

Submission into the Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill 2021

Submission No.: 198
Submitted by: Elizabeth Ivan
Publication: Making the submission and your name public
Position: I/We support the Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill
Comments in relation to: Eligibility criteria*
Attachments: No attachment

Submitter Comments:

My family and I are in full agreement with implementing VAD and have been for many years. My father was diagnosed with vascular dementia approx two years ago and in such a short time he lost his ability to drive due to lack of concentration, he was a danger to not only himself but to others in his vehicle including other drivers and pedestrians. During his earlier years he had always advised me his daughter if he were to ever get to stage whereby he could not look after his personal hygiene, feed himself etc he wanted to be able to just go to sleep one night and never wake up.

My father was a very proud man and you could see on his face the suffering and shame he felt having his daughter shower him, he was placed into a nursing home, however felt as though he was in a jail as every time he moved in his room the staff would come in and ask him where is was going and why did he want to leave the room, my father was not the type to wander aimlessly, he pleaded with me to bring him home, which I did and took over his full time care.

From December 2020 he declined quite rapidly with his dementia due to chest infection, then a stroke New Years Eve, from which he recovered fully within a week, although this affected his dementia even more. On the 24th January 2021 he fell over in the bathroom as he urinated all over the floor and we did not hear him get out of bed, my mother was sleeping in the same room and was so tired she did not hear him, all we heard was a loud bang, we all went running and found him lying in the doorway. We knew he had broken his hip, we called 000 and the ambulance took 45 minutes to arrive, he had surgery on Australia Day. After his fall although he could not communicate you could see in eyes the pleading to let him go, which for obvious reasons we could not do. Our family had a meeting with the doctors and tired to make them understand that we only wanted comfort care for him as he had had enough pain and suffering and it needed to stop. It took us quite a lot to convince them to stop pushing him and to just make him pain free. My father finally passed on the 12th February 2021 and I can honestly say that regardless of the amount of pain medication legally available for him he face still showed pain, he still struggled to breathe, I sat with him until he took his last breathe and it is not something that anyone should go through. We have more compassion and sympathy for animals than what we have for humans, why? No one should even be questioning VAD, nor should anyone dictate to another regarding their choice or in the instance of my father the families decision. Who knows the person best, doctors, specialists, psychiatrist, government or their own family? If anyone disagrees with VAD then it should also be stopped on animals, one for all and all for one.