End of Life Assistance (Scotland) Bill

Linda Cannon

I wish to give notice of my opposition to the "End of Life Assistance Bill" for the following reasons:

The proposal on assisted suicide has previously been rejected by both the Scottish and Westminster Parliaments, I do not appreciate the same subject matter being covered again, taking both time and resources from elected members each time it is recycled.

The British Medical Association does not support it, nor do other professional medical bodies. (I am a health professional working for the NHS)

The relationship of doctor and patient is one based completely on trust, this proposal will, in my opinion undermine and eventually erode that trust. People will become reluctant to go to their doctor for fear of what they may find out. Certain conditions will become extremely feared eg Parkinson's Disease and other degenerative neurological conditions, people diagnosed with such conditions will made to feel that they will be too much of a burden to their family and the professional care system as their condition progresses. At this point I would highlight the extremely loose descriptive language used in the Bill eg who can define what is "intolerable"?

The care provided by the Hospice system in this country is exemplary and in my opinion is the care which "enables a person to die with dignity and a minimum of distress"

I am not impressed with or proud to be part of a society which would judge the quality of life of those people who are in some degree or another deemed to be dependent on others, a society which feels it needs to give such people a "way out" is surely a society which is saying "We don't wish to care for you". How would such a person be treated ultimately in a society like this? Would they not feel that they had nothing to offer, be somehow dispensible?

I think that this Bill would disadvantage the poor most of all as it will come down to resources in the end and put pressure on those who cannot pay for the care they need to ask for end of life assistance.

Thank you for your attention to these thoughts and protests.

Linda Cannon (Mrs)
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