



Submission To The Legal and Social Issues Committee:

From: Dr.P.J.McCleave,

[REDACTED]

Re "Inquiry into End of Life Choices"

I write this as a medical practitioner of over 50 years standing, with specialist qualifications in medical administration and public health. I have had, and continue to have, daily experience in dealing with the aged and the dying. I was an adviser, and foreword writer, to the first Australian text on death and dying, 'The Way We Let Them Die', by Selwyn Perry, 1973. I submit as follows:

- 1 Euthanasia by disinterest and ageism already exists in Victoria and should be addressed and not expanded. I give a typical example:
 An elderly lady under my care became acutely confused and listless. There are limits as to what one can do in an Aged Care Establishment, and, as she was a well known patient of a Melbourne Public Hospital, I rang the Admitting Officer in Accident/Emergency, to ask could she be seen and assessed. This doctor replied that as she had so many issues in the past, palliate her, and not send her in. I, and the family, disagreed with this, and as she was one of those who had private cover, I sent her to Epworth. She was kept for a number of days, was treated for pneumonia, did well, and on return was able again, to be mobile, and join others at meals, and in the day room. Basically, now, hospitals cannot cope, and there is disinterest if one is 70 years of age, or over. The political class say it's a clinical decision what is decided, not repeatedly facing, that the Public Hospital system, is overloaded, and cannot cope.
- 2 Advocates for euthanasia in general, appear not to have wide practical experience, in ongoing care, for, the aged, infirm and dying. I have never been asked by patient, or relative, to terminate a life. The publicity and hype surrounding this issue, does a disservice to current frail infirm, as it agitates them, and their relatives, and at times raises false suspicion that helpful drugs, are terminating their life not assisting. I consider this a self-serving cruelty by lobbyists with their false -catch cry, of "dying with dignity".
- 3 The question of experience overseas is that established euthanasia is perhaps out of control. I draw attention to an article in The New Yorker; June 22 2015. This established publication is liberal in its journalist endeavours, rather than conservative. The article is named THE DEATH TREATMENT "Should the incurably depressed be euthanized" by Rachel Aviv. I consider committee members should read this article. I am a long time subscriber to this publication, and can forward a copy if the secretariat cannot get access.

[REDACTED]