

From: [Inquiry into End of Life Choices POV eSubmission Form](#)
To: [LSIC](#)
Subject: New Submission to Inquiry into End of Life Choices
Date: Tuesday, 14 July 2015 4:26:43 PM

Inquiry Name: Inquiry into End of Life Choices

Ms Patricia de Moulpied
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

SUBMISSION CONTENT:

--

I would like to make a submission to the Inquiry into End of Life Choices. My first observation would be that at the moment there are not many legal choices. One can suffer excruciating physical and/or existential pain when confronting a terminal illness or burdensome old age, or one can be sedated and spend one's final days unconscious, causing great distress to one's loved ones. This must change.

Quite a few jurisdictions overseas, including Canada, several US states, The Netherlands and Switzerland allow people to decide to end their lives when they become unbearable and death is inevitable. There is no evidence that this option is being abused, in fact for many terminally ill people the mere knowledge that assisted dying is possible eases their anxiety to the extent that they do not use this assistance in the end.

It is time for Victoria to join the more enlightened jurisdictions and give people the right to end their lives under medical supervision when they decide their situation is unbearable. As things now stand, many people are driven to distressing acts of suicide (as has been witnessed in the retirement village where my mother-in-law resides), which means they not only have to suffer a lonely death, but their next of kin are deeply traumatised. This is not good enough. It is possible to put in sufficient safe-guards so that the opportunity will not be abused, as has been shown elsewhere.

However, these safe-guards must still allow for those who can no longer communicate to make end-of-life choices. People who have been left unconscious through disease or injury, or who have dementia, must still be able to die with dignity under their own terms. For this reason, advance health care directives must be given legal standing under any changes to legislation. As I personally have a daunting family history of Alzheimer's disease, my greatest dread is not dying, but being left demented in a nursing home for years as has happened to several members of my family. Although I have lodged my advanced health care directives with many medical practitioners, I must constantly live with the knowledge that my wish to have all life prolonging medical intervention

withdrawn should I develop dementia (the only option possible under current legislation) can legally be ignored. This must also change.

--

File1:

File2:

File3: