

# 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.

an individual

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".)

Member of the public

**Optional: You may wish to explain briefly what expertise or experience you have that is relevant to the subject-matter of the consultation:**

A close friend received a terminal diagnosis. If I were in the same position I'd want the right to choose, he didn't the have luxury of that.

Please select the category which best describes your organisation

*No Response*

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).

Lynne McGregor

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 supportive

**Please explain the reasons for your response.**

I have been a supporter of an individual's right to the death of their choice for a long time in principle. More recently that has been informed by reading the experiences of high profile campaigners who have lived experience and also within the last few years having a friend who was terminally ill. Whilst everything possible was done by palliative teams at the end of the day the choice of a painless death AT THE TIME OF THEIR CHOOSING, and to avoid suffering, was not theirs. It pains me, and frightens me, to think that in the same situation I or one of my loved ones might experience the same horror. To not have control over this final thing is terrifying. Not everyone have the means to pay for, or endure, the trip to Dignitas. No one wants to force a spouse or family member to risk prosecution by aiding a suicide. It is a dreadful and abhorrent situation at odds with freedom of choice.

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.

I believe legislation is required to set out legal boundaries, for example ensuring that doctors are free from prosecution when certain conditions are met. It should set out the rights of the individual clearly in terms of competence to make a decision and how such competence must be assessed etc.

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 supportive

**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.**

I think the proposals for safeguarding are fair, 14 days reflection is reasonable, with an option to be shorter for those with much more limited time.

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

Fully supportive

**Please explain the reasons for your response.**

The requirement for two doctors to certify both the decision, and competence of the patient to make it, seems right and proper.

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

Fully supportive

**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?

Proper record keeping is essential, from every viewpoint. Life Insurance companies may have an interest in this process, it is vital that the decision to terminate one's own life does not negate any cover that might be vital to loved ones. All parties must be in no doubt that the condition was terminal and the patient is simply deciding to end life in a less painful and distressing way. It would be intolerable for a patient to suffer needlessly because an insurance company might deny a payout. Record keeping is a legal essential.

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

No medical professional should be forced to enact a decision they disagree with on moral or religious grounds BUT a patient much have the right to access another's opinion and support in such circumstances.

## 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:

no overall change 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.**

I believe such occasions where someone requests assisted dying will, in practice, be limited. Two doctors' time, plus administrative costs in recording decisions. Such costs would surely be offset by the reduction in the palliative care needs for days or weeks. I feel sure the NHS will be able to reconcile these. But anyway, what price can you put on human suffering? The Bill is sorely needed, both to protect the right of the patient to choose the manner and time of their death and to protect those assisting them from possible prosecution.

## 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?

Neutral (neither positive nor negative)

## 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?

Yes

**Please explain the reasons for your response.**

I cannot see how the bill negatively impacts on the above and it has a purely positive impact on a 'just society' and supports scientific evidence.

## 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)?

I urge our lawmakers to finally take this long overdue step. I know there is cross party support, I know the public overwhelmingly support it and the medical profession, with caveats, does too. Other countries like Australia have managed to operate a fair and robust system, it cannot be beyond us to do likewise. Please, please, do not let others suffer as so many have before.