

Submission into the Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill 2021

Submission No.: 1092

Submitted by: Viviana Roberts

Publication: Making the submission and your name public

Position: I/We do not support the Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill

Comments in relation to: Conscientious objection by either individuals or entities, Other

Attachments: See attachment

Submitter Comments:

1st July 2021**TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN*****Re: Objection to the proposed Queensland Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill****I have two reasons to object to this Bill based on:****Conscientious objection and cost of implementation of the Bill****In the proposed Bill Reference Page 11 under the heading**Division 2 Principles of voluntary assisted dying it says:**“The principles that underpin this Act are—*

- (a) human life is of fundamental importance; and*
- (b) every person has inherent dignity and should be treated equally and with compassion and respect; and*
- (c) a person’s autonomy, including autonomy in relation to end of life choices, should be respected; and*
- (d) every person approaching the end of life should be provided with high quality care and treatment, including palliative care, to minimise the person’s suffering and maximise the person’s quality of life; “*

Most people would agree with these values BUT a fundamental fact is that these guidelines are NOT being met and governments are NOT giving enough funding to meet them.

Why implement another Bill into the Health Care System when the current BASICS are not being met. Queensland’s current health system cannot even provide day to day health care to it’s spread out population; by it’s own admission remote area health services are lacking – how can it safely cope with providing such a new scheme.

Realistically, there is NO ‘choice’ until high quality palliative care is available to ALL Queenslanders. Before Parliament provides Queenslanders with an option to die, shouldn’t it be providing a higher quality option to live ?

In 2018 Queensland had approx. 49 FTE (full time equivalent) palliative care specialists for the state. The Palliative Care Queensland recommendation is 2 FTE specialist palliative medicine physicians per 100,00 population – so Queensland would have needed 101 FTE palliative care doctors to meet these recommendations in 2018. (the Queensland figures providing half of which was needed.)

If Queenslanders (including indigenous remote populations) were given a choice between better quality and more extensive general health and palliative care OR The Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill, I am certain most would opt for the first as ALL will NEED health and palliative care at some stage while FEW may access the proposed Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill.

My personal view is that from a logical and practical perspective, the Queensland government should be investing in **improving the Health Care System in place for ALL Queenslanders** (in itself a massive challenge) rather than investing in the new proposed Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill.

Yours faithfully,
Viviana Roberts