



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

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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From: CAROLYN WIGHTMAN
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A submission to the Secretary, ACT Legislative Committee on the End of Life Choices.

Euthanasia being a form of State-sanctioned suicide. It is a disgrace that this is sanctioned in Victoria and hopefully will not be passed as law in the ACT.

There are many positive experiences with palliative care at Clare Holland house in Barton which is always fully occupied. In the Netherlands euthanasia has made the hospice system all but obsolete.


What is left out of the current debate by many euthanasia proponents is that people can easily get coerced when they are vulnerable, and some coerced into volunteering to die.

Experiences about misdiagnosis of, or recovery from, terminal illness. In Vermont, people who had recovered from terminal illness, or whose illness was misdiagnosed have gone on to enjoy many more years of happy life.

Euthanasia makes it easier for family members to pressure the elderly to end their lives early and it also creates conditions in which the elderly are more likely to feel like they are a burden and that "voluntary euthanasia" is the right thing to do. One palliative care doctor used to put it this way "please put mum out of MY misery".

People with a disability already suffer discrimination in health care. When assisted suicide and euthanasia are legal, people with a disability are more at risk of being offered death as a solution because doctors and others consider that they would be better off dead.

Sincerely
Carolyn Wightman


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