We support people’s right to make a choice about the way they wish to end their life.

We set out below the following reasons for this.

1. **Palliative care cannot cure all suffering.** There is some suffering that only death can end.

2. **Legalizing medically assisted dying is associated with an improvement in end of life care.** Jurisdictions that have legalized end-of-life choice have seen improvements in palliative care. Seventy-six per cent of Oregon’s physicians reported improving their knowledge of pain medications “somewhat” or “a great deal” after Oregon’s “Dying with Dignity” legislation became law.

3. **Offering medically assisted dying is compassionate.** Family members and medical providers can be deeply traumatized when someone who is suffering greatly begs for relief when none can be provided. As a compassionate society, we need to offer information and choices to individuals and prevent needless suffering.

4. **Banning medically assisted death does not stop people from ending their lives.** Some terminally-ill people travel to Switzerland to receive a medically assisted death, but the cost of this trip, with associated airfare, transport and hotel costs, is likely to run somewhere in the range of $20,000 - $30,000, an amount that is beyond the means of most. Those who choose to end their lives in Australia are left to do so without medical assistance, which can lead to pain and suffering even if the attempt is successful. Others may choose to end their lives violently. This makes their death horrific not only for themselves, but also for their families and for emergency responders. Providing a peaceful means of death will prevent this trauma.

5. **Control gives peace of mind, and sometimes that is all that is needed.** Studies have repeatedly shown that people are healthier when they know they have control over their lives.

If dying Australians had the right to end their lives in Australia at a time of their choosing, they would have greater peace of mind, and might choose to die a natural death.

6. **Medically assisted dying does not compromise the physician-patient relationship.** A study from Oregon found that doctors who opposed the “Dying with Dignity Act” were more than twice as likely to report a patient becoming upset or leaving their practice as a result of their position compared with physicians who supported the “Dying with Dignity Act”.

Jan Kendall and Charles Davis