



URGENT!

EUTHANASIA BILL HERE!

ACT NOW TO HELP STOP ASSISTED SUICIDE IN QUEENSLAND.

Here we are with another killing Bill to fight. The Queensland Labor Government has tabled the "Voluntary Assisted Dying" Bill, which if passed would allow Queenslanders with a 12 month prognosis access to assisted suicide - which is being prescribed poison by their doctor so they can kill themselves, or euthanasia, where the doctor administers poison to the patient via a syringe or drip.

The cruel legislation also refuses doctors and institutions with ethical objections to euthanasia the democratic right of a full conscientious objection. The dangerous Bill would distort the role of doctors from healers to killers. It would target the terminally sick, disabled, and elderly. The so-called "right to die" would become the "duty to die". Coercion, even subtle coercion, would be rife. There would be many extra deaths in Queensland every year if this Bill were to pass. This is all against a backdrop of a woeful palliative care funding deficit to the tune of \$275 million a year in Queensland.

This newsletter is packed with information to help you fight hard. The most effective thing you can do is meet with your MP, regardless of party, as we need some Labor MPs to vote against this Bill, otherwise it will pass. There's also an opportunity to get a submission in, but please be quick as it closes at 9am on Friday 2 July (please refer to pages 3 & 5). The Bill is due to be voted on in September this year.

We are fighting against this Bill, side-by-side, shoulder-to-shoulder with the Australian Medical Association, Nurses Professional Association of Queensland, Catholic Health Australia (the largest provider of health services in Queensland after the government), UnitingCare and other health care groups. As well as almost every denomination of Christian churches, many indigenous groups, ethnic communities, disability groups, anti-elder abuse groups and palliative care specialists and oncologists from around Australia. There are more on our side than against us, but whether it will translate into defeating the Bill remains to be seen; tragically South Australia this month became the fourth Australian state to legalise assisted suicide.

In advance, thank you for fighting hard, dear friends.

God bless.

FIGHTING AGAINST EUTHANASIA & ASSISTED SUICIDE



Senator Amanda Stoker speaking against euthanasia at the March for Life Brisbane on Saturday 8 May (story page 8).

26,583 babies were aborted in Qld in 2019

Almost 10,000 more babies were aborted in 2019 than the previous year due to Labor legalising abortion up to birth in late 2018.

The Queensland Labor Government's extreme law includes the "right" to abort babies for any reason, even up to birth.

Now Labor wants to legalise assisted suicide.

After the Queensland Labor Government legalised abortion up to birth, abortion rates leapt by 58%, so what do you think will happen if they legalise assisted suicide?

(Queensland's suicide rate is already among the highest in Australia.)



Teeshan Johnson speaking to the media against the assisted suicide Bill on 25 May, 2021

MARCH FOR LIFE BRISBANE
SATURDAY 8 MAY, 2021
Speakers' Corner Parliament House, George St, Brisbane
2:30pm to check-in & collect signs
For a 3pm rally, with a March afterwards
For more information go to www.cherishlife.org.au or call (07) 3871 2445



▲ A 1/2 page newspaper ad we ran in The Courier-Mail warning Queenslanders, that like the abortion rate blowout there would be a blowout in assisted suicide if the euthanasia Bill were to pass.

◀ Protesting the tabling of the assisted suicide Bill, at a mini-rally on 25 May (story on page 2).

PROTESTING THE EUTHANASIA BILL

On the morning of Tuesday 25 May we held a mini-rally outside Parliament House to protest the terrible assisted suicide / euthanasia Bill being tabled by the Premier that day.

With about 50 fearless friends answering the late (and discreet) call to peacefully stand for life, we held bold anti-euthanasia and pro-palliative care signs high, to send a clear message to politicians who were going into Parliament.

The media took great interest in our protest rally, and it was the lead story on every TV station that evening! The ABC even promo-ed the news with the voice-over saying "Protests over right-to-die legislation" showing footage of our rally.



KAP MPs take a stand for life with some passionate pro-lifers.
(Photo: Visual Reality Productions)

All the three Katter's Australian Party MPs - Robbie Katter, Shane Knuth and Nick Dametto attended the rally and shared words of wisdom, as did LNP MP for Maroochydore Fiona Simpson and Teeshan Johnson for Cherish Life.

Here is some of what was said, in order of speakers:

Robbie Katter, KAP MP for Traeger and the leader of the Katter's Australian Party: "It's very important that we fight it... I believe very strongly in the ripple effect in politics. Little things matter, little efforts matter. Those conversations you have amongst your peers done in a peaceful and respectful way can have a very large impact...we come back in [after they] passed legislation on killing babies, now killing our elderly..."

