

Submission into the Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill 2021

Submission No.: 223
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Position: I/We support the Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill
Comments in relation to: Administration of the substance
Attachments: No attachment

Submitter Comments:

I have witnessed my father die a prolonged and terrible death. He died with no dignity, no control over his own body, no quality of life and endured suffering from uncontrollable pain.

In his final weeks he made it clear to hospital staff that he hated his situation, and didn't want to be forced to suffer any longer. He was in extreme pain, however the doctor treating him refused further morphine as he stated 'he had a duty of care not to compromise his (my dad's) breathing'. I stated at the time he had a duty of care to ensure his patient was not in pain. Regardless, the doctor continued to refuse more morphine and left my father crying every time he had to be touched in order to roll him over to clean his backside (as he was bed-ridden). He even cried when his fingernails were being trimmed.

He eventually died when he drowned in his own phlegm as he lost the ability to swallow his spit. This was horrific for him and horrific for my sister and myself as we sat next to his bed watching him convulse, with his eyes rolled back in their sockets and hearing his gurgle as he drowned.

Even though the hospital staff knew his wishes, they were powerless to assist him in ending his pain and suffering. So many times you hear of patients who were gifted compassionate doctors who willingly helped them to end their lives. These doctors, some who have publicly admitted to helping their patients, risk their medical license by doing so. This VAD bill gives the protection required so medical staff can assist when requested to do so, with the right processes in place that will protect them.

Nobody should be in a situation where a doctor is too afraid to give more morphine / pain killers in case this leads to 'premature' death. No patient should be forced to suffer intolerable pain and be refused more morphine / pain killers in case it affects their breathing and leads to death.

Please pass this bill so our terminally ill have the option to end their suffering, if they so wish, and to give our medical staff the protection they need to be able to assist when requested to do so.

Please. Give us a VAD option. Our body, our choice.