



New Submission to Inquiry into End of Life Choices
Inquiry into End of Life Choices POV eSubmission Form
To: Isic

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Inquiry Name: Inquiry into End of Life Choices

Mr William Alcock

[REDACTED]

Retired Town Clerk
N/A

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SUBMISSION CONTENT:

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End of Life Care
My Life My Death My Choice

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There are thousands of patients in nursing homes waking up to indefinite confinement not afraid to die but scared stiff of waiting until they die

I am an 90 year old EDA veteran affairs pensioner I recently arrived home from Prince of Wales hospital where I had open heart surgery. I have several other failing parts and I am scared stiff that I may be confined indefinitely in a nursing home suffering from Alzheimer's, dementia, incontinence and the like

I have just had check up from the cardiologist and he said to me you know Bill you were born in 1925 you are past your use by date , your heart has suffered a lot of damage so you must accept the fact that your end is nigh

When the end is nigh it is best to avoid hospital. The health system is geared to actively treating patients and prolonging life not to recognize the dying

There are thousands of patients in hospitals and nursing homes with no quality of life lingering on indefinitely awaiting the blessing of death to release them from their despair

When quality of life is lost and the sufferer is confined to care with Alzheimer's, dementia, incontinence and the like palliative care is definitely not enough

When our pets lose quality of life the vet eases them out in a dignified manner why not humans?

I find it very difficult to believe that anyone with an ounce of compassion can deny those who have lost quality of life be it degeneration or terminal illness the right to make a choice for a dignified and peaceful death provided this has been documented in an advance health care directive whilst of sound mind.

If ever I am unfortunate enough to be placed in the same situation I hope there is a sympathetic doctor around to end my life in a dignified and peaceful manner

In light of the Governments unsympathetic attitude I have no option but to direct in my advance health care directive that if I should lose quality of life I do not want any medical treatment that will prolong my life and I do not want any further sustenance or fluid. Although it will take me a few days to die this option is better than the alternative. It would give me great peace of mind if I could get medical assistance to die in a dignified manner if I should lose quality of life.

To give me peace of mind if all else fails I have been able to obtain some Nembutal from china 15 grams in powder form which I have been told to dissolve in water or orange juice drink favorite wine afterwards. Three days before drinking it take 2 tablets of anti-nausea medication. I would like to ensure what I have been sent is genuine and the dose is sufficient to achieve the desired result

It is my firm opinion that enforced prolonged life when quality of life is lost is a fate far worse than death, I fear degeneration far more than I fear death, it is inhumane to leave those who have lost quality of life, whether it be degeneration or terminal illness that leaves them confined in a nursing home indefinitely suffering from dementia, Alzheimer's, incontinence and the like.

Times have changed in my grandparents day there were no nursing homes my parents cared for them at home , the family doctor every other week to check on them issue scripts and when they lost quality of life he asked for a family conference and was given permission to ease them out with analgesics. It was not called euthanasia but rather compassion

My strong belief is the right for everyone to make a choice for euthanasia should they lose quality of life has been influenced by two family occurrences:-

The first a heavy smoker with cancer of the throat deteriorated quickly, I could hear him gasping for breath as I entered the main hospital entrance, he could not communicate, did not recognize anyone and was being fed intravenously' fortunately I was able to persuade a sympathetic doctor to ease him out in a dignified manner

The second a mate who served with me in the second world war who had always expressed the wish not to be confined in a nursing home. The doctor put his arm around him one day in my presence and said to him "Don't you worry Tom when the time comes I will ease you out" This gave Tom great peace of mind, however the time came when Tom had to go in a nursing home and was given medication to stop him wandering at night, crying out and

disturbing other patients. He deteriorated quickly became incontinent bowels and bladder, was bedridden, unable to communicate and did not recognise anyone

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When I approached the doctor for help he said sorry I cannot do anything for him now as all medication in a nursing home has to be documented. Tom was allowed to lie in his bed in this state for 15 months, surely you must agree that this is an extremely cruel fate to impose upon someone who had served his country with distinction

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I would strongly recommend that everyone prepare an advance health care directive and appoint an enduring guardian, so that he/she has the authority to liaise with the doctor in the preparation of a health care management plan when quality of life is lost

The health care management plan should provide that you not be subjected to and intervention or treatment aimed at prolonging life, and that and distressing symptoms (including and caused by lack of food or fluid) are fully controlled by appropriate analgesics or other treatment even though this may shorten life. For those wishing to avoid prolonged confinement in a nursing home and distress to loved ones, I would strongly recommend that they take this action whilst of sound mind

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In conclusion let me make it clear that is not my intention to impose my views on anyone , however I consider that euthanasia should be an option for those who have documented their wishes in an advance health care directive.

Yours Sincerely

Bill Alcock
Port Macquarie