Nick Dametto, KAP MP for Hinchinbrook: "We've got MPs in there, to be fair, who do not understand the legislation they are voting for. It's our responsibility to share with them, not only our views but help them unpack it socially and morally before they go into the House to vote on this. Let them know... this isn't assisted dying, this is assisted suicide. This is going one step further than anyone in Queensland has ever done before... there were some disgusting laws that [came in] last term [on] abortion... We can make sure that as a group we make ourselves heard and keep up that fight."

Shane Knuth, KAP MP for Hill: "This is about getting the truth out there so people see what it [the assisted suicide Bill] is all about... Don't underestimate the role that you are playing here. Get an email to [your MP's] office. We have a great chance of

swinging this. Swinging this in the other direction, like the way it happened over there in England [the UK parliament has rejected euthanasia six times] and I believe that this is going to happen here in the Queensland Parliament, where this Bill is going to be defeated.. and we'll go about ensuring people can access proper palliative care..."

Teeshan Johnson, executive director, Cherish Life Queensland: "We actually need some Labor people [MPs] to vote against this otherwise we're not going to hold. Whatever party your local MP is...they need to hear from you. Emails, phone calls, a meeting is actually best...When people understand what euthanasia actually is, that it is intentionally killing someone, it is assisted suicide..

and it will lead to wrongful deaths. There would be more deaths in Queensland every year as a result. It's highly dangerous ... "

Fiona Simpson, LNP MP for Maroochydore: "[We need to be] engaging people... even those that might believe in euthanasia, about the dangers of what this proposal is. What they are proposing is that you can access euthanasia if you have 12 months to live, but you may not get palliative care until the weeks or months before the end of life... so they are denying people from what they call a choice.. It's not a choice if you don't have proper palliative care."

News reports:

Against a backdrop of bias towards euthanasia evident in almost all mainstream media in Australia, we were encouraged that the side for life (and truth) had the opportunity to comment at all.

As well as being the lead story on every free-to-air TV station, and Sky News, the ABC Online on Tuesday 25 May published this report "Voluntary assisted dying legislation introduced to Queensland Parliament as protesters voice opposition" where we were mentioned: "Teeshan Johnson from Cherish Life Queensland said her group — which is also opposed to termination of pregnancy — said it was petitioning the government to further increase palliative care funding. 'This [the legislation if passed] will lead to wrongful deaths, and the real form of dying with dignity is actually world-class palliative care,' Ms Johnson said."

The Canberra Times, 7 News Online, Victor Harbor Times and other regional papers ran a story written by an Australian Associated Press journalist titled: "Queensland protestors urge free euthanasia vote" and on other sites "Queensland Parliament to debate euthanasia laws" where the issue of conscience votes was discussed. We were mentioned as follows: "Cherish Life Queensland executive director Teeshan Johnson said the Bill won't pass if MPs were allowed a truly free vote. Ms Johnson claimed that while publicly allowing MPs a conscience vote on an abortion bill in 2018, Labor privately bullied MP Jo-Ann Miller after she voted against the laws. 'If Labor aren't given a conscience vote, they have the numbers to push this through,' Ms Johnson told AAP. 'But if it's a real conscience vote, it won't go through, that's really what it comes down to.'"

A video of the rally along with some of the news broadcast can be found at our Youtube channel www.youtube.com/user/cherishlifevideos



QUEENSLAND'S ASSISTED SUICIDE BILL

The Queensland Labor Government's "Voluntary Assisted Dying" Bill is very wide, loose and dangerous legislation. There is no doubt that if enacted it would lead to wrongful deaths in Queensland - including people who would have wrongfully accessed assisted suicide because of wrong diagnosis, wrong prognosis, coercion, elder abuse, untreated mental anguish, or because they had little or no access to palliative care specialists and felt they had no other choice. There are also grave concerns, that like Victoria, there would be an increase in non-assisted suicide rates because of a suicide cognition effect that often accompanies euthanasia or assisted suicide being legalised.

