THE CRUELTY OF PAIN
Edel Wignell

(I am willing to appear at a public hearing.)

Pain daily! Consider living twenty-four hours a day with severe pain. You have tolerated it for years and you can't legally ask for assistance to die.

I have lived with pain for more than 30 years. When I joined Dying with Dignity Victoria more than 20 years ago, about 60% of the population approved of PAD (Physician Assisted Dying). Now public approval has risen to 85%.

The pain started in 1982 in the right hip: referred pain from the lower-back. Gradually arthritis captured almost every joint. In 1994, pain medication was prescribed.

In October 2010, a new, sharp pain arrived in my head - like a volcano ready to erupt. Scans showed that there was nothing wrong with my head and it was pronounced as referred pain from the arthritis in my neck.

When you have a busy and interesting life, it’s possible to ignore pain during the day, but, at night head pain is horrendous. Three or four hours of sleep aren’t enough.

In 2013, I was overtaken by constant exhaustion, weakness, reflux and nausea, and tests showed liver damage, probably caused by long-term ingestion of pain-killers. So, no more pain-killers.

If 85% of the general public agree with PAD, why can’t our politicians make it legal? Perhaps none of them has ever endured pain.

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