
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 31 May 2021 10:02 PM
To: Health and Environment Committee
Subject: submission: Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill 2021

To the committee,

The legislation is not administrative enough and delivers too much executive power to medical professionals. The stated aim of the bill is to give patients choice. The bill has too many problems that make it a matter of medical opinion rather than the choice of a patient. The Premier gives the story of a dying relative but they would only have been covered if the Queensland Government was corrupt. The cancer isn't the disability but the chronic pain is the disability, the cause of intolerable suffering. Simply having chronic pain does not qualify a person for eligibility for VAD under this legislation.

clause 5 where "should" omit insert, "is to"

clause 10 omit (i), (ii) insert, "Suffering has not or is not reasonably expected to become sustainably tolerable within 12 months"

renumber i, ii

insert (iii), "mere hope or expectation of the possibility of a currently unobtainable intervention or miracle is not to be considered in the application of 10(i); and"

Accounting for the religious beliefs of practitioners that find it difficult to separate their professional conduct from cult practices. It's no secret from the numerous anecdotes available from dying people that have found it difficult to obtain the Disability Support Pension because a doctor refuses to sign a form saying they have less than six months to live with the excuses of fairy tales and well-wishing.

insert (iv), "intolerable suffering is to be taken to be assessed upon the patient's self-reporting and not a doctor's opinion; and"

This accounts for the practitioner that may choose to substitute a 1 for a 10 pain rating based on a desire to prolong the patient's life.

insert (v) "is not the subject of a life insurance policy that commenced before the date that the legislation came into force"

People entered contracts at agreed prices with agreed conditions and life insurance firms charged premiums under the assumption that they could string people along for a couple of extra annual payments, diminishing their net payout slightly. This allows those contracts to be grandfathered in, avoiding disruption to their business model. The potential for life insurance policies to exclude payout in the case of voluntary assisted dying should also be considered with the potential for insurance companies to verify that VAD was not provided for those who choose to agree to such terms.

13b

omit "may be" insert "satisfying the criteria is"

omit (b)

s81

if requested

s124

insert, "members must not vote on or influence decisions where conflicts of interest exist. Conflicts of interest must be publicly declared." The appointment process does not have a legislated non-compete clause. Bribery is also vague in medical law. for example, a serving board member could receive honorarium -a vague high-risk not quite personal payment or remuneration for work done- from an insurance firm. It would actually be prudent to remove registered doctors from all state boards until the AMA clarifies the issue and considers such payments as professional misconduct which it definitely isn't and is totally legal and not corrupt. Those exercising executive power should be held to higher standards compared to the completely not lax and completely legal standards that the AMA and various guilds set for their members.

s149

a health practitioner must not administer life sustaining treatment to a person having self-administered or being administered a voluntary assisted dying substance.

Robert Heron



From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 7 June 2021 11:57 AM
To: Health and Environment Committee
Subject: supplementary submission: Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill 2021

to the committee,

In a land far far away, there once was a [REDACTED] country. The peasants suffered terribly under ruthless tyrants from a lack of health care, social services and communal infrastructure. Sick peasants with manageable health conditions deteriorated until they were so wracked with pain and suffering that there was little that could be done to cure them. The poorest most wretched peasants could only afford the mercy of opioid medication or street heroin to soothe their suffering. Soon the evil tyrants learnt of this and in order to conceal their wickedness, framed the wretched peasants as morally bankrupt addicts. The rest of the world's leaders believed the ruthless tyrants' lies and proceeded to restrict pain relief to their own wretched peasants, condemning the doctors that relieved their pain and the peasants themselves. The wretched peasants begged for death to end their suffering but the tyrants would not let them die.

With reference to the following ABC article referring to certain comments by the honorable member Linus Power,

McKenna, K.(6 June 2012) Linus Power becomes first state Labor MP to voice concerns about Queensland's VAD laws. ABC News Online.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-06-06/queensland-labor-linus-power-first-concerns-vad-laws/100193888>

In reference to the given reason of, "I want to be in control." Martin Luther, referring to the use of the fear of being poisoned to keep the clergy in line and prevent dissent, identified that a man values his mind above all else.

There is a palliative practice known as palliative sedation. Doctors can simply keep you unconscious, unable to respond or beg for death, dismissing your objections as incoherent babble. This is why people fear palliative care. The Queensland government has spared no expense to advertise it recently as a wonderful end of life choice to fulfill ones dying wishes while glossing over the reality.

Forensic psychiatry offers other reasons for wanting to maintain control. Suppose you had a brain tumor. What parts of your brain or combination of parts would you consider losing to be a no-win-game? The speech faculties that allow the coherent structuring of thought? The inhibitory faculties that cause you to hesitate instead of impulsively murdering, raping or gambling away your children's inheritance? How many organs replaced with ports and tubes seems reasonable?

I agree that the frame work presented by the Queensland Law Reform Commission is poor. There are fates worse than death.

Robert Heron
[REDACTED]