

# Dying *with* Dignity Tasmania (Inc)

PO Box 1022  
Sandy Bay  
Tasmania 7006

***your right to choose***

[www.dwdtas.org.au](http://www.dwdtas.org.au)

January 2009

DwDTas Committee

Mike Harris (President)  
Margaret Sing (Vice President)  
Trish Kershaw (Treasurer)  
Kay Scurr (Secretary)

Beatrice Bentley  
Allan Cameron  
Barbara Porter  
Marian van den Byllaardt  
Noel Woodrow

## **Forthcoming events – dates for your diary**

### **Annual DwDTas Barbecue**

**WHERE: BBQ site no. 9, Waterworks Reserve, Waterworks road, Hobart**

**WHEN: Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> February starting at 12.00am**

This is a great social event and chance to meet like minded friends and catch up on news. Once again we will be sharing it with members of Exit International and for our comfort have booked the premier site (No.9), which is at the far end of the Waterworks reserve. In a beautiful setting it has plenty of space, electric BBQs, tables, seating and a roof to protect us from the elements. Car parking and toilets are close by.

Bring a plate to share. If you need a lift please phone me on 0407923156 and I'll see if it can be arranged.

### **Salamanca Market Stand – volunteers needed**

**WHERE: Salamanca Market, Hobart**

**WHEN: Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> February**

Hobart City Council kindly allow us occasional use of a stand at Salamanca Market. Our display stand helps generate conversation and always encourages a few new members. With the Parliamentary election in March, what better time to present our message to the public?

Once again we are looking for volunteers to attend the stand, just for an hour during the morning. Please call **Noel Woodrow (ph: 6266 3480)** if you are able to help out as part of the team.

If you've never done this before, have no fear. Most helpers find it an enjoyable time and look forward to meeting new faces and swapping stories. Noel will shortly be drawing up a

schedule to ensure that the stand is always attended by two members but we do need your help to make this a success.

## **Dates of Committee and Annual General meetings for 2010**

Provisional dates for committee meetings in 2010 are as follows:

12/February  
12/March  
9/April  
14/May  
11/June  
2/July (Annual General Meeting)

Meetings are usually held at the at the Glenorchy library and start at 2.00pm. Members are invited to attend but as these details may change, please check with a committee member before hand.

*Best wishes for the holiday season*  
*Mike Harris (President)*  
*(ph: 0407923156)*

## **Dying with Dignity Bill 2009 – The Debate and Beyond**

### **SUMMARY OF THE DEBATE**

As you know, the *Dying with Dignity Bill 2009* was defeated in a vote on 4 November 2009, with 7 votes for and 15 against. Two MPs were absent – Michelle O’Byrne and Sue Napier (both from Bass) - and the Acting Speaker, Steve Kons, did not vote.

On the plus side, it was very pleasing that seven members of the House of Assembly voted for the Bill at the second reading stage. This means that they voted for it to go through to a detailed debate on each clause when amendments could be made as necessary. They made very good speeches that included excellent points in favour of the proposed legislation even when they saw the need for some amendments to the Bill.

As the more detailed information in this report shows, there were some who voted against the Bill who indicated support for the principle behind the Bill and/or indicated that they were voting against it because of particular issues that we believe can be addressed.

The concern that was raised most frequently was the possible threat to the ‘vulnerable’. We do not believe that this is so but it shows how effective the scare-mongering has been by opponents of the legislation. The other concern that has arisen directly from the AMA scare-mongering is the possible negative impact on the doctor-patient relationship. We see this claim as illogical or unreasonable and the exact opposite result of what is likely when doctors will be free to have open discussions with their patients and to respond to their end-of-life wishes without the threat of legal action.

A number of speakers demonstrated how paternalistic they are and that they believe they ‘know best’ what is right for everyone else. Dr Heather Dunn addressed this issue very effectively in her evidence

to the inquiry on behalf of DwDTas : “It is not up to what Archbishop Doyle thinks, and it is not up to what I think or anyone else thinks; it is up to what the patient thinks is for them a dignified death. It is up to them to decide what is intolerable. We cannot tell what they are suffering because we are not experiencing it; it is their suffering.”

While there were thoughtful and heart felt speeches made by a number of members who indicated how carefully they had considered the Bill, there were speakers against the Bill who came across as arrogant, authoritarian, with little or no regard for the facts or evidence and/or interested in distorting and misrepresenting the issues.

