End of Life Assistance (Scotland) Bill

Zoe McKinstry

Response from concerned medical student in the West of Scotland.

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

No, from not from a registered medical practitioner, or anyone else.

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

No, no-one should be allowed to be killed regardless of age or connection with Scotland.

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

No, the criteria are ambiguous and the safeguards are inadequate.

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, ultimately no number of safeguards or processing would be enough to avoid abuses of the procedure.

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

No, no process or safeguards could ever be sufficient to avoid abuses or unintended outcomes.

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

Yes – please see the following.
As a medical student i want to express serious concerns about Margo MacDonald’s End of Life Assistance (Scotland) Bill.

I hold that this assisted suicide/euthanasia bill is dangerous because;

1. it would put pressure on vulnerable patients and their families; this could result in conflict and uncertainties ultimately compromising care of the patient.
2. There would be unacceptable power given to doctors and put medical practitioners under undue pressure.
3. Financially speaking it would put pressure on health boards to make savings by taking away from funding the ongoing development and provision of high quality palliative care.

Conclusions
I urge you, for the safety and welfare of the people of Scotland and the caring professions, please do not support this Bill. Thank you.

Zoe McKinstry (medical student)
10 May 2010