

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:

I am a family member who has cared for three terminally ill relatives- Mother Father and Sister. All three of my family members had long, lingering, cruel deaths. My sister was not much more than 4 stones when she died. These family members did not die with dignity and respect- services were very poor. It is delusional to think that health and social care services in Scotland will, in the short term to medium term future, if ever-be available to provide good palliative care or 'good' deaths for our loved ones. People WANT to die. This is a shocking truth in this day and age. But they WANT to die because their lives have become so unbearable because of a lack of suitable services. The very limited resources which are available would be best used providing services to people who WANT to live. We do not let our pets suffer when the end is near- but we allow our loved ones to become emaciated and to suffer long lingering deaths. It is a national scandal that decisions made about the ending of the lives of our precious family members are made by a few pompous MPs who are deluded if they think that our dying relatives will be able to access anything like decent services to make their passing less traumatic for both them and for their family members.

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).

Margaret Meiklejohn

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.

People should have the right to choose how and when they die, provided safeguards are in place to prevent people being coerced into making such decisions. My reasons are as outlined previously- I watched the end of life being dragged out for three of my loved ones who wanted their lives to end as they became iller and iller. This was traumatic for them as well as our family as they pleaded with us to help them to go. I wish I had had the courage to do what they asked of me. Also, it is so cruel that terminally ill people are made to go abroad if they want to end their lives with dignity - it is disgraceful.

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 required. If it is not legislated for, some people will still be denied the right to end their life with dignity. This right should be available to all and the decision should not be left to anyone else but the individual, otherwise different practitioners or family members will take the decision out of their hands.

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 proposed bill is suitable in its current form.

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 safeguards are suitable and well thought through.

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.

Any body, whether new or existing, should be totally independent and unable to be manipulated by the

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

Scottish Government regarding either the timing of reports or the content of them. Recent publications regarding the influence exerted on to data providers about the timing and content of reports has led me to believe that the Government is not open and honest and exerts too much influence on certain organisations.

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 a difficult one. I am torn between believing that healthcare professionals should not be able to object- surely the wishes of their patients are the most important thing?..but I'm trying to take into account that this might be a step too far for healthcare professionals with strong religious beliefs. It is a bit like abortion though. I accept that it's difficult but the healthcare professional should be doing what is in the best interest of their patients.

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 reduction in 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?

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

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)?

Not really except to reinforce my view that terminally ill people are being let down. The people who object to this bill do so on idealistic grounds. The people who have watched their dying relatives suffer the most painful cruel deaths are the people who should make the decisions about whether the right should be there or not. Not a lofty politician who has no lived experience.