Aspects of the proposed law include:

1. Queenslanders with a 12 month prognosis who are over 18 years old would be eligible for euthanasia or assisted suicide, upon the approval of two doctors who don't have to be specialists. Nor is there a requirement for the patient to be examined by a specialist at any stage of their illness.
2. The two approving doctors can be junior General Practitioners with little or no specialised training in end-of-life management.
3. Doctors with a conscientious objection to euthanasia or assisted suicide would be forced to refer patients for it, and therefore be complicit in the outcome of a patient killed.
4. Health institutions whose charter is opposed to euthanasia (i.e. Catholic Health Australia and UnitingCare as well as many others) would be compelled to refer patients who qualify for euthanasia or assisted suicide upon request. In the case where the patient is a permanent resident of a facility, like an aged care home for example, the institution would be forced to let the assisted suicide or euthanasia take place on the premises by an outside doctor coming in to kill the patient or the poison being delivered to the facility.
5. No mental health checks. There is no requirement for those requesting assisted suicide to be assessed by a mental health expert like a psychiatrist, yet mental anguish and depression is often one of the main drivers for requests for euthanasia, as data from other jurisdictions shows.
6. No requirement to be seen by a specialist in the area of the patient's suffering, e.g. an oncologist for cancer patients.
7. No requirement for a patient to be seen by a palliative care specialist.
8. Inequitable access to euthanasia and palliative care. If passed, this law would allow people with a 12 month prognosis to access euthanasia straight away, but they may not be able to access palliative care until a few weeks or a few months before the end of life (and in some cases in regional Queensland they may have no access to palliative care at all). Very concerning, when Western Australia passed its assisted suicide legislation, an amendment to the Bill which would have given regional WA the same access to palliative care as assisted suicide was voted down.
9. The deceptive language in the Bill - even the term "voluntary assisted dying" makes it sound like people are accessing palliative care when in fact it is euthanasia or assisted suicide.
10. The Bill allows people with a prognosis of 12 months to access assisted suicide. In other Australian jurisdictions the legislation stipulates a six month prognosis, so it allows access six months earlier than all other assisted suicide legislation in Australia.
11. Trying to talk someone out of assisted suicide could put you in jail for up to 7 years.

12. Death certificates would be falsified for people who access assisted suicide to record their underlying sickness as the cause of death instead of suicide or euthanasia.

13. The Premier also wants "tele-deaths" legalised so people can access assisted suicide via a mere phone call - she has even asked the Prime Minister to change the telecommunications / carriage laws to facilitate this.

14. A doctor or a nurse can raise the idea of assisted suicide in the context of discussing other end-of-life options. This is incredibly dangerous, as a patient would no doubt be feeling unwell, distressed by their prognosis and very vulnerable.

Additional thoughts:

- Queensland already has one of the highest suicide rates in Australia, and legalising assisted suicides would only lead to more suicides. This is called a suicide contagion effect. In Victoria in the non-assisted suicide rate increased by 13% when they legalised assisted suicide.
- Catholic Health Australia, which is the largest provider of health services after the government is strongly opposed to the legislation. So too are UnitingCare, BaptistCare, Anglicare, as well as other Christian health care providers.
- Queensland has a woeful palliative care deficit to the tune of about \$275 million per year according to Palliative Care Queensland. The Queensland government has only promised an additional \$171 million over six years which amounts to only \$28.5 million per year. This is despite many calls for substantial increases to palliative care funding from the Australian Medical Association, Catholic Health Australia and Cherish Life through our parliamentary petition to the Queensland Government.
- Every Queenslanders has a fundamental right to high quality palliative care (should they need it), and this legislation does nothing to provide that for Queensland.
- Providing high quality palliative care to ALL Queenslanders would only cost an extra \$1 per Queenslanders per week.
- The Australian Medical Association is opposed to euthanasia and assisted suicide. So too is the Nurses Professional Association of Queensland.
- One of the most vulnerable sectors of our community – indigenous Queenslanders – have not been consulted on the matter.
- Outside of the SE corner and in remote, rural and regional Queensland palliative care services are at best patchy and sometimes non-existent.
- Elder abuse and 'inheritance impatience' is real, underreported, and would be further encouraged by euthanasia laws.
- Queenslanders with disability are particularly vulnerable to pressure, neglect, and abuse regardless of 'safeguards.' Disability groups are condemning this legislation.
- In Victoria, proponents of the Bill who boasted about its "safeguards" are now calling those things "barriers" - as they push for wider access.
- If 'safeguards' work why have we had Royal Commissions into aged care, disability, child abuse and mental health?
- 107 of the World Medical Association's 109 constituent National Medical Associations oppose euthanasia and assisted suicide
- Irony of introducing euthanasia when:
 - Queensland Government has a target for halving suicide rates by 2026
 - protecting the elderly and the vulnerable were/are the priority during COVID.

Please see page 5 for what you can do.

