

# 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:**

I am a retired GP with over 30 years experience of helping and supporting people at the end of their life.

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

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

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

I strongly believe that individuals have a right to choose the manner and timing of their death. This right is fundamental. Professionals that act on an individual's request need the protection of the law in order to carry out the request.

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 to protect the individual/professional who is asked to carry out the request to end life.

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.**

I think the reflection period is longer than necessary. I would prefer 7 days, shortened to 72 hours in exceptional circumstances.

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

Partially opposed

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

I am not in favour of the medication having to be administered on by the terminally ill individual themselves. Many will be denied the option of assisted dying because they are not physically able to administer the medication themselves.

It's also unclear, as written, how many individual doctors are required to complete the process. It appears it could be as many 6 or even 8?? My experience has been in rural general practice. To require that many independent doctors to be involved would effectively prevent rural patients accessing assisted dying.

I think 2 independent doctors is a more realistic and practical minimum.

As written this section of the bill may make assisted dying theoretically legal but no one will actually be able to complete the process before they die without assistance!

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.**

It would be very helpful to have a reliable source of information on how the act is being implemented. Probably better being a non medical body.

I would like to see information on all aspects - diagnosis, where it takes place; home, hospital, hospice

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

etc., time from request to death, method, comments from family and carers. Anonymised data should be accessible.

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

I don't think this is a major problem. Any professional can chose not to be involved and simply informs the individual asking for assistance. However there should be safeguards (simple professional ethics should be enough but safeguards required) to ensure that another professional is asked to be involved who does not have conscientious objections.

## 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 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 the outline draft of the bill is more cumbersome than is needed whilst still providing adequate safeguards.

## 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.**

It marginally improves the autonomy of individuals without touching the 'protected characteristics'. The bill could be more simple and make a bigger impact.

## 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.**

As it stands the Bill it makes very little difference because few will access it. So make it more accessible.

## 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)?

This bill is for me some way short of what is needed to give individuals their right to choice. There is a need to protect professionals involved and there is a need to protect vulnerable people. However the overly complex provisions in the Bill may deny some (many?) people from accessing their rights and autonomy as an individual particularly in rural areas.