

Admin, LACO

Subject: FW: Submission: End of Life Choices Inquiry

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From: Hans van der Linde

Sent: Sunday, 22 October 2017 10:08 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.

Thanks for taking the time to read this submission.

My name is Hans van der Linde. I am very concerned that there may be a possibility that Euthanasia will be legalised in our state.

It is my hope that this will never happen.

It is my firm conviction that human life is sacred above all other life forms. The Hippocratic Oath, that has served the medical profession so very well for thousands of years already, should continue to be the foundational statement for all medical practitioners.

To me euthanasia is state-sanctioned killing.

My concerns about euthanasia are not just based on 'hypothetical problems'

that may or may not arise once it is legalised. My concerns are based on actual developments I have witnessed, not only in my country of birth: the Netherlands, but in other countries that have gone down that road as well.

The so-called 'safeguards' that were supposed to prevent the wrong use of euthanasia have shown to be ineffective in the sense that they are not upheld, or have 'eroded' quickly in the Netherlands and in Belgium.

It has been documented that subtle pressure has been exercised on old and seriously ill patients 'to do the right thing' and end their life instead of continuing to be 'a burden' for relatives and friends.

The most vulnerable in our society, like the old and frail, those that suffer mental illness, the seriously and/or terminally sick, need our protection and care. Palliative care should be used in the cases where it is required. A lot of time and effort should be spent on improving this palliative care, as well as advanced pain management, for people that need it.

Many medical specialists, including the AMA, have warned against the dangers of euthanasia. Instead, they have called for the application of the excellent palliative care that is available these days.

We have lost our eldest daughter and a niece to brain tumours, and two close relatives to ovarian and prostate cancers. We are very thankful for the excellent palliative care and pain management that was given. Euthanasia was never considered by us or by our relatives, though it was mentioned as an option.

If euthanasia were to be legalised overseas experience has shown that there will arise situations in which people are, more or less subtly, coaxed towards making the decision to end their life.

It is my hope that at the end of the inquiry-period your advice will be NOT to proceed with legalising euthanasia.

Respectfully submitted,

Hans van der Linde