

**From:** [Inquiry into End of Life Choices POV eSubmission Form](#)  
**To:** [LSIC](#)  
**Subject:** New Submission to Inquiry into End of Life Choices  
**Date:** Thursday, 9 July 2015 6:34:10 PM

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Inquiry Name: Inquiry into End of Life Choices

Mr Geoffrey Hookey  
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## **SUBMISSION CONTENT:**

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### LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL STANDING COMMITTEE SUBMISSION TO INQUIRY INTO END OF LIFE CHOICES

From Geoffrey Graham Hookey

Late on the night of 26th November 2014, my 86 year old wife, Dorothy Ellen Hookey, took herself to bed and all alone consumed a lethal dose of pentobarbitone, her suicide note stated that she could no longer bear the pain of her illness, that this was her decision alone, and that no other person had assisted her with this decision or her action.

She was a widely travelled intelligent woman with a diverse range of interests across many fields, such as literature, music, art, history, and science. Her lifelong devotion to gardening had given her an encyclopaedic knowledge of plants and their care.

In her later years she had been suffering severe arthritic pain in her hands and more particularly in her hip, which had a congenital conditional deteriorating with her age. In the weeks preceding her death this had reached unbearable levels. Continual increases in pain killers and latterly in the drug Fentanyl were not easing the pain, and her doctor was of the opinion that the severity of her condition was such, that they would never be able to eliminate it completely.

As a member of Exit International for many years, she was very vocal espousing the right of an individual to be permitted to die with dignity at a time and place of their own choosing, and had canvassed and received approval from her family to pursue such a course should circumstances require.

At approximately 3.00 am, I observed her light still on and entered the room to put her to bed. In the belief that she had again fallen asleep whilst reading.

Dorothy was sitting up in bed with book and glasses by her side apparently asleep. From that moment the lives of our family have changed irrevocably.

Following the pandemonium which ensued in the hours after calling Triple O the arrival of ambulance personnel and the removal of Dorothy's body by the State Undertaker, I had time to examine the scene and discovered the suicide note.

The police were then notified, and numerous officers arrived at the house within a few minutes. In the house at the time of her death with me were my daughter,

assisting with her care, and one son on a regular visit to us. In the course of the police investigation all three of us have been subject to the most rigorous and lengthy interrogation on several occasions, with the objective to see if any one of us aided or abetted Dorothy in her suicide. Based on the attitude of the police, we have been advised by our Senior Counsel to make no further statements to them unless charges are laid.

Some 3 months later in early March a search warrant was executed on my home seeking "computer, tablet, computer storage median," Peaceful Pill" handbook, any other item or thing that may provide evidence". As a result of such search both of our computers and equipment were seized. The Senior Officer informing me that the return of these could take up to 12 months.

Can you imagine the mental anguish, and uncertainty being endured by our family over the last 8 months? Not only were we denied the right to be with our beloved wife and mother in the final moments of her life, but we are still awaiting resolution of the police investigation.

The Coroner's office have advised us that they cannot complete their findings until they receive the final police report.

It is a dreadful indictment of our social system, that an uncaring government can enact legislation designed not to punish those who succeed in making a rational and considered end of life decision, but will exact its revenge instead, by ensuring that those persons who do, know that they must do it alone, and without the presence at that crucial time of their loved ones. Should they do otherwise, they run the very real risk that criminal proceedings will be taken against them.

This punitive inhumane enactment should not be allowed to continue. Our parliament should enact responsible legislation to ensure that those rational persons who have made a reasoned end of life choice, can do so in humane and loving circumstances.

I would greatly appreciate the opportunity to appear in person before this enquiry.

Geoffrey Graham Hookey. 9th July 2015

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File1:

File2:

File3: