

Proposed Assisted Dying for Terminally Ill Adults (Scotland) Bill

Introduction

A proposal for a Bill to enable competent adults who are terminally ill to be provided at their request with assistance to end their life.

The consultation runs from 23 September 2021 to 22 December 2021.

All those wishing to respond to the consultation are strongly encouraged to enter their responses electronically through this survey. This makes collation of responses much simpler and quicker. However, the option also exists of sending in a separate response (in hard copy or by other electronic means such as e-mail), and details of how to do so are included in the member's consultation document.

Questions marked with an asterisk (*) require an answer.

All responses must include a name and contact details. Names will only be published if you give us permission, and contact details are never published – but we may use them to contact you if there is a query about your response. If you do not include a name and/or contact details, we may have to disregard your response.

Please note that you must complete the survey in order for your response to be accepted. If you don't wish to complete the survey in a single session, you can choose "Save and Continue later" at any point. Whilst you have the option to skip particular questions, you must continue to the end of the survey and press "Submit" to have your response fully recorded.

Please ensure you have read the consultation document before responding to any of the questions that follow. In particular, you should read the information contained in the document about how your response will be handled. The consultation document is available here:

[Consultation Document](#)

[Privacy Notice](#)

I confirm that I have read and understood the Privacy Notice attached to this consultation which explains how my personal data will be used.

On the previous page we asked you if you are UNDER 12 YEARS old, and you responded Yes to this question.

If this is the case, we will have to contact your parent or guardian for consent.

If you are under 12 years of age, please put your contact details into the textbox. This can be your email address or phone number. We will then contact you and your parents to receive consent.

Otherwise please confirm that you are or are not under 12 years old.

No Response

About you

Please choose whether you are responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation.
Note: If you choose "individual" and consent to have the response published, it will appear under your own name. If you choose "on behalf of an organisation" and consent to have the response published, it will be published under the organisation's name.

on behalf of an organisation

Which of the following best describes you? (If you are a professional or academic, but not in a subject relevant to the consultation, please choose "Member of the public".)

No Response

Please select the category which best describes your organisation

Third sector (charitable, campaigning, social enterprise, voluntary, non-profit)

Optional: You may wish to explain briefly what the organisation does, its experience and expertise in the subject-matter of the consultation, and how the view expressed in the response was arrived at (e.g. whether it is the view of particular office-holders or has been approved by the membership as a whole).

We are a church and our office bearers are regularly involved in pastoral care which includes ministering to people who are coming to the end of life and their families.

Please choose one of the following:

I am content for this response to be published and attributed to me or my organisation

Please provide your Full Name or the name of your organisation. (Note: the name will not be published if you have asked for the response to be anonymous or "not for publication". Otherwise this is the name that will be published with your response).

Kirk Session, Garrabost Free Church of Scotland

Please provide details of a way in which we can contact you if there are queries regarding your response. Email is preferred but you can also provide a postal address or phone number.

We will not publish these details.

Aim and Approach - Note: All answers to the questions in this section may be published (unless your response is "not for publication").

Q1. Which of the following best expresses your view of the proposed Bill?

Fully opposed

Please explain the reasons for your response.

Changing the law could make vulnerable people consider themselves to be a burden on family and society. They may feel that they are a financial burden, emotional burden and that the time and energy others have to invest to care for them is too much. Unfortunately some family members may be tempted to manipulate the situation if there is something to gain by a quick death.

Q2. Do you think legislation is required, or are there other ways in which the Bill's aims could be achieved more effectively? Please explain the reasons for your response.

We don't believe this legislation is required. We are opposed to any bill which terminates life. We don't believe that there could ever be enough boundaries put in place to safeguard life. We sympathise with anyone who is suffering and we would love the government to invest more in holistic palliative care as the best way forward to allow people to die with dignity.

Q3. Which of the following best expresses your view of the proposed process for assisted dying as set out at section 3.1 in the consultation document (Step 1 - Declaration, Step 2 - Reflection period, Step 3 - Prescribing/delivering)?

Fully opposed

Please explain the reasons for your response, including if you think there should be any additional measures, or if any of the existing proposed measures should be removed. In particular, we are keen to hear views on Step 2 - Reflection period, and the length of time that is most appropriate.

There are many instances of people who are diagnosed terminally ill and may be very sick at the time but go on to experience times of a fairly good quality of health. If they have begun the process to end their life they may feel it very difficult to draw back.

Q4. Which of the following best expresses your views of the safeguards proposed in section 1.1 of the consultation document?

Fully opposed

Please explain the reasons for your response.

Any supposed safeguards would not be wide enough. The more people that would be required would no doubt over time lead to shortcuts being made due to finding enough people who would be fully acquainted with the case.

Q5. Which of the following best expresses your view of a body being responsible for reporting and collecting data?

Fully opposed

Please explain the reasons for your response, including whether you think this should be a new or existing body (and if so, which body) and what data you think should be collected.

Q5. Which of the following best expresses your view of a body being responsible for reporting and collecting data?

We do not support the proposal of assisted suicide and therefore this kind of body would not need to exist. Even if it did exist it would still be open to abuse.

Q6. Please provide comment on how a conscientious objection (or other avenue to ensure voluntary participation by healthcare professionals) might best be facilitated.

No one who are in positions to care for the terminally ill and who are conscientious objectors should in any way be forced to take part in the process of offering assisted suicide. This would limit the members of available staff in an already overburdened system.

Financial Implications

Q7. Taking into account all those likely to be affected (including public sector bodies, businesses and individuals etc), is the proposed Bill likely to lead to:

a significant reduction in costs

Please indicate where you would expect the impact identified to fall (including public sector bodies, businesses and individuals etc). You may also wish to suggest ways in which the aims of the Bill could be delivered more cost-effectively.

This bill would obviously save the country a lot of money and it would undermine the need to invest more in palliative care. But should peoples quality of care be determined by how much it's going to cost. We live in a time of tough financial pressures on everyone and it would make good economic sense to end a life that costs a lot of money to care for. But is this the kind of people we would like to be?

Equalities

Q8. What overall impact is the proposed Bill likely to have on equality, taking account of the following protected characteristics (under the Equality Act 2010): age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation?

Negative

Please explain the reasons for your response. Where any negative impacts are identified, you may also wish to suggest ways in which these could be minimised or avoided.

There is no doubt that if this legislation goes forward that it will lower the self worth of those who would be affected by it.

Sustainability

Q9. In terms of assessing the proposed Bill's potential impact on sustainable development, you may wish to consider how it relates to the following principles:

- living within environmental limits
- ensuring a strong, healthy and just society
- achieving a sustainable economy
- promoting effective, participative systems of governance
- ensuring policy is developed on the basis of strong scientific evidence.

With these principles in mind, do you consider that the Bill can be delivered sustainably?

No

Please explain the reasons for your response.

We believe that this kind of legislation would increase our selfishness and make us less compassionate as a society.

General

Q10. Do you have any other additional comments or suggestions on the proposed Bill (which have not already been covered in any of your responses to earlier questions)?

In these days where we see a significant rise in mental health no one should be made to feel that they would be better of dead. As Christians we believe there is life after death, but if as the Bible teaches we have not made our peace with God it would be far worse suffering after death. We would not be in a hurry to send anyone to death if more time will give them the opportunity of being reconciled to God to guarantee them that the next life will be free from suffering and death.