

Legislative Assembly Committee Office  
Level 1, 11 Harvest Terrace  
West Perth WA 6056



**Submission to the Joint Committee on End of Life Choices** Inquiring into the need for laws in Western Australia to allow citizens to make informed choices regarding their own end of life choices.

Submitted by Mr Vincenzo Monterosso

This is to inform you that I do not support changing State laws to provide for voluntary euthanasia or physician assisted dying (PAD) or ending of life by any human being, under any circumstance.

**Addressing Term of Reference #4**, the laws in Western Australia on Advance Health Directives and Enduring Power of Guardianship in my firm opinion and firm belief are more than adequate for citizens to make their own informed choices and decisions about their end of life options. We need safeguards for mentally ill or people who are incapable of making these difficult choices, when they are in a vulnerable physical state.

If voluntary euthanasia or PAD were legal, then this safeguard falls away. These “treatments” may be offered to the guardian or responsible person for the patient who has become incapable of making choices. Given how euthanasia and PAD are promoted as a simple way to address suffering at the end of life, nothing stops the guardian from authorising them even though the patient would not have chosen this “treatment” had s/he been competent to make this decision.

Changing the existing laws places us humans on a very slippery slope, which is evident:

- **From the past**

By the end of the 1800s in Germany, there were calls for euthanasia in the name of personal choice and mercy, using similar arguments today. By the time Hitler ordered the T-4 programme, the ideological ground had already been prepared ... and the rest is history.

- **From the present**

Countries who have legalised euthanasia, speak about stringent conditions and strict safeguards, but in reality, it is quite different. In Belgium and now Holland, there are few effective safeguards for the individuals facing death. The descent down this dangerously slippery slope is inevitable,” says Bob McCoskrie, National Director of Family First NZ. The Dutch government has just announced that it intends to draft a law that would legalise assisted suicide for people who feel they have “completed life” but are not necessarily terminally ill. This is tantamount to suicide, which is abhorrent in a civilised society.

Wherever euthanasia or PAD has been legislated for persons with chronic or terminal illness, the laws over time extend to other classes of citizens, because it would be discriminatory not to. This is unavoidable once Parliament violates the absolute ban on one person intentionally killing another.

Likewise, this line with euthanasia would very likely be interpreted to “in practice” in such a way, that elderly people will have their life terminated by the “**decision**” of **other people** – family, courts, doctors – as covered above for **Terms of Reference #4**. In all this, it is the poor, the marginalised, and the most vulnerable in our society, who are very often discriminated against. Life is to be protected. When a person is ready to die they do so naturally and not by the decision of another human being.

Signed

Date 8-10-2017