



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

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**SELECT COMMITTEE ON END OF LIFE CHOICES IN THE ACT**

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## Submission Cover Sheet

### End of Life Choices in the ACT

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## Submission to Legislative Assembly Select Committee (EOL Choices)

I think that Euthanasia should not be permitted in the ACT. A State or Territory has duty to care, not kill, the people in the jurisdiction.

### EDUCATION - INFORMATION

People should be aware that it is possible to properly prepare for death. Wills should be written and updated when necessary and Power of Attorney documents written if there is a doubt about the next of kin. Death is not a coffee table topic, but the realities of accidents and illness should be faced.

### MEDICAL FACILITIES AND PROFESSIONALS.

The ACT provides public and private hospitals all of which provide some section which will be used as palliative care. Palliative care is also available at home; it is provided by ACT health. As well Clare Holland House offers well-supported services and professionals, who maintain care for anyone in the final stage of his/her life. However, with an ageing population the funding for palliative care will have to increase.

It is often reported that there is a shortage of specialists in the ACT; this shortage is particularly noticeable in the Mental Health area. But the whole ACT Health system is often under pressure by reports of extended waiting lists for necessary surgery, and my own experience of waiting times at hospital out-patient clinics. Reports on local talk-back radio and in newspapers are often not flattering for the ACT Health system. The ACT Legislative Assembly would be better employed in seeking ways to improve all Health services for all people whilst keeping a clear mind about the growth of the numbers in the Aged Care Sector.

### CONCERNS ABOUT EUTHANASIA

It would be a retrograde step for Canberra, the National Capital, to become a Euthanasia destination. Besides it is obvious that the Netherlands, Belgium as well as some States in the United States of America have moved the goal posts since their original legislation was enacted. All Euthanasia states legislated for death by euthanasia to be well regulated and confined to those near death. But the so-called safe guards proved inadequate as reports now show. The horror of euthanasia in Belgium, The Netherlands and “book- an-exit” Switzerland is best illustrated by the vote against Euthanasia by their European neighbours/observers - UK House of Commons. The vote was 330 against 118 in favour.

I will conclude with words of former Prime Minister, Mr. Paul Keating, concerning the Victorian Euthanasia Law to which this Inquiry refers: Keating said “this (is) deeply regressive legislation... What matters is under Victorian law there will be people whose lives we honour and those we believe are better off dead.” <https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/dont-do-it-paul-keating-in-11th-hour-bid-to-stop-euthanasia-laws-20171019-gz4473.html>

Mr. Keating also said “liberalisation” of the law would happen. <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-11-10/fact-check-do-assisted-dying-laws-lead-to-a-slippery-slope/9116640>