

'Assisted Dying'

Assisted Suicide & Voluntary Euthanasia in New Zealand

People on both sides of the debate care about suffering and respect personal choice. Both sides include religious and non-religious people.

'Assisted dying' is illegal because our Crimes Act includes Section 179 against 'aiding and abetting suicide'. The debate is about whether the law should change to allow assisted suicide in some cases.

Like an iceberg, there's more to this issue below the surface.

Assisted Suicide Undermines Suicide Prevention

'Assisted dying' implies that death is an appropriate response to suffering - a dangerous message to vulnerable and young people.

People Request Death For Emotional Reasons

Physical pain is rarely the issue. People usually wish to die due to feelings of depression, grief, meaningless, loneliness or hopelessness; or fear of being disabled, dependent or a burden on others. Such feelings can pass.

Vulnerable People Would Be At Risk

People are at risk of receiving death without consent and of being pressured to request death.

Pressure could come from other people or from society - an expectation to request death to save money and free up resources for young and able-bodied people.

Vulnerable people include those who are elderly, disabled, mentally ill, dependent on others, in abusive relationships, under financial stress, or emotionally vulnerable: dealing with shock, loss, grief or depression. Abuse is often hidden and unreported.

Personal Choice Is An Illusion

Where legal, some people request euthanasia but don't get it. Some never request it, but still get it.

The ultimate choice and control lie with the system and its agents, not with the person who wants to die.

It's About Ending Another Person's Life

The proposed bill would make it legal to help end ANOTHER person's life. (Ending one's life is suicide and not illegal.)

It includes assisted suicide (helping someone get deadly drugs to take) and euthanasia (injecting a person with the drugs).

Safeguards Are Unenforceable

Assisted suicide and euthanasia laws are based on self-reporting. It's up to the person giving the drugs to report whether they have met all the legal requirements. If they didn't, nobody may ever know.

MORE INFORMATION:

www.euthanasiafree.org.nz
0800 4 AROHA (0800 427642)

Authorised by R. Joubert,
14/121A Selwyn Street, Onehunga, Auckland