There were some who indicated that their religious beliefs were a key factor in their opposition to the proposed legislation. While they demanded respect for their beliefs and the right to act in accordance with them, they gave no indication that they respected others’ rights to do the same.

Many of those who voted against the Bill ignored the opinion polls or implied that the recent representations they had received were a better indication of constituents’ views. This is despite the fact that, like us, they know how easy it is for some of the opponents of the legislation to generate those representations. Some went further and derided the credibility and relevance of the polls and implied that ordinary people do not understand the issue.

Some demonstrated very clearly that they do not believe they have any responsibility to represent the wishes of the vast majority of the community, which have been consistently expressed over many years in every reputable opinion poll on this issue. None of them acknowledged that this is the only social issue for which this has been consistently the case for many years.

It is mischievous and baseless scare-mongering to claim, as Messrs Hidding and Whiteley do, that if MPs did what the public wanted, we would have the death penalty. Support for the death penalty in Australia has always been relatively low. For many years, support hovered around 50% but it has continued to drop significantly. In the latest Morgan Poll reported very recently, in August 2009, only 23% supported the death penalty for murder.

More detailed information on the speeches made in the debate is set out below. The views of retiring members, Jim Cox, Michael Hodgman and Steve Kons, are not included (and are not worth reporting). The Speaker, Michael Polley, vacated the Chair especially to vote against the Bill but did not speak in the debate, although he seemed to have plenty to say to the MPs he called over to speak to during the debate. We can only speculate on what that might have been.

## **DETAILED INFORMATION ON THE DEBATE**

### **Votes for the Bill**

Those who voted for the Bill included Nick McKim (Franklin), who introduced and moved the Bill, and the other Green members, Cassy O’Connor (Denison), Kim Booth (Bass) and Tim Morris (Lyons). Three Labor members also voted for it – Ross Butler (Franklin), Lara Giddings (Franklin) and Lisa Singh (Denison).

### **Votes against the Bill**

#### **1. Support for the principle**

**Daniel Hulme** (Franklin) was strongest in his support of key principles and arguments. He stated: “I support the proposition that a person who is experiencing intolerable suffering and has no prospect of recovery from that suffering should have the option of ending their life at a time of their choosing. I

also believe that there needs to be some legislative framework to allow this to occur.” He went on to present other views in support of such legislation (eg no evidence of slippery slope, even the best palliative care, while potentially relieving pain, cannot necessarily relieve all forms of suffering). His argument for voting against the Bill was that it needed more changes than could be achieved by a few amendments and that further consultation was necessary.

**David Bartlett** (Denison) expressed support that was more luke-warm. He said: “I can certainly understand why many Tasmanians do passionately believe that terminally ill people should have the right to end their own lives with dignity, and I do not disagree with them.” He then went on to raise what he claimed were issues of confusion and uncertainty in the Bill. While claiming “they are debating points around the quality of the bill”, he did not vote to allow the debate to occur. He claimed that he was not convinced that the Bill was “watertight in its protection of Tasmanians” and he was therefore not supporting it.

**Brenton Best** (Braddon) did not specifically support the principle behind the legislation but supported the need for some action to be taken. He said he believed the Bill was “significantly flawed in many respects and would be unworkable - even if we discussed and amended it in the committee stage”. He expressed support for “a softer approach” and “better ways that the matter could have been addressed”. His suggestion was “decriminalisation, in instances where someone has been assisted and it is a genuine circumstance”.

## 2. Threat to the vulnerable

**Will Hodgman** (Franklin) clearly understands the issue from personal experience. He spoke in a moving way about his mother’s death and indicated how carefully he had considered the issue. He seems to have given particular weight to the views of the medical profession and indicated that there were two critical issues that influenced his decision to vote against the Bill: “I am disturbed by the arguments put by many in the medical profession about the compromising of a doctor-patient relationship and the very serious ethical issues that confront those who work in that profession. I am especially concerned about the risk to those who are vulnerable which, medical practitioners tell me, is very real.”

He also said he had “serious reservations about the legislation”. His conclusion was interesting: “I cannot support a bill that does not provide adequate legislative frameworks where it involves the deliberate bringing to an end of a person’s life, albeit one who is suffering an incurable disease or condition, **but where it is done by another person.**” (our emphasis)

**Jeremy Rockliff** (Braddon) expressed the same two concerns but he expressed his views in more emotionally loaded and negative language: “A question being asked is how, if we now ask our doctors to become legally sanctioned agents of death, can they continue to meet their promise to protect and promote the life of their patients. What would this do to the relationship between doctors and their patients especially those who are vulnerable, physically or emotionally frail and at risk?” In his concluding remarks he also said: “One of the reasons many of us have come into this place is to protect and look after the most vulnerable in our society. In my view, this bill does not reach this ideal.”