FACTS ABOUT EUTHANASIA AND ASSISTED SUICIDE AROUND THE WORLD

- Only 8 of the 193 nations in the United Nations have legalised euthanasia of any kind, as it is regarded as dangerous.

- The UK Parliament has rejected euthanasia / assisted suicide legislation six times.

- In 2016 and 2017 in Belgium:

- 3 children;

- 77 people suffering from mental health issues; and

- 173 people with no physical suffering but afflicted by conditions such as addiction, loneliness and despair were euthanised.¹

- Since the legalisation of assisted suicide in Oregon 20 years ago, the top five reasons given by those who request (and are given) assisted suicide drugs have been:

- Losing autonomy

- Less ability to engage in activities making life enjoyable

- Loss of dignity

- Losing control of bodily functions

- Burden on family, friends and caregivers.

- These are the same top five reasons given by those in Washington State who request assisted suicide.² Notably, pain or fear of it does not appear in the top reasons.³ This is important because the suicide lobby often cite terrible pain as a reason to legalise assisted suicide and euthanasia.

- The American Medical Association, the British Medical Association, the French Medical Association, the German Medical Association and in fact 107 out of 109 of the world's national medical associations are opposed to euthanasia and assisted suicide of any kind.

- Only 4.9% of those who have been given assisted suicide drugs in Oregon were sent for a psychiatric evaluation beforehand⁵ and only 6% of psychiatrists in Oregon reported being very confident that they could adequately determine whether a psychiatric disorder was impairing the judgment of a patient requesting assisted suicide in a single evaluation.⁵

- The legalisation of assisted suicide has a contagion effect, increasing the rate of suicide in the community.⁶ The suicide rate in Oregon, where assisted suicide was legalised in 1997, has been increasing. In 2012, Oregon's suicide rate was 42% higher than the national average.⁷ This does not include deaths by assisted suicide, as they are recorded as being deaths due to the underlying condition.

- Despite only being legal for four years in Canada, the practice of euthanasia is widespread. Since legalisation, 13,946 people in total have been euthanised.⁸ Since its legalisation in 2016 there has been a 400% increase in people accessing euthanasia in Canada.



- In the first two years of legalised euthanasia in Quebec, 62 deaths (5.6% of all euthanasia deaths) were deemed by the Commission on End of Life Care to have been abuse by the doctor who prescribed and administered the lethal injection, but the Commission did not recommend any for prosecution.⁹

- On her visit to Canada, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities reported concerns about the implication of legalised euthanasia from a disability perspective, after receiving "worrisome claims about persons with disabilities in institutions being pressured to seek medical assistance in dying."¹⁰

In the United States, in states where assisted suicide is legal, insurance companies have refused to cover chemotherapy treatment for cancer patients, instead offering the insured assisted suicide drugs.¹¹

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- 2 Washington State Department of Health, Center for Health Statistics, 2018 Death With Dignity Act Report,
- 3 Oregon Public Health Division, Oregon Death With Dignity Act: Data Summary 2017
- 4 Ibid
- 5 Ganzini L. et al., "Attitudes of Oregon psychiatrists towards physician-assisted suicide", American Journal of Psychiatry 1996: 153:1469-75.
- 6 Jones and Paton, "How Does Legalisation of Physician-Assisted Suicide Affect Rates of Suicide?" Southern Medical Journal Volume 108, No. 10 October 2015.
- 7 <https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/DISEASES/CONDITIONS/INJURYFATALITYDATA/Documents/NVDRS/Suicide%20in%20Oregon%202015%20report.pdf>
- 8 <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/hc-sc/documents/services/medical-assistance-dying-annual-report-2019/maid-annual-report-eng.pdf>
- 9 <https://www.mercatornet.com/careful/view/two-years-of-euthanasia-in-quebec-the-facts/20831>
- 10 End of Mission Statement by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities, Ms. Catalina Devandas-Aguilar, on her visit to Canada.
- 11 Stephanie Packer in California was denied chemotherapy treatment by her health insurance company but offered to pay for assisted suicide <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2016/oct/20/assisted-suicidelaw-prompts-insurance-company-den/> See also case of Barbara Wagner in Oregon - denied health cover but offered assisted dying.

URGENT

WE NEED YOUR HELP - AND ACTION

HOW YOU CAN HELP

1. Arrange a meeting with your local Member of Parliament.

Meeting with your MP is the most important thing you can do. Familiarise yourself with the various points in this newsletter – use them in your conversations, letters and emails with the local MP.



