

Proposed 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.

on behalf of an organisation

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".)

No Response

Please select the category which best describes your organisation

Third sector (charitable, campaigning, social enterprise, voluntary, non-profit)

Optional: You may wish to explain briefly what the organisation does, its experience and expertise in the subject-matter of the consultation, and how the view expressed in the response was arrived at (e.g. whether it is the view of particular office-holders or has been approved by the membership as a whole).

PlaySpace Publications is a small press which raises money for various charities including Dignity in Dying. We recently published a book called Living Our Dying including 28 writers - mostly in Scotland and including a chapter on Assisted Suicide: <https://playspacepublications.com/living-our-dying/>

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).

PlaySpace Publications

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'm a member of a group called "die-a-log" which has been meeting for 12 years and most of our members support legalising assisted dying.

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, definitely legislation is needed - just consider how legislation has reduced addiction to smoking. For many years working with people who are terminally ill and some wishing to end their life sooner, but being illegal, they could hardly even talk about it. The taboo is very strong. Legislation will enable full open discussions to happen with family and loved ones - particularly with people whose life has become unbearable due to pain and fear.

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've been in favour of assisted dying for many years and have supported people in that journey. The reflection period is important. Some folk I know have been terminally ill for 10 or more years - and receiving palliative care. Sometimes the decision to end your own may come to a head because you can't face another course of Chemo therapy. With option assisted dying legal - I predict that the suicide rate will decrease.

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 safe guard of two doctors, time for reflection, assessing the family situation, ensuring that no external pressure has been placed on the person wishing to end their life - that all seem sufficient to me

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.

I don't think an existing body could take on this work. One important piece of data would be to keep a record of who changes their mind during the reflexion time and why. Age and condition. Level of physical

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

pain. Emotional pain. The affect on survivors - family and loved ones - what sort of support might be offered to the survivors.

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

It seems clear in the bill that no professional healthcare worker is obliged to participate. There are many I know who will happily volunteer. I don't envisage any problem with facilitating this service

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:

a significant 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.

Keeping people alive is a huge cost to the NHS. This Bill has the potential to reduce healthcare cost for those to choose assisted dying, rather than living on for months or years with ongoing palliative care.

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?

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.

The Bill clearly states it is the individual's choice. The difficult piece of work is to make sure there is no external pressure for the person to end their life.

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.

The bill adds to our autonomy as humans taking responsibility for our life and our death.

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)?

There is now a training programme for Death Doulas in Scotland. Death Coaching will be needed, not just for the person choosing an assisted death, also for family, colleagues, friends. This need to be considered in the Bill. The professional medics who volunteer to implement this service will also need ongoing supervision and support. This needs to be considered in the budget.