He raised a number of matters in favour of the legislation but gave much more prominence to claims and arguments against it. He posed the issue of “whether assisting an end to life is necessarily the best or wisest course of action for anybody no matter what the circumstances may be”, but showed no support for individuals to make that decision for themselves. He concluded that: “Compelling though

many of the arguments have been on both sides of the debate today this bill simply does not sit right with me. Euthanasia, whether voluntary or otherwise, for me simply goes against the grain.”

**Peter Gutwein** (Bass) said that he had “wrestled” with the issue but had “not been able to satisfy myself that sufficient guarantees exist”. He concluded: “I think today has been a step forward in the debate on this issue. Today I cannot support the legislation before us. The overriding reason is that I do not feel we are able to protect the most vulnerable in our society.”

**Bryan Green** (Braddon) demonstrated that he had accepted false claims by opponents and had not taken into account factual evidence. He indicated belief in the ‘thin end of the wedge’ and the ‘slippery slope’ and said that he had “this nagging feeling that by supporting the bill I would be having a negative effect on people in the future”. His conclusion ignored all the available evidence: “As a result, I have faith that those people in the medical fraternity, particularly those in palliative care, will ensure that people can die with dignity and as a result of that I will not be supporting the bill.”

### 3. Other speeches

**Graeme Sturges** (Denison) waffled on for a considerable time in a self-serving and self-absorbed way aimed at convincing everyone what a good fellow he was (eg declaring how seriously he took his role as an MP, telling everyone about his family, his Christian upbringing, his love of Tasmania). In the end, he gave no rational explanation for his vote against the Bill. He stated: “It has been soul-searching, it has been considerable thought that I have given to this, and it has been listening to the members of the community that have brought me to the conclusion that I cannot support the bill.”

The most extreme speeches against the Bill were made by the following MPs who were arrogant, authoritarian, showed little or no regard for the facts or evidence and/or attempted to distort and misrepresent the issues.

#### ***Liberal MPs:***

**Rene Hidding** (Lyons) used the same tactics and repeated many of the same arguments and baseless claims that he had used in his submission to the inquiry (see the report in the last newsletter). He maintained his fallacious argument that if MPs acted in accordance with opinion polls they would be supporting the death penalty.

He did not repeat his unbelievable claim that “thousands” of people had come up to him at Agfest expressing support for the death penalty. He did, however, make the equally incredible claim, against all the available evidence, that “the entire medical profession and the entire legal profession and, if you like, the entire ethical profession around Australia, simply does not agree with [Nick McKim]” about the need for legislation. He repeated his beliefs that “God provides life and life therefore has a special sanctity and to take it or offer to take it is forbidden” and that “the moral basis for this bill is bad”.

**Brett Whiteley** (Braddon) expressed similar views and beliefs in his speech, with statements that implied he knew best what people wanted and that, while ordinary people did not know what euthanasia is, he did. He said that euthanasia is “premeditated or deliberate killing of a human being” and that it “will involve injecting a lethal dose of chemicals into a person's body with the sole purpose of killing them”.

He declared that: “What Tasmanians want, in my view, is not euthanasia but adequate pain relief and no unnecessary prolonging of life just because we can” and “What I think Tasmanians desire today is

not euthanasia but an end to useless and sometimes degrading treatment". He therefore conveniently ignored the consistent evidence that palliative care cannot relieve all suffering. He expressed his Christian views strongly and his belief that he was representing the views of those who voted for him. He also supported his position as follows: "I have never heard anyone ask the doctors to kill their elderly parent, for example. I have heard them ask doctors to end their pain. 'For God's sake, Doctor, end their pain', but I have never heard the words, 'Please, Doctor, kill them'."

### **Labor MPs:**

**Heather Butler** (Lyons) made much of her experience at Epworth Hospital, even though it was only during a short social work placement while she was a student, and claimed that: "All patients, no matter what their health status, were treated with dignity there and their pain and anxiety eased". She expressed no compassion for those who are not so fortunate and for whom the Bill would provide assistance. She expressed beliefs such as "hope is what keeps us going" and offered the following advice: "In my experience, medical management, social work and sometimes prayer can greatly assist people who feel intolerable pain".

