

# 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 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).

Rebecca Smith

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 believe every human should be able to have the option of assisted dying when given a terminal diagnosis. If a person is in pain, unable to benefit from treatment or simply is 'ready to go' there should be better options, closer to home and legally accepted so they can spend the last moments of their lives

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

surrounded by the people they love. It should be their choice and there should be a way for them to be assisted to end their suffering safely.

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.

Legislation is incredibly important as currently in Scotland it isn't legal for another person to help someone die. The legislation will safe guard professionals to be able to help end suffering of their patients. Legislation will also provide clear guidelines for all involved and help family members understand whose decision it is to opt for assisted dying if/when the time comes for their loved ones.

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.**

The declaration step must be clear so individuals can make their chosen decision is easy for all involved to understand and interpret when the time comes. The reflection period SHOULD be able to be flexible given that some people have longer/shorter amount of time after their terminal diagnosis. The prescribing/delivery step should also be clear so that all involved know the part that they will play but also flexible given the constant changes in methods of assisted dying procedures (research is ongoing, medicines change, ways to administer etc.)

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.**

Again, safeguards/procedures should be clear to allow everyone - the patient, the doctor, the family members - to be reassured that the right decision is made when it is time for assisted dying to take place. It is very unlikely that mistakes could be made but to make things legal and proper it is very important that safeguards are in place.

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.**

While assisted dying is a personal and private matter it is also important for records to be kept of decisions made by that person. Having a specific body that is responsible for this will prove to be invaluable in this

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

regard. Doctors/medical staff are already overwhelmed so a separate 'department' that is responsible for the collecting and reporting of data is the obvious answer.

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

This is probably the trickiest aspect of this issue. When someone is first diagnosed with a terminal illness, the person should be given the opportunity to declare what their wishes are. During this process they should be supported by a range of healthcare professionals to ensure they are given all the facts. A terminally ill person will (hopefully) be surrounded by those they love - plenty of emotional influences. The facts/options for that person need to be considered carefully before they make their decision. Also, there should be the option of changing their mind nearer the end of their life IF symptoms get worse, quicker or the pain becomes unmanageable or, for medical reasons, assisted dying protocols need to be administered more urgently. Having the option of a conscientious objector should be allowed. The person should be able to choose this option to help/support them through this often difficult procedure.

## 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.**

Hmmmm- I feel awkward saying this.....but although initially it may seem that there will be a substantial increase in costs for all concerned, in the long run there should also be savings/decreased costs of long term care for people given a terminal diagnosis. It may seem harsh to say but if people are given the option of assisted dying, they will use less hospital/at home care as they will not require it for as long. In most situations this may decrease the current cost incurred by public sector bodies, businesses and individuals etc.

## 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)

**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.**

Statistically, the current ratios of terminally ill diagnosis rates regarding age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual

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?

orientation should not be impacted as the legislation should ensure that assisted dying will be offered to anyone - equally. I hope.

## 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.**

This legislation is overdue. Other countries are already successfully offering assisted dying to its citizens. When Scotland is ready to go ahead, the legislation will be current and will offer the most effective, participative system of governance - giving each and every citizen the choice of assisted dying. A system that has been developed as a result of strong, 21st century scientific research and best practice. A support system at the end of life that ensures a strong, healthy and just society - a place which benefits the local, national and international environment while achieving a sustainable economy.

## 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)?

Please genuinely think of the impact assisted dying will have on your own life if, you are the one in the position of needing help at the end of your life. No one should suffer when there is a pain free alternative when the body is no longer able to go on. Thank you