

## *The Dying Person's Bill of Rights*

*This bill of right addresses the desire of dying people to choose what they want (reflecting some of their concerns).*

- I have the right to be treated as a living human being until I die.
- I have the right to maintain a sense of hopefulness, however variable its focus may be.
- I have the right to be cared for by those who can maintain a sense of hopefulness, however variable this might be.
- I have the right to express my feelings and emotions about my approaching death in my own way.
- I have the right to participate in decisions concerning my illness.
- I have the right to expect continuing medical and nursing attention, even though “cure” goals must be changed to “comfort” goals.
- I have the right not to die alone.
- I have the right to be free of pain.
- I have the right to have any questions answered honestly.
- I have the right not to be deceived.
- I have the right to have help from and for my family in accepting my death.
- I have the right to die in peace and dignity.
- I have the right to retain my individuality and not be judged for my decisions which may be contrary to the beliefs of others.
- I have the right to discuss and enlarge my religious and/or spiritual experiences regardless of what they mean to others.
- I have the right to expect that the sanctity of the human body will be respected after death.
- I have the right to be cared for by caring, sensitive, knowledgeable people who will attempt to understand my needs and will be able to gain some satisfaction in helping me face death.

*Southwestern Michigan Inservice Educational Council appearing in Ann Lander's column*