



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: Annie de Smet
To: [LA Committee - EOLC](#)
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I am very concerned that legislation is being considered regarding End of Life choices. Whilst the numbers who wish to end their life without palliative care etc maybe small my concern is that these numbers will increase with legislation legalising thismany reasons and life experiences have developed my dislike for such legislation.

My parents both had palliative care and died at home, my father in his 70s and my mother in her 90s, it was this care and support from the wonderful nurses etc that enabled both to die at home surrounded by family and familiar surrounds...(as A pastoral carer in the past, I don't think many realise the power of this)

As a Pastoral Carer I observed many in hospital who were surrounded by professional staff etc however lack of empathy and support from family and friends left these in vulnerable positions which I fear if they were given the choice of legalised euthanasia(a terrible expression when you stop and actually think about it for longer than a second)

Having observed family members who were 'impatient' for the family members death, there is no other way to say this, I fear many dying patients will feel pressured into making the decision which best suits those before themselves.

No amount of legislation and care can exclude how any one person will act, professionals are human and have frailties like all of us, and you cannot legislate for empathy/concern for all regardless of their creed,colour,ethnicity,religion.

For those who wish a quick death I cannot offer any solution other than the knowledge that in all my experiences I have not witnessed anybody suffering more than they need, if this is the case it points to one or two concerns regarding healthcare in this country. The lack of priority for quality care over number crunching has turned the medical care into concerns about waiting lists (which often balloon out as actual emergencies happen in the already hectic area of emergency medicine), the lack of higher rates of Palliative Care in the community is the biggest issue facing Canberra. We are losing excellent staff who are frustrated by the administration of the program and this is where the problem lies.

As in all issues it should remain a non religious choice one group should not have more weight over another, it should provide a non emotional outcome but it won't! I would like to think a personal letter has as much weight as those experts some who have never actually worked in the area or at least had family members who have died peacefully at home

Anne de Smet