



## Press release

12 February 2014

**The ICPCN Conference, held in Mumbai, India, from 10 – 12 February has issued a declaration on children's palliative care that calls for the Belgian government to reconsider their recent decision to allow euthanasia for children.**

At the conclusion of the first ICPCN conference that took place in Mumbai, India a declaration, to be known as the ICPCN Mumbai Declaration 2014, was issued and signed by delegates. The declaration calls for all children with life-limiting conditions to have access to appropriate pain and symptom control and to high quality palliative care to meet their particular needs.

The declaration in full reads as follows:

We believe that all children (neonates, children and young people) have the right to the best quality of life. When they have life-limiting conditions they have the right to high quality Palliative care to meet their needs.

We believe that euthanasia is not part of children's palliative care and is not an alternative to palliative care. It is imperative that we work together to improve access to children's palliative care around the world, including ensuring access to appropriate pain and symptom control.

We call on all governments to transform children's lives through the development of children's palliative care, and in particular we urge the Belgian government to reconsider their recent decision to allow euthanasia of children.

This includes:

1. Access to children's palliative care within the children's health care system
2. Access to appropriate pain and symptom management (Including medications) for all children
3. Supporting children and their families to be able to live their lives to the best of their ability for as long as possible.

This declaration was signed by both individual delegates and organisations present at the conference.

Joan Marston, CEO of the ICPCN said about the declaration, "Euthanasia is not and has never been a part of palliative care and we believe the answer to a child's suffering is more and better palliative care services and not the ending of a child's life."

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## **Notes for Editors**

The International Children's Palliative Care Network (ICPCN) is a worldwide network of individuals and agencies working with children and young people with life-limiting conditions.

### **ICPCN's Vision**

To live in a world where children's palliative care is acknowledged and respected as a unique service, and every child and young person with life-limiting or life-threatening conditions and their families can receive the best quality of life and care regardless of which country they live in.

The International Children's Palliative Care Network (ICPCN) shares a vision that the total need of life-threatened or life-limited children should be met to encompass physical, emotional, spiritual and developmental aspects of care.

### **ICPCN's Mission**

Our mission is to achieve the best quality of life and care for children and young people with life-limiting conditions, their families and carers worldwide, by raising awareness of children's palliative care, lobbying for the global development of children's palliative care services, and sharing expertise, skills and knowledge.

### **ICPCN's Aims**

1. To help services across the world to develop and meet the total care and support needs of life-limited children and their families.
2. To advocate and raise awareness of children's palliative care and the specific needs of life-limited or life-threatened children and their families.
3. To develop a strong ICPCN membership from children's palliative care services across the globe.
4. To facilitate communication and sharing of resources, information and research worldwide, and to provide a 'one stop shop' for information relating to children's palliative care.
5. To campaign for the global development of children's palliative care services.
6. To enable the sharing of expertise and information between children's palliative care practitioners.
7. To increase the international evidence base for children's palliative care through education and research.
8. To maximise ICPCN's resources by developing its fundraising activities in order to discharge its mission.