

Admin, LACO

Subject: FW: Submission: End of Life Choices Inquiry

From: Fayliesha Spyker

Sent: Saturday, 21 October 2017 6:45 PM

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

Subject: Submission: End of Life Choices Inquiry

Dear Members of the Joint Select Committee on End of Life Choices.

Thank you for the opportunity to send a submission outlining my views and thoughts on the issue of euthanasia. My name is Fayliesha Spyker, I am 24 years old, and have been working as a disability support worker since 2010. I have had the opportunity to support and care for individuals who may be deemed to have low quality of life. And yet, their life is worth as much as yours or mine, and I have great respect for them and am thankful for what they have brought to my life, to the lives of all those around them, and to society in general.

I have also experienced the loss of family members - some due to cancer, and some due to old age. Euthanasia is not the answer to suffering. We need to have utmost respect for life - it is not up to us to make the decision to end life. Our responsibility is to provide appropriate palliative care.

As a Christian, I believe all that God has revealed to us in the Bible. He is the Creator of this world and everything in it. He is the Creator of life. God has given life, and God will take life. Life is not to be taken from man by man. Euthanasia is man putting himself in the place of God. In my opinion, euthanasia is equivalent to murder. God prohibits murder. God decides the days of each person's life. We need to have respect for this and obey His commands.

Even apart from my Christian worldview, euthanasia is not necessary when there is good palliative care and pain management available. More effort could then be put in to ensuring that there is appropriate care for those who need it, rather than suggesting that they end their life.

I am very concerned about what will happen if euthanasia is legalised. Those euthanised will typically be those who are weak and vulnerable. There is much opportunity for malpractice to occur. People with terminal illness or with severe permanent disability may be pressured into ending their life. They may feel that they are a burden to those caring for them, so choose to make it easier for everyone. And who makes the decision for those who can no longer make decisions for themselves? How many lives will be taken in a murderous way?

Also, what image does this portray about the quality of life? Life is valuable in and of itself. It does not depend on how the person can contribute to the community, or whether they can speak, or how much they can communicate. They are valuable and loved, because they exist. This is the message that needs to be spread.

In the last number of years there has been an increase in advocacy for people with disabilities to increase awareness and rights to equal opportunities. This all indicates that people with disabilities are valued and appreciated in society. So why this opposing suggestion that is raised in the euthanasia argument? Are the lives of people with disabilities valued? Or are they not? Would it just be easier for everyone if they were quietly gotten rid of? We need to show 100% love and support to all people and encourage and enable them to live the fulfilled lives that they are able to live.

My recommendation is that the committee do everything in its power to prevent legalised euthanasia and instead support palliative care so that people do not feel the need to end their life.

Yours sincerely,

