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*Real care,
love and
compassion*

– the alternative to euthanasia



Real care, love and compassion – the alternative to euthanasia

Compassion for the suffering and dying is something which unites us all. Many of us have been with friends or family as they face the fear and uncertainty of a serious illness. Our heart goes out to them and we wish only the best for them.

Some propose euthanasia or assisted suicide as a compassionate choice for people who are facing such illness. But this view is unwise and dangerous and makes the most vulnerable less safe at the last chapter of their lives. Killing people is wrong, and this principle is central to our law.

We ask you to consider the following myths and facts outlining why euthanasia, or government authorised killing, is never the best expression of compassion.

“Killing people is wrong, and this principle is central to our law.”

Myth 1: Euthanasia can be legislated for safely

Fact: Euthanasia or assisted suicide can never be safe. Because terminally ill people are vulnerable to powerful feelings of fear, depression, loneliness, not wanting to be a burden, and even to coercion from family members, no law can adequately protect them from succumbing to euthanasia if it is available.

Myth 2: Dying with dignity

Fact: Our dignity is not dependent on our usefulness or health, but simply on our humanity. Our society should be judged by how well we care for the sick and vulnerable. Everyone should be loved, supported and cared for until they die.

Myth 3: Euthanasia is an issue of personal freedom and choice

Fact: Euthanasia always involves a second person and is therefore a public act with public impacts. One person aiding the death of another is a matter of significant public concern because it can lead to abuse, exploitation and the loss of care for vulnerable people including the disabled and the elderly.

Myth 4: It's worked well in other places

Fact: The 18 overseas models are not working well with numerous examples of so-called safeguards failing badly and criteria being gradually expanded. The Victorian scheme has only been in operation since June 2019 and already there has been a rapid rise in the incidence of euthanasia and requests for expansion. Most places in the world have not legalised assisted suicide.

Myth 5: Euthanasia should be legalised because polls support it

Fact: Parliaments don't legislate on opinion polls alone. Parliaments should legislate in favour of the common good, to endorse responsible action and to protect the vulnerable, whose voices and concerns are often not heard in opinion polls.



Myth 6: Euthanasia is necessary to relieve pain

Fact: Good palliative care, not killing, is the answer to relieving pain for the dying. Well-resourced palliative care gives people the ability not only to live well in their illness, but to die well too, “free from pain, in the place of their choice, with people they wish to be present, and above all, with dignity” (Palliative Care Australia). Many families speak of palliative care as providing very precious time with their loved one and a period in which their loved one made peace with others and their lives.

What can I do?

Talk and write to your friends, family, work colleagues and Members of Parliament about the dangers of euthanasia for our society, and put forward the alternative pathway of good, readily available palliative care, love and compassion.

“Compassion for the suffering and dying is something which unites us all.”