SCAN HERE
TO FIND OUT
WHO THEY
ARE or
[CLICK HERE](#)



2. Make a submission to the Queensland Health Committee against the assisted suicide Bill.

Submissions close at 9am on Friday 2 July.

It doesn't have to be long but does need to address the actual assisted suicide Bill. The most extreme aspects of the Bill are explained on page 3 of this newsletter.

The email address is: hec@parliament.qld.gov.au

Phone: 07 3553 6626

Postal Address: Health and Environment Committee, Parliament House, George Street, Brisbane Qld 4000



SCAN HERE
TO MAKE A
SUBMISSION
DIRECTLY
or [CLICK HERE](#)



3. Engage your local community and church to do the same.

4. Write a letter to the editor of a newspaper.

Getting a letter to the editor published in a newspaper is very effective. Guidelines and email addresses for writing letters to the editor of newspapers can be found on page 7 of this newsletter.

5. Write a letter to your MP.

Please send your MP a letter, always being sure to ask for a reply. If you have a meeting with them too, please send a letter later.



SCAN HERE
TO SEND A
LETTER TO
YOUR MP or
[CLICK HERE](#)



6. Visit the Catholic Health campaign website.

The largest provider of health services in Queensland after the government has created a website called www.anotheroption.com.au with email letters to go the Premier and Opposition Leader.

7. Stay in touch. Sign up for Cherish Life e-newsletters, if you don't already receive them, at www.cherishlife.org.au a lot of time-critical information is communicated this way.

Any questions at all, please call the Cherish Life office on (07) 3871 2445

QLD STATE HEALTH BUDGET \$23 BILLION

ADDITIONAL PALLIATIVE CARE FUNDING REQUIRED \$275 MILLION PER ANNUM

FUNDING REQUIRED PER ANNUM TO PROVIDE PALLIATIVE CARE TO ALL QUEENSLANDERS APPROX \$400 MILLION PER ANNUM

THE COST OF 3 KM OF MOTORWAY UPGRADE \$400 MILLION

(SOURCE: [HTTPS://STATEMENTS.QLD.GOV.AU/STATEMENTS/91971](https://statements.qld.gov.au/statements/91971))

QUESTIONS FOR MPs

1. Ask whether they support or oppose the assisted suicide Bill, and how they intend to vote.
2. Ask whether they will support an annual increase in funding to palliative care services of \$275 million per year.
3. Ask if they know 107 of 109 World Medical Associations oppose euthanasia as it isn't a medical treatment, and considered dangerous.
4. Ask them whether they know that the abortion rate blew out when the Labor Government legalised abortion to birth in 2018, and whether they understand that the suicide rate is likely to blow out if this law passes.
5. Ask how introducing assisted suicide legislation fits with government targets to halve suicide rates by 2026.
6. Ask how assisted suicide is compatible with the priority of protecting the elderly or vulnerable established under COVID19.
7. Ask if it is fair to force doctors with a conscientious objection to euthanasia to refer for assisted suicide or euthanasia.
8. Ask if it is fair to deliver lethal assisted suicide substances to regional and remote areas which have no palliative care.
9. Ask if they know providing palliative care to all Queenslanders each year costs about the same as 3 kilometres of motorway upgrade.
10. Ask why health and aged care providers opposed to assisted suicide and euthanasia will be forced to allow it on their premises.
11. Ask them to reject the Bill, and support any amendments that would make the Bill less dangerous.

Please remember to thank the MP for their time and be willing to listen to their concerns if any. It seems a number of MPs have had a loved one die in pain which is leading some to believe legalising euthanasia is "compassionate", but we know that intentional killing is the opposite of compassion and that shocking palliative care deficits in Queensland have tragically meant some Queenslanders have died in pain when they should not have. It's important we continue to stand for life, speaking the truth - in love - understanding it is a delicate topic.



PLEASE STAND WITH THE MEDICAL EXPERTS, PRIVATE & CHRISTIAN HOSPITALS, AGED CARE FACILITIES & HOSPICES, CHURCHES, INDIGENOUS GROUPS, MULTICULTURAL GROUPS, DISABILITY GROUPS & ELDER ABUSE PREVENTION ADVOCATES IN OPPOSING THIS LEGISLATION.

PALLIATIVE CARE IN QUEENSLAND

• Palliative Care Australia states on their website: "Palliative care is high quality health care and support for people living with a life-limiting illness and their families. Palliative care helps people to live as well as they can by managing pain and symptoms to ensure their quality of life is maintained as the illness progresses. Palliative care identifies and treats symptoms and issues associated with life-limiting illness which may be physical, emotional, spiritual or social. Palliative care is a family-centred model of care, meaning that family and carers can also receive practical and emotional support."

