
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 23 June 2021 2:05 PM
To: Health and Environment Committee
Subject: Support for dying with assistance bill

To those that have a vote on this matter,

I am a 59 year old two time ovarian cancer survivor. I was initially diagnosed in December 2015 at stage II which made me very lucky. I was then in remission until August 2020 when it became clear that my ovarian cancer had returned, this time perforating my bowel and again giving me the luck of being diagnosed early.

Ovarian cancer is the poor sister to breast cancer so you may be unaware that the recurrence rate is 85% and the 5 year survival rate only about 43%. I am well aware that my luck is going to run out sooner or later and when that occurs I would like the right to die with dignity.

I am a Registered Nurse and was in fact a Director of Nursing for the latter 18 years of my career, only retiring in February 2021 after working throughout my most recent post surgical recovery and 6 months chemotherapy. As a nurse and DON I know exactly what a palliative patient's end of life experience is currently like and despite what family and other observers might think there is nothing dignified about it. The patient exists in a pain filled cloud until such time as they can no longer bear it - they are then administered a syringe driver cocktail of drugs which usually includes enough morphine to impact the persons ability to breathe - respiratory depression is a known (and welcomed in this case) side effect of Morphine. They then struggle along in a comatose state due to all of the drugs until the dosage finally wins and the person succumbs.

Meanwhile I recently had to put my beautiful fur baby Jack Russell, aka Jack, down due to haemangioma sarcoma and his end of life experience at the vets hand was so much more humane than this. After being sedated prior he received an injection which had an immediate effect and he got to go bring cuddled by me. Since the dying with dignity bill clearly includes that the patient must not be cognitively impaired when they decide on VAD, that they cannot be coerced to make such a decision, and that they must be terminal with no hope of recovery there is no chance for this to be misused.

Please vote yes for the voluntary assisted dying bill so that people like me have the right to die with dignity and on our own terms instead of gurgling along in a drug induced coma for days in the name of supposed 'caring palliative care'.

Thankyou

Fiona Brown
[REDACTED]