

Legislative change to allow assisted suicide or euthanasia would be completely detrimental to our society.

Our society needs easy access to palliative care - ***under 50% of people who desire palliative care can access it*** (taken from a speech by Dr Rachel Carling-Jenkins MLC to the Legislative Council on 14 April 2015).

Legalised euthanasia and assisted suicide will mean that certain lives will be deemed 'not worth living'. Not necessarily by the persons themselves but by those around them – family, friends, doctors, nurses. Many sick, disabled or elderly people will feel like they are a burden on others. Because of this, they may even feel like have no right ***to want*** to live. What kind of a society will do this to people?

The point that I am trying to make is that legalised suicide and euthanasia will affect the way that society values life in general – or should I say the way that society will gradually devalue life. Every life is unique and irreplaceable – including the sick, disabled and elderly. If sacrifices (including financial ones) need to be made to look after them then so be it.

Where will all of this end? Well, we can look at how it has unfolded in the Netherlands and Belgium – the option of euthanasia has been extended to children and those with mental health issues. So children, who still rely on their parents to decide what they're having for dinner that night and what movies they're allowed to watch on television – have been given the power to end their lives. Simply unbelievable. Additionally, those who struggle in their minds with *diagnosable illnesses* are allowed to make the decision (using that same struggling mind) to end it all.

There's no use in saying that it will not be taken that far in this country. It can and will happen – because we've already seen it played out in real life. The slippery slope argument wins out in the end, despite any safety measures in place. Those who make the decision now to legalise will ultimately be responsible for it.

I urge you to place ***the undeniable value of human life*** at the ***top of the priority list*** when making this decision. It is not just about individuals making a choice for themselves – it will inevitably impact on the social conscience of society in a detrimental way.