• Palliative care is a medical specialty - graduate doctors study full-time for at least another four years to become palliative care specialists.

• According to Palliative Care Queensland, there is a palliative care funding shortfall of \$275 million per year in Queensland. The terrible deficit is most pronounced in regional Queensland.

• Some Queenslanders in regional or rural areas have no access to palliative care specialists at all.

• The Australian and New Zealand Society for Palliative Medicine and the Australian Medical Association do not support euthanasia and assisted suicide.

• Evidence provided to a Queensland Parliamentary Committee back in 2013 indicated there was significant unmet need for palliative care in Queensland and this gap was continuing to grow¹.

• In 2013 the Health Department's own reports admitted Queensland palliative care services were already stretched, with referrals to services increasing annually by 20 per cent while funding was only expected to increase by an annual 12.9 percent².

• More recent reports reveal only a 5.6% funding increase between 2013/4 and 2019³.

• A 2016 review of the National Palliative Care Strategy found that there are significant barriers to access to palliative care services for a number of people within the population, particularly for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples⁴.

• As at 2018 Queensland had approximately 49 FTE palliative care specialists for the state⁵. To meet Palliative Care Queensland's recommendation of 2 FTE specialist palliative medicine physicians per 100,000 population, Queensland would need 104 full-time equivalent palliative care doctors.

• A 2019 QUT report estimated that between 51,000 to 71,000 of the total population in Queensland require palliative care services. For people over 65 years old, between 52,000 and 57,000 would require palliative care services⁶.

• Queensland ranks low among the other states for the number of publicly funded in-patient palliative care beds per capita, and though efforts are being made in digital/telehealth to connect specialist palliative care to regional and remote areas, face to face access is significantly limited. For example, the city of

Mackay with a population of 134,000 has no specialist palliative care physician⁷.

• There are only 134 dedicated palliative care beds in Queensland.

• Of the 49 recommendations made in Victoria's inquiry into end of life choices, 30 related to the improvement of palliative care funding and access, and only a single recommendation related to the introduction of assisted suicide. Palliative Care Victoria requested an additional \$65 million per annum to implement the recommendations, but it received less than half this amount. The Victorian state government only committed an extra \$71.9 million, over a 4 year period, and only after the euthanasia and assisted suicide legislation had been passed⁸.

• 105 of Australia's 148 palliative medicine specialists (70% of the profession) wrote an open letter in 2017 to Victorian and NSW MPs, saying that euthanasia advocates "actively and deliberately undermine" public confidence in palliative care⁹.

• Current Australian data indicates that no more than 2 in every 100 palliative care patients would be in moderate or severe pain at the end of life. In these unusual cases where when all other methods of palliation for pain and other symptoms are inadequate, and if

the patient agrees, palliative sedation therapy is available to provide adequate relief of suffering⁹.

• The United Kingdom palliative care services are ranked best in the world, and the UK Parliament has rejected euthanasia and assisted suicide legislation six times between 1997 and 2016¹⁰.



REFERENCES

- 1 AMA Queensland's Health Vision Part Five: Care at the End of Life
- 2 Health and Community Services Committee, Palliative and Community Care in Queensland: towards person-centred care, Queensland Parliament, May 2013
- 3 Queensland Health Palliative Care Services Review – Key Findings March 2019; page 21. Increase of 5.6% cited is for Hospital and Health Services (HHS) Activity Based Funding for palliative care
- 4 [http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/content/EF57056BDB047E2FCA257BF000206168/\\$File/Evaluation%20of%20the%20National%20Palliative%20Care%20Strategy%202010%20Final%20Report.pdf](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/content/EF57056BDB047E2FCA257BF000206168/$File/Evaluation%20of%20the%20National%20Palliative%20Care%20Strategy%202010%20Final%20Report.pdf)
- 5 National Health Workforce Data Set 2017
- 6 QUT (2019) Palliative care services review: Commissioned external literature review
- 7 Palliative Care Queensland Submission to the Parliamentary Health Committee Inquiry 2019
- 8 https://www.no euthanasia.org.au/national_palliative_care_week_2019
- 9 https://www.no euthanasia.org.au/letter_members_parliament_australian_palliative_professionals
- 10 "How We Die: A View from Palliative Care" by Michael Ashby in QUT Law Review, Volume 16, Issue 1, pp 5-21.

