

Submission into the Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill 2021

Submission No.: 1243
Submitted by: Name withheld
Publication: Making the submission public but withholding your name
Position: I/We support the Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill
Comments in relation to: Eligibility criteria* ,The request and assessment process,Conscientious objection by either individuals or entities,Other
Attachments: No attachment

Submitter Comments:

The QLD draft legislation allows for a person (with an incurable/terminal illness) to have a 12 months' life expectancy to be able to access VAD - in other states this is set at 6 months' life expectancy. There should be no prognostic time frames once you are diagnosed with a terminal/incurable disease. If there does have to be a time frame then I support the 12 months' time frame.

Telehealth/access: People in rural, regional areas should have equal access to VAD. The draft bill needs to address the current Commonwealth prohibition on using Telehealth to discuss Voluntary Assisted Dying (which is characterised in the Code as suicide). People who are dying are not well enough to travel miles to see a specialist or doctor.

Healthcare professionals - conscientious objection: I support the conscientious objection of individuals but do NOT support "institutional conscientious objection": We don't believe "institutions" (hospitals) have the right to block VAD in their facilities when they are funded by the government. The focus should be on the individual and not the individual having to find alternative hospitals that allow VAD when they are dying and at their most vulnerable and wish to access VAD.

Someone who lives in a nursing home or retirement village that is run by a religious institution - because it is that individual's "home" they should not be blocked from accessing VAD or doctors who might attend "their home" as part of the VAD process based on the ownership of the facility by a religious institution.

I support the right of a terminally ill individual to choose to die with dignity and without undue and extended suffering for themselves and their loved ones.