



HEALTH ETHICS SEMINAR

**2025-
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SERIES**

An Ethical Analysis of Health Canada's Special Access Program as Mechanism for Health Professionals to Request Access to Psilocybin for Palliative and Refractory Patients



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**Thursday, 12 February 2026
12:00 - 13:00 MST
ONLINE via Zoom application
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Psilocybin is the active psychoactive molecule in the Psilocybe genus mushrooms currently receiving significant scientific attention for the treatment of addiction, depression, anxiety, and other conditions that often resist standard methods of treatment. Often as a last resort, Canadians suffering from these conditions are motivated to explore investigational options. Though Psilocybe fungi grow in every province, are easy to cultivate, and widely available for purchase, they are illegal to sell and to possess. Many Canadians are rightly apprehensive about acquiring and using medicine without the advice of, ideally, their own personal physician or prescriber. The only mechanism available to Canadian prescribers to treat patients with psilocybin is the Health Canada Special Access Program (SAP). In this presentation, we will describe the process necessary for a Canadian prescriber to gain access to and administer psilocybin to a patient. We will then offer an ethical analysis of this mechanism in the context of traditional medical ethical principles. We will explore what motivation Health Canada and the government might have to present Canadians the right to try novel treatments as a last resort, and conclude with a simple suggestion to mitigate the harm inherent in this unnecessary and unhelpful bureaucratic process.

More information: please call 780-492-6676, e-mail dossetor.centre@ualberta.ca or visit the [Dossetor Centre website](#).

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