



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: 345

Date Authorised for Publication: 29/3/18

From: Elvis Seman
To: [LA Committee - EOLC](#)
Subject: Submission from Dr Elvis Šeman
Date: Wednesday, 21 March 2018 4:50:03 PM

Dear members of parliament,

I have had the privilege of working as a doctor for 35 years. During my training, we were taught that, to be a 'good healer,' we should first do no harm and, if possible, do some good. Hippocrates recognised that healing and killing are incompatible, and he separated the 2 roles in his famous oath. Over the subsequent 2,500 years, the practice of medicine flourished and patients have, by and large, benefited greatly.

In 2018, I read with sadness and great concern that the ACT government is on the cusp of legalising euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide. If this happens, great harm will inevitably come which will outweigh any potential benefits from such legislation. Serious examination of the sequelae of legalised killing in Belgium, the Netherlands, Oregon (USA) and Canada confirms this.

This is so because legalised killing has an adverse effect on 3 cultures, simultaneously namely, the culture of medicine, the culture of society, and family culture. Medicine is harmed because doctors who are empowered to kill are dangerous, patients don't trust them, and medicine as a whole stagnates because its cheaper and easier to kill than to find better ways of caring. Society is harmed because the sick, disabled and elderly are perceived as a burden and thus dehumanised. The 3rd victim is family culture, whose thinking will be polluted by those who believe in killing as a solution to suffering and create conflict with members who don't.

August medical bodies and governments which have carefully examined the pro's and con's have invariably rejected such legislation as it is impossible to adequately safeguard those at risk of abuse.

Please, do not pass euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide into law.

Dr Elvis I Šeman
MB BS, FRANZCOG, EUCOGE, FRCOG, PhD, NFPMC.

Treasurer, MaterCare Australia
matercare.org.au

Medical Lead - Urogynaecology,
Flinders Medical Centre
Bedford Park, SA 5042

Senior Lecturer (honorary)
Flinders University
South Australia