End of Life Assistance (Scotland) Bill
Dr Neil Harrison

I am writing out of deep concern regarding the above bill. I am currently nearing the end of my training as a general practitioner.

The whole ethos of good medicine is to relieve suffering, treat illness and preserve life. To legalise assisted dying is to legalise killing. For the first time killing will be seen as potentially good treatment rather than harm. The bill would put doctors under pressure legally to go against good medical practice and their own conscience. We wish to give people dignity both in living and in dying. This bill changes the role of doctors and will destroy good doctor-patient relationships which are based on trust.

In conclusion my answers to the following are:

**Do you agree a person should be able to request end of life assistance from a registered medical practitioner?**
No, there should be no laws allowing one person to kill another.

**Are you satisfied with the requirements for age and connection with Scotland as set out in the Bill?**
No, there should be no laws allowing one person to kill another.

**Are you satisfied with the two categories of people who would qualify to be assisted under the terms of the Bill?**
No, there should be no laws allowing one person to kill another.

**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, there should be no laws allowing one person to kill another.

**Do you consider the level & nature of safeguards in the Bill to be appropriate?**
No. Legislation, no matter how detailed, cannot protect vulnerable members of society.

**Any other considerations on the Bill not included in answers to the above?**
Legalising assisted suicide or euthanasia is not only immoral, but also in practice would be dangerous and unnecessary.

I conclude from the above that:

- Doctor assisted dying and euthanasia should not be legalised.
- The proposed bill is fundamentally flawed and would substantially change the way medicine is practised in this country.
- No bill should be taken forward.

Dr Neil Harrison
12 May 2010