

ASHWOOD MEDICAL GROUP

448 Warrigal Road, ASHBURTON, VIC. 3147
Telephone: 9885 4494 Fax: 9885 9475

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Lilian Topic

Secretary, Legal & Social Issues Committee
Parliament House
Spring Street
Melbourne VIC 3002

Dear Lilian

I wish to make a submission on "End of Life care and Advanced Care Planning"
I have been in full time General Practice for 48 years with special interests in care of the aged and palliative care.

It would be ideal for people who are facing the end of their life and especially those admitted to a nursing care facility or hospice to sign a directive for end of life care. This procedure is not necessarily welcomed by all people and may be most uncomfortable so to legislate for a compulsory plan would be complex.

I think that the palliative care services in this state are first class especially in dedicated facilities. It can be anticipated with an ageing population that the services will face increased demand. It would be advisable for the government to provide funds for more facilities and for medical training to provide state of the art management of end of life care.

With respect to proposed legislation for euthanasia and physician assisted suicide I firmly believe that this is one track this country should not take. We can work well within the current laws as in fact we have done up to date. It is worth noting that there have been twenty four rejections of proposed bills on this issue in Australian parliaments in recent years. Similar bills have been rejected in the British and Scottish parliaments. We are now seeing the unfortunate slippery slope shamble of Belgium and Holland who have liberalised laws of euthanasia and physician assisted suicide..

I care for elderly and palliative patients in aged care facilities and I want to emphasise that cessation of treatment in the terminally ill or acutely sick patient with a hopeless prognosis is not euthanasia. Furthermore opioid administration does not cause death-patients are very tolerant of opioids used in the dosage required for palliation.

Yours sincerely

Jill Rosenblatt MB BS, FRACGP

20/8/2015

