

From: [REDACTED]
To: [LSIC](#)
Subject: RE: Submission to the Inquiry into the End of Life Choices | Request to withhold submitter's name
Date: Monday, 31 August 2015 2:47:00 PM
Attachments: [Submission to the Victorian Parliament Inquiry Into End of Life Choices.pdf](#)
[ATT00001.txt](#)

To Whom It May Concern,

My submission is conditional upon my name not being published. I request that you withhold my name and contact details from publication in respect of the attached submission. I am requesting this as we have not been able to locate and notify immediate family members of my mother's passing and think that it would be inappropriate and distressful should, by chance, those family members learn of my mother's death via the submissions to this inquiry.

If you are unable to withhold my name and contact details from being published the submission is withdrawn.

If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind Regards,

[REDACTED]
mobile: [REDACTED]

Submission to the Victorian Parliament Inquiry Into End of Life Choices

I have recently watched my previously proud and independent mother suffer a painful and undignified death – suffering that could have been prevented if her wishes of an assisted death could have been fulfilled.

It was not a question of the quality of palliative care – everyone was very caring and as respectful as they could be. It was the slow effects of dehydration – my mother was in such discomfort and almost every touch to her body seemed to cause her pain. The five days and nights were agonizing for both my mother and her family. This was no way to die and certainly not what she wanted.

The commencement of palliative care was not the commencement of her suffering. My mum had been clear that she did not want to live a life where almost every bodily function was now out of her control, where she was constantly in fear of imminent harm due to hallucinations that no longer could be rationalized away nor treated with medication and where she was tired of the aches and pains that racked her body. We had discussed her preferences for end of life care over the ten years that preceded her death. Her preferences and wishes were made when she was living a fulfilling and independent life. She relied on me to help her make those preferences a reality. I am living with the guilt of not being able to do what she wanted.

If I could have legally assisted my mother to die I would have and this doesn't mean that her life was worth less. It means that she had lived a full life and that it was her choice to choose how and when she wanted that life to end. It was cruel to her and those left behind that there was no end of life choice. Her beliefs and wishes could not be respected.

To those who use religious based arguments to reject any right to assisted dying, what right do you have to impose your beliefs on others who do not share those beliefs. What makes your beliefs more important than those who do not believe in the same God/Gods? Legalising assisted dying does not mean that you cannot follow your beliefs – that is the point. You will have a choice and you can choose not to be assisted in your death.

To those who say palliative care makes assisted dying unnecessary, that palliative care provides a supported peaceful death. You may be right in some situations but this is not always the case. I have witnessed a slow, painful death despite good palliative care. Palliative care is not always enough.

To those who argue the floodgates of involuntary euthanasia will open should assisted dying become legal - the reality is that it is not a slippery slope when there are appropriate safeguards. Assisted dying is driven by the patient and there is a difference between in certain limited circumstances allowing a person who asks for death to die with dignity and killing a person who does not choose nor want to die. Have more faith in our medical profession.

Should there be any signs that my life is going to end the same way in which my mother's did, I will have no hesitation in taking my own life earlier than perhaps it would end if assisted dying was a legal option that I could authorise. Without that option I cannot take the risk that I will reach a stage of ill health that would mean that I am no longer able to take action by myself.

Please allow individuals to make a choice as to how we want our life to end when faced with terminal illness.