LABOR TRIES TO FOOL THE PUBLIC THAT 'VOLUNTARY ASSISTED DYING' IS NOT SUICIDE

Under the proposed law the Government intends to redefine suicide and would exempt doctors and nurses from homicide (the crime of murder) for killing their patient, all under the guise of "voluntary assisted dying".

The Queensland Law Reform Commission Report Summary on the treacherous Bill titled "A Legal Framework for Voluntary Assisted Dying" states: "As the law currently stands, the self-administration of a substance to kill oneself, and which results in death is suicide. Persons, including health practitioners, who assist that process of self-administration commit the offence of aiding suicide. Depending on the circumstances, a person who administers the substance at the person's request may commit the offence of murder or manslaughter.... Voluntary assisted dying legislation alters that law in defined circumstances... Voluntary assisted dying laws provide that someone who ends their life in accordance with the process does not commit suicide and the health practitioners who assisted them to die are not liable for homicide or the crime of assisting suicide."

The report reiterates this by declaring: "If the assistance is authorised by legislation, then, in law, the death is not treated as a suicide and the health practitioner is not treated as having assisted a suicide."

It is particularly frightening that a government would legislate such a lie, denying that this is either suicide if the patient drinks a poison cocktail, or manslaughter or murder if the doctor or nurse administers the lethal injection. Although, arguably it's not a surprise that a government which is a proponent of killing is also a proponent of lies.

HELPFUL WEBSITES

Australian Care Alliance

www.australiancarealliance.org.au

Hope / No Euthanasia

www.no euthanasia.org.au

Catholic Health's campaign website

www.anotheroption.com.au

Cherish Life

www.cherishlife.org.au



HOW TO WRITE A LETTER TO THE EDITOR OF A NEWSPAPER

Getting a letter to the editor published is extremely effective; politicians take notice, particularly if it's written from someone in their electorate. It may just be the thing to tip a wavering MP to voting against the Bill, or move a staunch supporter of the legislation to vote for amendments which would soften the severity of the proposed law.

Here are the golden rules for writing a letter to the editor of a newspaper:

- The letter must address a column or article that appeared in the newspaper that day.
- Your letters must be no more than 250 words long, but even shorter is better. Shorter letters have a higher publication rate.
- Your letter must be signed off with full name, full address and phone number. If it gets published it will only contain your name and suburb. If you are a medical doctor please be sure to include Dr before your name.
- Letters must be emailed to the newspaper no later than 1pm on the same day the letter or article you are referring to appeared in the paper, or in the case of responding to a Sunday Mail story the following Wednesday.
- Try to use some of the arguments against euthanasia contained in this newsletter. Wording it your own way if you like is probably best.

Email addresses for sending in letters to the editor:

The Courier-Mail email: letters@couriermail.com.au

The Sunday Mail email: yournews@thesundaymail.com.au

The Australian email: letters@theaustralian.com.au

Cairns Post email: letters@cairnspost.com.au

Townsville Bulletin email: letters@townsvillebulletin.com.au

The Gold Coast Bulletin email: letters@goldcoast.com.au

Please call your local papers too to get their email addresses for their letters editor.



Medics Know Best

THE self-congratulatory opinion piece by activist Professors White and Willmott (C-M, 31 May) raised many more concerns than it allayed.

Firstly, they are not doctors, but legal academics. Like most of the politicians who support this dangerous Bill, they haven't studied for decades to keep people alive nor will they be expected to do the killing, as this will be shoved on to the medical profession.

Indeed, the AMA, the Nurses Professional Association of Queensland and the World Medical Association are all opposed to euthanasia of any kind. In fact, a staggering 107 of the World Medical Association's 109 constituent national medical associations oppose euthanasia and assisted suicide.

Secondly, they boast that institutions with a conscientious

objection to assisted suicide will still be forced to be complicit with euthanasia. This is outrageous, as every hospital, hospice or nursing home should have the right to a full conscientious objection, as well as doctors and nurses. This freedom is a basic democratic right.

Finally, their talk of equity is absurd. Because of significant underfunding, there would be no equitable access to palliative care compared to assisted suicide if this woeful Bill were to pass.

Lawyers and politicians alike should be listening to the resounding NO from the medical community, instead of trying to impose on us the social ideology du jour - which is actually to kill people.

