

To the Victorian Parliament,

These are my circumstances:

- I have multiple conditions, which do not fit protocols and my body does not tolerate medication. I have end stage lung disease though the gut problem is more likely to kill me. I am steadily losing weight.

- I live with level 7 -10 pain which cannot be relieved as the medication so far offered, I either react to, have severe side effects or it exacerbates another condition. I was told by Caristas Christi when I was an inpatient there that some people's pain cannot be relieved and I am one of them. And I was assured the pain will increase. The various humiliations the gut inflicts on me will increase. As will bladder problems. Also the skin problems will become more severe as I lose more and more weight.

- My care requires a team approach the medical profession is unable to provide.

- The medical profession is not capable of dealing with conditions that cannot be fixed. The bullying culture exposed in Four Corners extends to patients whose body like mine will not fit into their boxes.

- Because of food intolerances most hospitals cannot even feed me as they have outsourced catering.

- I have chemical sensitivities which make hospitals / nursing homes intolerable.

- I am incontinent.

- Eastern Palliative Care have refused to help me twice because I cannot be promise that I will be dead in three months though doctors give me less than 12 months but most of all care is denied me because I do not have cancer.

- I have completed a refusal of medical treatment form / Advance Care Planning Document which it would seem that Box Hill Hospital last year ignored. And when the crisis came they did not even contact my husband who is my medical power of attorney but sent me off to 'resus' so i am still here. My medical history is somewhat vague on what occurred. I was not conscious. The doctor apologised to me the next morning saying he felt he had not done what I wanted which was to be allowed to go quietly.

They did have all the documentation and I had talked to them on what I wanted when I came into Emergency that day.

So Victoria needs statutory recognition of Advance Care Directives. (ACDs) Also known as living wills.

- I am also a carer supposedly though I can no longer really care for myself.

- My life is intolerable. If I left my cats in such pain, in such a condition I would in court for neglect and cruelty but because I am a human being it is legal to leave me like this. And I believe this must change. I believe God would not wish what I must live day upon day, night upon night on anyone. God is love.

- I am now 60 years old. I want the peace of mind that the legal option of voluntary euthanasia would give me NOW as my dying process becomes more and more awful. It would be such a relief. Not just to me but to my family who have so often to watch me crying or screaming with pain. Going to Emergency they simply say they do not know what to do, that I am at risk of further infection if admitted so I am sent home in even more pain.

- It is my life, or what is meant to pass as life, and I believe I should have the right to say that I have had enough. Nearly five years of intense suffering with no relief is more than God asks of me.

- I do not believe that a loving God would want us to endure such unnecessary suffering at the end of life. I am only here because doctors would not let me die (yet ironically will provide no care to make

life bearable). I come in the too hard basket,

- It would give me some comfort, to know that I could have a doctor who would be willing to help me to die at my request.

- I am one of the majority of Christians in Australia who believe terminally ill patients should be able to choose an assisted death as part of good palliative care especially when there is no other care that can be given.

- If doctors will not let us die, will not allow the natural process, than we must make the choice. I do not believe this is suicide or killing. I want to die as my past cats have died, with loving hands and voices around them, without pain... leaving a good memory. The loss yes is there with assisted death but there is a chance to say goodbye properly. To have the memory of the death as one of love. This is what my family wants. My daughter studies in the US. She would like to be with me when I die.

As one person said to me one should not have to die sitting on a bedpan.

Please allow mercy. God is a God of mercy, so please allow His mercy to be enacted. This is all I ask

Many thanks

Christine Hamann

You might also be interested in this reply from Victorian Palliative Care. This is typical of the type of response I receive when seeking care.

Dear Christine

Thank you for your email.

I am sorry that we are unable to assist with care or support. We are a small office and our focus is on providing information and connecting people to services that have staff with the expertise and capacity to provide ongoing care and support.

We wish you well and hope you understand why we are not able to provide further assistance.

Kind regards,

Palliative Care Victoria....