End of Life Assistance (Scotland) Bill

Lyndsey Stoops

Do you agree a person should be able to request end of life assistance from a registered medical practitioner?

No. No-one has the right to request assisted suicide, nor do they have the right to ask someone else to partake in this, especially a member of the medical profession.

Are you satisfied with the requirements for age and connection with Scotland as set out in the Bill?

No. Scotland has high rates of suicide, and many initiatives are being established to reduce these numbers. It would be paradoxical to also allow assisted suicide. No matter what age you may be, no-one has the right to request aid in killing themselves.

Are you satisfied with the two categories of people who would qualify to be assisted under the terms of the Bill?

No. People who have terminal illness and who are physically incapacitated are vulnerable and under many pressures financially and psychologically (even more so if a bill such as this is passed). Therefore the patient may have “capacity” but may still be influenced.

The Bill outlines a several stage consent and verification process that would be required to be followed for an eligible person to receive end of life assistance. Are you satisfied with this process?

No matter how tight the criteria, the system will be abused.

No person should be lawfully allowed to kill another person.

Do you consider the level and nature of safeguards as set out in the Bill to be appropriate?

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No person should be lawfully allowed to kill another person.

Do you have any other considerations on the Bill not included in answers to the above questions?

Assisted suicide is unnecessary with adequate provision of palliative care, which allows dignity with death.
Assisted suicide expects Medical Practitioners to end life. A Doctor’s job is to promote life, prolong it and improve quality of life.

The bill places the responsibility of ending life into people’s hands, a potentially dangerous thing to do.

As a future doctor I would not be prepared to assist in ending a life in anyway, this goes against the morals of our law, the medical establishment and my own moral standing. I decided to do medical degree to help people live, and help them to live happily and with dignity, not to end life.

**Conclusion**

As a medical student I am a doctor of the future, this bill expects from me something that goes against every reason I chose medicine in the first place.

Through the long and painful last days I seen of my grandfather’s death, I seen the value of the Palliative care team, whom helped him have a comfortable, dignified end of life – even prolonging it enough for me to see him and get to know him that little bit better before he died. To think that opportunity could have been taken away from him (and from me) is horrible.

Please do not make killing legal, even compassion as a reason is not enough, and is still unjustified. Doctor’s must demonstrate beneficence – to do what is in the best interest of their patient, surely this does not mean committing an immoral and irreversible act.

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