

RECEIVED 7 JULY 2015

Alan Shell


LILIAN TOPIC, SECRETARY, LEGAL & SOCIAL ISSUES COMMITTEE

SUBMISSION - END OF LIFE CHOICES

Unlike earlier times where a disease at the end of life was often quick and deadly, these days diseases can cause us to linger terribly. Despite the excellent work of palliative care specialists it is generally accepted some 25 per cent of terminal cancer patients suffer intolerably from pain, nausea and helplessness

ADVANCE HEALTHCARE DIRECTIVES

Unfortunately there is an hiatus between the Medical Treatment Act 1988 which I understand mandates medical practitioners to maintain life and a patient's Advance Healthcare Directive.

An Advance Healthcare Directive includes provision for the patient's doctor to declare the patient is of sound mind. Advance Directives need legal recognition and this should be provided as soon as is practical

PEACEFUL LIFE EXIT

On the broader issue it should be the right of any person having a terminal illness and in the face of incurable intolerable suffering to seek medical assistance to exit life. Every survey has shown that over 70 per cent of Australians support the right in such circumstances so as to be able to say goodbye to loved ones and peacefully exit life. It seems unconscionable that persons with religious or ethical views opposing this right can politically manoeuvre to prevent the passing of the necessary legislation.

Signed 

Alan Shell