


From: 
To: [LSIC](#)
Subject: End of life choices - submission
Date: Wednesday, 22 July 2015 2:09:14 PM

To Whom It May Concern

When I was a young girl my grandmother was diagnosed with inoperable stomach and bowel cancer and given a month to live but she lingered on for eighteen months. The thing that has stuck in my mind even to this day was when the family doctor came out of grandma's room with tears in his eyes and told my mother there was nothing he could do for her (and stay within the law). So she rotted away in her bed while the putrefying smell pervaded the whole house. This was no way for a proud woman to end her days.

Later I lost my father at age sixty-one and then my husband aged forty-two to the same disease. They died slow lingering deaths.

Both men knew and feared what was in store for them towards the end of their life as they had seen others suffer the same fate. Both men were also law abiding citizens and as such had no choice but to suffer the indignity of having all of their bodily functions attended to by other people, be in constant pain despite being given massive amounts of opiates (legally), have their bodies waste away and discolour just waiting for it all to be over. And this is dying with dignity?

Please let us stop this needless suffering; not only those whose fate is already written but those who are left behind. Sometimes I think it is worse for those who have to watch the agony and distress of a loved one dying slowly and painfully, then have to live with that memory forever.

My grandmother, father and husband deserved a painless and dignified death at a time of their choosing. Obviously what they got was just the opposite.

Some opponents of voluntary euthanasia say that good palliative care is all that is required to have a dignified death. They obviously have never been close to and cared for a loved one in that situation. Being drugged into a stupor and losing control over bodily functions is not dignified. Others are anti-euthanasia on religious grounds. The problem with the religious argument is that I don't share their beliefs and have no dogma I can cling to if I find myself with zero quality of

life.

Surely as civilised people supposedly living in a democratic society, we can get past the thinking of the middle ages and allow these people the freedom of choice in their hour of greatest need. It seems quite perverse that in a society that extols the virtue of euthanasia for our terminally ill pets but then denies that same compassion for our family and friends.

As you may have gathered, I am a staunch believer in the rights of the individual and the greatest right that an individual can have is the right to choose the time and place of their death free from interference from church or state.

Yours sincerely

Shirley Jeffries

