

# 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".)

Professional with experience in a relevant subject

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

Fourteen years experience working in health and social care roles in hospital and social work settings.

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).

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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 with a terminal illness, who have the capacity to do so, should be allowed the choice of ending their own life at a time they wish to do so and not have to endure pain, fear, discomfort and loss of dignity which they often experience despite palliative care measures.

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. Clear guidelines drawn from this would protect the people who wish assisted dying support and the healthcare practitioners providing this assistance.

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)?

Partially 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.**

Step 1 - This would allow the person to have a discussion behind their wishes and would ensure that alternatives are known so that they can make an informed decision. Step 2 - A period of time to digest information provided after consultation with the two doctors and an opportunity to discuss with those close to you is important. The time allocated should be discussed and agreed on with the person and the two doctors at Step 1 in light of that person's own condition in terms of pain experienced, for example, and the anticipated time until death. Step 3 - I agree with step 3, however, I would like to say that I believe if people have the assurance of knowing that, when it comes to the right day for them, that they have the option to do so they may end up, in fact, not following through. This knowing would alleviate anxiety and give the person back an element of control which their illness has taken from them. My concern here would be the availability of HCP to carry out this task on the day the person wishes to die.

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

Partially supportive

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

In agreement on the whole, however, as previously mentioned, the reflection period should be determined and agreed in line with that individual's own situation.

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

Fully supportive

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

**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.**  
In agreement with the reasons for same in the proposal.

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

Following information sessions, HCP could be given the opportunity to record their decision as to whether or not they would wish to proceed further with training for this important role and a database could be set up. Only those in agreement with the action to be taken should spend a person's final moments with them.

## 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

**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.**

Public sector - I would envisage savings coming from reduced palliative care provision in terms of staffing and medication.

## 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)?

My mum had various health conditions including heart disease and cancer which greatly impacted on her quality of life. That last two months of her life were extremely stressful for both her and the family, not least of which were the four times I was called to say "Come now, it's time" and it wasn't. As an ex-nurse I have seen for myself how people you do not expect to rally do so and I am in no way blaming staff. However, each time she came back so to speak she felt worse, she was extremely uncomfortable and agitated towards the end despite the drugs administered via the syringe driver. She experienced toxicity from the morphine administered to ease her breathing and behaved so unlike herself and I know she would have been so unhappy to be like this. My mum was a Spiritualist and believed in the afterlife. We were fortunate to have one relatively good day together towards the end during which she was calm and accepting of death, saying that she knew she was going to pass. If my mum had the opportunity at the end of that day to take control and make that decision to say goodbye to us and end her life I know 100% she would have. What happened over the next three days meant that my mum went from being in this calm, accepting state to one of fear as she experienced hallucinations due to the lack of oxygen to her brain. My mum slowly drowned. It was horrific for her and it was horrific for us. My mum would never have wanted myself or her grandson to go through what we did and we certainly didn't want her to suffer as she did. If she could have ended her life when she wished to her passing would have been such a different experience. Difficult? Yes it always is hard to say goodbye to someone you love but my mum and ourselves could have been spared the ordeal we had. Quality of life, choice, dignity, freedom from pain and fear - these are the things that matter and should be a human right.