

Admin, LACO

Subject: FW: End of life choices submission

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From:

Sent: Saturday, 14 October 2017 7:19 PM

To: Joint Select Committee on End of Life Choices <eolcc@parliament.wa.gov.au>

Subject: End of life choices submission

Dear Committee Members,

We ask you to focus your enquiry's attention on improving palliative care availability for all Western Australians. Better palliative care options will really improve end-of-life choices, whilst legalised euthanasia and assisted suicide will only result in more coercion of the elderly and less real choice.

The truth is that legal euthanasia ultimately devalues the right to life for everyone, especially the most vulnerable. Please consider that the elderly already experience financial and emotional abuse and legalised euthanasia would only exacerbate this. Legal euthanasia creates the public perception that the most vulnerable people in our community may legitimately be coerced or pressured to "stop being a burden" on others or the health system. The result is that people who do not want to die will be killed; at first by 'giving in' to pressure from relatives and doctors and in the future completely against their will, as now occurs in countries such as Holland.

Furthermore, to co-opt the medical profession to legitimise and carry-out euthanasia is particularly disturbing. Euthanasia violates medical ethics of "first do no harm," and upends the role of the doctor as healer and carer, pressuring him to do what is in the best interests of the hospital or health budget instead of his patient.

We therefore pray that the committee will recommend that euthanasia not be legalised, but will make many positive suggestions about how genuine palliative care can be improved.

Yours faithfully,

Steve and Helen Terpstra