



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

SELECT COMMITTEE ON END OF LIFE CHOICES IN THE ACT

Ms Bec Cody MLA (Chair), Mrs Vicki Dunne MLA (Deputy Chair), Ms Tara Cheyne MLA,
Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA, Ms Caroline Le Couteur MLA.

Submission Cover Sheet

End of Life Choices in the ACT

Submission Number: 297

Date Authorised for Publication: 29/3/18

From: sarah avery
To: [LA Committee - EOLC](#)
Subject: Voluntary Assisted dying
Date: Saturday, 17 March 2018 11:37:15 PM

Dear Committee,

I have formed a view on end of life choices.

I believe that the ACT should legislate for voluntary assisted dying.

Please excuse the explicit detail below.

I have seen my grandmother pass away slowly and in great pain from cancer. Palliative care was not sufficient to take away her pain. She expressed a desire to end her life. Indeed, she said, "If I had a gun, I'd use it."

She felt that she had no dignity, and indeed, she had very little. Her cancer was such that her bowel eroded and sent faecal matter into her vagina. She needed help from my mother to keep clean, and the house constantly smelled like faeces for her last months because she wanted to be cared for in her home, which I support.

She died surrounded by all of us after she fell into a 2-3 day coma during which her breathing became more laboured. We kept her mouth moistened with cotton buds soaked in water or lemonade and had several fans running over her.

We had a morphine pump which my mother and one of my uncles kept operating. I do not believe this was enough.

This happened when I was 15 years old. I'm now 35. I will never forget what I saw, smelled and heard.

I do not want this to happen to my parents, my other loved ones, or to me.

I would also like to be able to set guidelines for life-promoting measures were I to develop dementia.

My Aunty has vascular dementia which got very bad about 10 years ago and she has been in a nursing home for about 7 years. She has no quality of life. She is paralysed and tube fed. I have no idea how she is still alive.

I know that she would not like to be kept alive in this state. Nor would I, nor would my parents. I would like this to be addressed in any voluntary assisted dying law, or in a related law.

Thank you for considering this view.

Yours sincerely,

Sarah Avery