

Health and Environment Committee

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 30 June 2021 1:00 PM
To: Health and Environment Committee
Subject: I oppose the "Voluntary Assisted Dying" Bill

Categories: Submission

Re: I oppose the "Voluntary Assisted Dying" Bill

Dear Health Committee Members,

I, object to the Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill 2021 (Bill).

This legislation downgrades medical care to Queensland patients. Queensland already has a palliative care deficit (minimal funding and only 134 dedicated palliative beds), particularly in regional Queensland where some areas have no palliative care service at all.

This bill is extreme in nature, rushed, and impinges on Queenslanders access to health care support and free conversation about life and death.

Section 141 of the Bill makes it an imprisonable crime (seven years prison) to talk someone out of suicide.

I object to the fact that medical practitioners with a conscientious objection to euthanasia or assisted suicide must refer patients to it. This is wrong and takes away an individual freedom and makes a doctor complicit in the outcome of the patient's death.

Division 3 of the bill dictates strict process and penalty for any doctor that does not follow to the letter the process should they decline to kill the patient.

Health institutions such as Uniting Care or Catholic Health Australia that have a charter opposed to euthanasia, they would be compelled to refer patients who qualify for euthanasia or assisted suicide upon request. In the case where the patient is a permanent resident of a facility, such as an aged care home for example, the institution would be forced to let the assisted suicide or euthanasia take place on the premises by an outside doctor coming in to kill the patient or the poison being delivered to the facility.

The wording of the bill is also deceptive, 'voluntary assisted dying' sounds like palliative care but it is not. The Bill if passed would legalise both assisted suicide, where the doctor prescribes poison for the patient to take, and euthanasia, where the doctor administers a lethal injection to kill the patient either via syringe or a drip.

I say no to suicide and I oppose this Bill.

Sincerely,
Sujata Saha