

Submission into the Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill 2021

Submission No.: 898
Submitted by: Suzanne Stubbs
Publication: Making the submission and your name public
Position: I/We support the Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill
Comments in relation to: Conscientious objection by either individuals or entities
Attachments: No attachment

Submitter Comments:

An Individual, organisation or body of any kind should never have the right to prevent or intervene or interfere in a person receiving information about VAD, discussing VAD or deciding to use VAD as long as the safeguards in the draft Bill are in place. Regardless of your political, personal or religious beliefs, it is every individual's right to know about, discuss and decide for themselves whether they wish to have VAD as an option to end their life and ultimately whether they use this option and actually end their life. VAD does not encourage suicide. VAD prevents suffering. My wife didn't pass away peacefully in my arms. There are very few of these romanticised deaths where the person closes their eyes and takes their last breath with a calm look of love on their face. This is rare. Cancer ravaged my wife. She couldn't talk to tell me what she needed. She couldn't stand as she was reduced to skin and bone. She had no dignity as she couldn't go to the toilet or feed herself and was drooling and vomiting as she writhed in pain. All this despite the best, most excellent and caring palliative care. Palliative care is absolutely necessary but it is most certainly not the answer when death approaches. My wife wanted to use VAD 12 weeks before her death but she knew it was not legal. Are you able to imagine her fear and dread knowing she had to endure weeks of agony and despair before the final relief of her death. I don't think we are capable of imagining what she went through but I know it was awful. Horrific to watch and it haunts me to this day. 12 weeks of pure hell which gave no joy to her, to me, or our children. 12 weeks that she endured. 12 weeks that have left me emotionally unable to "return to normal ". 12 weeks that will now cost the government a life time of ongoing costs to cover my healthcare costs, counselling costs, and centrelink benefits required for me and my children to cope with psychological scars. Those 12 weeks did not save her soul. In fact she was condemned to suffer. Those 12 weeks did not bring comfort to her or her family or her friends. Those 12 weeks brought distress to all around her. Those 12 weeks are all I can think about even 2 years after her death. Those 12 weeks were also a financial burden to her, her family and our healthcare system. Those 12 weeks and all the ongoing repercussions could have been avoided if VAD was legal. I agree with the safeguards but do not let religion or politics prevent anyone from making this decision. Absolutely every single person, who is able to understand, should have the right to end their life through VAD.