

Health and Environment Committee

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 1 July 2021 2:38 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,

The Chair Health Committee ,

We wish to object to the "Voluntary assisted Dying Bill" from both the individual and societal perspectives.

Firstly, the individual aspects include the lack of examination by Specialist Medics to assess the root causes, particularly depression, anxiety, fear and pain which includes psycho/emotional, physical and spiritual. Secondly, the vulnerability of the person, especially if an option of assisted killing or suggestion of suicide is proposed as a 'caring' option, when in essence it is a total abandonment of them in their time of deepest need. Is that the best we as a society can provide?

We understand little about the power of Social Norms which prevail in our society and to which many fall victim. i.e. " Everybody is co-operating with this suggestion and I SHOULD also as it seems expected of me"

The social aspects are manifold. We are a corporate society and one,s actions affect others. We do not function in a vacuum.

To legislate for health practitioners to compromise their deeply held beliefs about the value of life, and particularly the Medical Profession to abandon their Hippocratic Oath - "First Do No Harm" will have profound repercussions in their life namely guilt,failure to be allowed to uphold their beliefs because of legislative requirements which threaten their positions/employment. It will also deeply affect the position of trust in which we as a society hold our Medical Professionals.

To legislate for health providers to compromise/abandon their Mission Statements to care & protect their wonderful patients/ residents in their care,is to totally fail all the individual staff whose values align with those of their place of employment. Also this could possibly promote fear or apprehension in the patients or residents about the their safety and security in the facility where they are residing, and which they have chosen because it aligns with their beliefs about the sacredness of life.

In essence the desire of the individual takes preference and the myriad of unified objectors is to be subsumed.

From a personal perspective, I am a loving and caring wife of a beloved husband who is terminally ill and enduring great pain and who would probably be confronted with this option of assisted suicide/ or suicide. My husband would be greatly offended and shattered if presented with this deadly proposal of abandonment under the guise of 'mercy and assistance' when what he would require is the true care and assistance offered by Palliative Care.

Please consider funding for palliative care as opposed to the seemingly easy,but deadly option, of abandoning those at the time of their greatest need. We could all attest, that when in crisis or need,it was the love and support of others which brought us through.

Thank you.

Denis & Helen Bowman

Sincerely,
Helen Bowman

