

History: This message has been replied to.

Inquiry Name: Inquiry into End of Life Choices

Mr Robert Gunter

[REDACTED]

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**SUBMISSION CONTENT:**

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I was a medical practitioner for 55 years. I am now retired and no longer am a registered medical practitioner. For the last 35 years I practised as a consultant psychiatrist. Prior to that most of my work was in general practice.

At a personal level, I suffer from a slowly progressive disease which, if I live long enough, can be reasonably expected to incapacitate me such that I shall no longer be able to walk, stand, and may experience loss of bladder and bowel control. If I ever do get to this stage and if I wish to do so because my life has become unbearable for me I should like to be able to end my life without breaking the law either for myself or for anyone else.

At a more general level in relation to other people, I consider that, as a fundamental right, people who suffer from a relentless and terminal medical condition and for whom there is no useful medical treatment, and so-called palliative care is insufficiently beneficial, should have the same right to end their life when and how they choose without breaking any laws affecting either themselves or other people. In no way am I suggesting that palliative care does not have a lot to offer the terminally ill. At times I have had the impression that the palliative care people consider that they can satisfactorily help anyone and everyone to have a reasonably pain free and peaceful death. My experiences as a medical practitioner tell me that there is never any management that will be effective and appropriate for 100% of people.