

From: Peter Whitehead  
To: LSIC  
Subject: Right to end-of-life choices  
Date: 30 July 2015

Please accept my submission to the inquiry into end of life choices

I submit that Victorians should have some choices available at the end of their life.

**The only (legal) choice currently available to a Victorian is to refuse medical treatment** – i.e. to take a month or so of additional pain and suffering while starving to death having rejected intravenous feeding.

**The unavailability of legal euthanasia places psychological pressure on severely ill persons to end their life prematurely** – while they still have the physical ability to commit suicide. I am aged 75 and accept death as inevitable. I am not currently ill but am considering early suicide as an option, having observed the pain and suffering of those who left that decision too late. That pain and suffering was compounded in the hospital I was employed in by young RMO's being reluctant to prescribe sufficient morphine to minimise pain 'just in-case I am accused of contributing to death by the lawyers'.

I object to those who would not permit me end of life choice based on their religious beliefs. I do not accept the logic of those beliefs. I accept that they can live and die in the manner they want to; just don't impose that manner on me.

I understand that many don't object to end of life choice but are concerned that the ill or aged will be encouraged by relatives to end their life. Given the wisdom of our legislators and the resources available to them in drafting safeguards I suggest these concerns are unwarranted. The advice of my Dutch relatives is that inappropriate pressure by relatives is not, in practice, of concern in the Netherlands. Further, that there is no mass migration to or the utilisation of the availability of euthanasia. Your committee should have access (by mail or personal travel) to Dutch legislation and related statistics and social commentary.

Thank you for your consideration.

Peter Whitehead

