

From: Graham [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 27 July 2015 10:46 PM
To: LSIC
Subject: End of Life Inquiry

As a general practitioner with 40 years experience in medical care I write to your inquiry to support palliative care and oppose euthanasia and physician assisted suicide.

Suicide is already a huge problem for our society including youth suicide. If the government legalizes physician assisted suicide, it gives the loud message to the community that if the struggle is too great then the solution is to die. This will only increase the the problem of suicide in pir communities.

Euthanasia is against the moral code of all reputable medical ethics since the time of Hippocrates. To legalize the killing of patients places he doctor in a compromised position. Currently he is authorized to care for and not to willfully harm the patient. Death is the ultimate irreversible harm.

Medically it is very unclear as to how to define a terminal illness. Everyone is going to die. Doctors are notoriously wrong in guessing how long a patient with a serious illness is going to live. The speed of medical developments means that the treatments available are rapidly changing and improving. Tomorrow may well find better solutions to the challenges of today.

Good palliative care can address the issues of pain and anxiety that are so commonly feared in people with a terminal illness.

Promoting euthanasia and physician assisted suicide will denigrate and remove resources from this very valuable part of modern medicine.

The vulnerable and weak are most endangered by legislation to allow one group i.e. doctors to legally kill another group i.e. terminally ill patients. Experience in Europe shows that euthanasia has been used to get rid of unwanted groups in society, to the detriment of all.

For the sake of people do not think that caring for people means killing them. Caring for people means doctors being there for them and helping them through all the stages of life including the terminal stage with compassion and respect.

Yours faithfully

Dr Graham Toohill

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