

Health and Environment Committee
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Submission to the Queensland Inquiry into the Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill 2021

Dear Members of the Committee,

We believe that the Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill 2021 should be abandoned. The terms used are general and thus are open to manipulation both in present times and in time to come. Section 11, lines 17-21. Suffering has not been sufficiently defined. What is suffering? There are short and long term sufferings. There are sufferings that, with treatment and care can be alleviated. Suffering is a subjective term. One person's suffering is another's path to overcoming great obstacles. Every person suffers in their life. It is not sufficient to put suffering as a general term. This is a case of life and death. The wording of the legislation is poor and is open to misuse.

The bill is contradictory. It states that: " A health care worker cannot

(a) initiate discussion with the person that is in substance about voluntary assisted dying; or

(b) In substance, suggest VAD to the person.

In the next section, it states that health care workers can talk about voluntary assisted dying if they also talk about treatment options available.

The treatment options available are what we need to talk about as they offer real hope and real assistance to terminally ill people, not terminating lives. We want our society to be a truly civilised society where we look after all people and care about them.

It is nonsensical that the bill states that Voluntary Assisted Dying is not suicide. The Oxford Dictionary defines suicide as ' an act of taking ones own life.' Wikipedia defines it as the act of intentionally causing one's own death. Getting a medical person to help them does not change this fact. It never has and never will.

There will be problems with eligibility. If enacted into law, it will be open to exploitation where individuals will not die voluntarily and without coercion as has happened overseas. There will be issues with individuals decision making capacity, especially when there is the presence of mental illness, loneliness and low self esteem.

For these reasons we call on parliamentarians to stand up for truth and true compassion and reject this flawed and dangerous bill.