVD

A membership with *lifecircle* is compulsory for the application for an AVD.

When will the first AVD be possible with SPIRIT

The SPIRIT Foundation will not be able to realize the first AVD before July 2012.