End of Life Assistance (Scotland) Bill

Julie A Inglis

I am writing to say that I do not agree that a person should be able to request end of life assistance from a registered medical practitioner. My reasons for this are:

1. A doctor should never be asked to take another person’s life. The whole point of their vocation is to save lives when possible and if not then to offer the best care they can if the life is unable to be saved. This does not mean ending a life.
2. There would also be others involved in the process, for example the pharmacist making up the lethal drug – would they be able to refuse participation in this? Also the nurse caring for the patient, administrators – all of these people would be involved in the process. This then demeans human life and the value we place on it.
3. Family pressure on the patient – the elderly in particular may feel they are a burden to their family and a sub-issue to this would be that the family may pressure them into thinking this. There is no way a doctor would be able to find out if there had been no “undue influence”.
4. Palliative care would suffer for those who don’t want to take their own lives.
5. The age of consent is ridiculously low. A 16 year old who can’t drink alcohol or even drive a car can decide to take their life. An individual does so much maturing in their late teens and life values usually change drastically over this time.

If this Bill is to become law errors and abuses will take place. The safeguards put in place to protect the doctor are also open to abuse by disagreeing families for a one example. I for one would not like to be a vulnerable person in a society where the value of human life has been greatly diminished by a Bill like this.

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