Dr Donna Purcell, Toowoomba
1 June, 2021

The Courier-Mail

Questions over proposed voluntary assisted dying law

WENDY Bonython, in her opinion piece (C-M, May 28), talks about safeguards of multiple medical practitioners in Queensland Labor's proposed euthanasia law. My understanding of the proposed law is the need for a decision to be made by two doctors who may have little or no experience of

palliative care and minimal specialised knowledge of the patient's condition, and the need to conscript an unsuspecting rural nurse to carry out the euthanasia act, presumably by administering a lethal drink, which, possibly, might not be lethal. Is the Royal Flying Doctor going to be summoned to

complete the deed?

This is the kind of bizarre scenario that might occur under Labor's plan for rural Queensland, when properly funded palliative care would be sufficient and so much better for all concerned.

Dr Tim Coyle, Earlville
29 May, 2021

The Courier-Mail

4,000 QUEENSLANDERS MARCHED FOR LIFE IN MAY

4,000 Queenslanders gathered at Speakers' Corner, outside Parliament House on Saturday 8 May to raise their voice for the voiceless and vulnerable.

We protested the Queensland Labor Government's push to legalise assisted suicide, as well as petitioning the government for greater investment into palliative care services. We also protested the 58% increase in abortions in Queensland resulting from the Queensland Labor Government legalising abortion to birth in 2018, and we petitioned the federal government to allow George Christensen's Human Rights (Children Born Alive) Protection Bill 2021 to go to a vote this term of government.

As a WONDERFUL unexpected bonus Senator Matt Canavan announced he will be presenting a Bill to federal parliament which would prohibit a Medicare rebate on abortion for sex-selective reasons! We are backing this 100%! (We will be sharing more on this as well as the Children Born Alive Bill in future communications).

Speeches against assisted suicide and for greater palliative care included:

Dr Tim Coyle, Cherish Life Cairns President shared valuable insights about the Government's push for euthanasia: "Many doctors have contacted me recently and raised their concerns that if Queensland Labor pass their euthanasia permit law, they will be making suicide, or assisted suicide if you like, a standard medical procedure.. How crazy is that? Making suicide or assisted suicide a medical procedure? What a disaster! How can you on the one hand work to prevent suicide, and on the other hand

suicide has become a legal medical procedure assisted by doctors or nurses?.. And how deceitful to use phrases like assisted dying [to make] euthanasia or deliberate killing sound like palliative care."

Senator Amanda Stoker, Assistant Attorney-General, Assistant Minister for Women: "I have a message for those people [who are opposed to us] it's a message of love and a message of care. We

are not here to judge you or your actions or beliefs or your choices. Far from it. That's not our place and it's not our intent. We would speak up for you and help you if it were your parents who didn't feel like they could go on. We will defend you, your humanity and your dignity, should you be facing illness or the tyranny of age could find yourself in the type of pain that makes you want to end it all. And we will value your unique gifts, the joy you bring, even if you are challenged by disability... And if we are serious about providing dignity for people

facing the end of their lives, then the answer isn't euthanasia. It's a commitment to investing in palliative care, to ease suffering without extending life... An abundance of research shows that effective palliative care makes all the difference. Both for the person who is ill and for the experience of the family they are leaving behind."

Senator Matt Canavan: "We have another fight here to make sure these euthanasia laws don't come in. We fought and defeated those in Canberra a few years ago, with many good people in the Labor Party supporting us, so we need to keep cultivating those [relationships with Labor MPs] and talk to your Labor friends, because we'll need their support to defeat this Bill here in this [Queensland] parliament. Because when you think about it, the people pushing these euthanasia Bills often say they want to give people the 'right to choose'.... But really what some of them are saying is they want people to choose [euthanasia] so they don't have to provide [palliative care]. Because we've heard about the inadequate funding of palliative care services in his state, particularly in my area - Rockhampton in Central Queensland. Let's get that right... let's give people the choice to die with dignity in a proper palliative care home and fund that... As I said we won this fight in Canberra and we can win this fight in Brisbane."

The March was reported on the ABC, Channel 7 ([watch HERE](#)), Channel 9 and Sky News, as well in The Courier-Mail, Brisbane Times and The Australian.

A time lapse of the march can be watched [HERE](#).

Videos of all the speeches can be accessed at our YouTube channel [HERE](#).



March for Life Brisbane, 8 May 2021, speakers (L-R): George Christensen MP, Senator Amanda Stoker, Mark Robinson MP, Martyn Iles (MD of the ACL), Teeshan Johnson, (Cherish Life) and Senator Matt Canavan. (Dr Tim Coyle, Cherish Life Cairns branch president, was also a speaker but not in the photo.)



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