

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

Please select the category which best describes your organisation

No Response

Please choose one of the following:

I would like this response to be published anonymously

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).

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.

Dignity in our last moments is a basic human right. It is cruel to both the patient and their families to forcefully prolong life if they have a terminal diagnosis and the patient wishes to pass on their own terms. I believe, with the correct medical assessments, this is an option people should have

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.

Yes - some kind of mechanism to ensure certain tests are met - to ensure the patient is making a decision with the full facts available to them re their life prospects, they are not being coerced/bullied especially when there might be wealth/assets to be inherited.

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 having a Reflection period is vital - I'm not sure how long would be appropriate though? My gut says longer just to make sure the patient really has had time to consider their choice but I'm not sure if longer than 2 weeks would make a diff?

Some thoughts: should there be some kind of legal obligation to advise family/next of kin?

Around Declaration - what is definition of independent re the 2 Drs? Should there be an official process to 'prove' the independency of the 2 doctors from each other? Thinking of situations where there is an inheritance and possible accusations from friends/family esp if they do not get what they 'expect' - important to ring fence medical staff from possible legal actions..?

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.

As before I wonder if there should be a definition of 'Independent' regarding the Drs and perhaps some kind of 'test' to be met. This would give further transparency to the process and therefore some reassurance to family/next of kin and also, protect them from possible accusations from family?

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.

Unaware of what existing bodies there are that could do this, but 100% the data should be collected and reported and I would go further and say this should be made public

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

I'm not sure but there should be space for this

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:

some increase 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 think this is a process that should be free and I would expect, in the event of a separate body being created to provide governance over the process, some increases in costs. I believe these costs should be met by Scot Gov as part of overall NHS/social care costs.

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?

Slightly positive

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.

I think it may improve equality somewhat on the basis that all patients would be treated the same regardless of their protected characteristics. Also, for those left behind ie carers it would give them an opportunity to lead fuller, healthier lives. Being a carer for a terminally ill patient is stressful - emotionally and physically and they often sacrifice a lot. But inequalities run deep in our society at all levels and need to be tackled as a separate issue- this will not fix it.. If anything I think extra care should be taken to protect those with these characteristics (& others) to ensure the decisions they make are fully informed ones. In this scenario especially I wonder if involving family/carers in that conversation might be a good thing - worth considering.

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

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- living within environmental limits
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- 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?

Please explain the reasons for your response.

I think so - I would expect the costs to increase but not by a huge amount. I think that the overall wellbeing of the patient and their loved ones would improve - to be able to pass at a time of your choice with the people you love around you, to say the things you want to say - this is a HUGE thing and I believe a positive and healthy thing for the wellbeing of 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)?

None but I do wish to say that I welcome that this conversation is being had. It's difficult, emotive and incredibly sensitive but it is long overdue. Well done to all those involved.