

Submission into the Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill 2021

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My mother, Jo A. Bodderij (spouse of Dr WJC Verhaart, my father) studied in Utrecht from 1920 to 1926 to finish as a GP. She worked at a clinic in the North of Holland until the family went to Batavia in the then Netherlands East Indies in 1931. After a short time at a paediatric clinic, she opened her own practice at home until the Japanese occupation in 1942. My father was then in a garrison town near Bandung as a medical Officer.

In the Tjideng camp we moved to in September 1942 she continued practicing as a GP and became the Head Doctor in that camp. In September 1944, the infamous camp commander Kenichi Sone ordered her to move to Kramat, another camp in Batavia (now Jakarta), where she stayed and worked until the end of the war in August 1945. After the family had reunited, we moved to Melbourne, where she soon made-up part of a group of GPs treating Dutch refugees. In June 1946 she was requested to return to Batavia where she became Director of the Tjikini Hospital. In the meantime I was finishing my high school in Melbourne.

In 1950 the pair moved to the Netherlands where Jo treated babies at baby clinics around the town of Leiden for some years. When my father went to a conference in Rome, Jo came with him but not before studying Italian from a guide. Upon return she became serious and started a study of Italian language and literature at the Leiden University. She made good progress and the lecturer asked her if she would try her hand at translating part of an Italian book. She did and enjoyed it so much that she translated the whole book (Enrico Carletti: [Ragionamenti del mio viaggio intorno al mondo](#)) about Carletti's travels around the world in the 16th century. It was published by Kruseman in The Hague

After that she translated a few other books and became good friends with some female Italian authors and winning some literary prizes.

In 1978 she began to suffer from Alzheimer's disease and died in December 1982.

It was a terrible sight to see this alert, intelligent, active person degenerate into something that could only enjoy small pieces of chocolate and small bits of biscuits. I am sure that if she had known of VAD, she would have said "Put me down, quick".