Another of her claims that we find impossible to believe is that "the overwhelming majority of my constituents have let me know that they do not support the bill". She declared that "they prefer improved palliative care options to be made more widely available" but gave no acknowledgement that she had shared with them the finding of the Parliamentary Committee, of which she was a member, that "there is a small number of terminally ill patients for whom even the best of palliative care fails to provide relief". She derided the value of the opinion polls and claimed: "If the question had been asked, 'Would you give a stranger the right to kill your father or your mother', perhaps the often-quoted polls would show very different outcomes."

**David Llewellyn** (Lyons) made a short speech, opposing the Bill "out of principle and morality". He supported his view with a quote from the Foundation for Human Development, with which he agreed. The quote included the claim that "the voluntary euthanasia movements reflects that part of our society which cannot accept or understand illness, suffering or death" and refers to legalising of "killing the sick".

Mr Llewellyn said that what he found "very pertinent" in the Foundation's statement is that it is "wrong to propose the elimination of a person in distress in preference to the elimination of distress in the person". Apart from being ludicrous nonsense, his claim makes no mention of the fact that the people who would be eligible for assistance under the legislation would have intolerable and unrelieved suffering. Mr Llewellyn suggested no compassionate or democratic alternatives for sufferers. What Mr Llewellyn also did not mention is that the Foundation is an arm of the NSW Right to Life Association.

### **BEYOND THE DEBATE**

Those of us who support dying with dignity legislation have reason to remain positive about the chances of it being passed within the foreseeable future. It is clear there is some strong support for the principles of such legislation among House of Assembly members among some who voted against the Bill on this occasion as well as by those who voted for the Bill. We have written to all MPs who voted for the Bill thanking them for their support and congratulating them on their speeches.

A very positive development is the potential for a consultative approach in the development of a new Bill after the next election. We understand that, after the debate, the Deputy Premier, Lara Giddings, approached Nick McKim and offered to help with the development of the next Bill. The following day on the Tim Cox ABC program, Nick indicated that he would consult with others on the next Bill. We

see this as a very good approach and there is much more likelihood of a positive result if there are MPs from all parties involved in a new Bill. We have also advised Lara Giddings and Nick McKim of this.

The debate has provided very clear indications of the issues for some MPs who approached the issue with compassion and an open mind. We have written to most of those MPs to communicate important facts and arguments related to the concerns they raised. We have urged those who support the principle behind the Bill to work with their colleagues to develop a Bill which addresses the technical issues they have raised. We see no point in writing to Messrs Hidding, Whiteley or Llewellyn because they have demonstrated they are not likely to change their minds.

While not one of the current Liberal members voted for the Bill, Will Hodgman clearly demonstrated his continuing thoughtful approach and understanding of the issues. We will continue to communicate with him with the hope that he will become involved in any consultation on the development of a new Bill that will address his concerns. We believe that, if this happens, others may be influenced to support the new Bill.

The debate also showed clearly which MPs showed little regard for the facts or for their responsibility to provide democratic representation of the community. We all need to challenge this behaviour in the lead-up to the State election in March 2010 and beyond that in the lead-up to the next Bill.

There will be several new members of the House of Assembly after the March election. At the very least, there will be replacements for the three retirees. We will be surveying all candidates for the election and will be letting you know their views so that you can take them into account before you vote and can tell others.

In the coming months, there will be more cooperation and sharing of resources at a national level which will be very helpful to us. The DwDTas Committee will also be considering a plan of action beyond the election with the aim of making the result of the next Bill a much more positive one.

## **THE LAUNCESTON FORUMS**

Two forums which were held in Launceston on 20 October 2009 were very well received. There were approximately 30 at the afternoon session and a slightly smaller number at the evening session. Thank you to all members and their friends who attended.

The speakers were Alan Cameron, Bill Godfrey and Dr Helen Cutts. We thank them for the considerable effort they put into making the forums a success. A big thank you goes to Alan Cameron for suggesting the meetings, for helping to publicise them and to encourage people to attend and then for stepping in at late notice to chair them when illness prevented the Vice-President from attending. A special thanks also to Dr Helen Cutts for stepping into the breach at late notice when another speaker was also taken ill.

We are very grateful to Jo Archer at the University of Tasmania for a great deal of help in the organisation and publicising of the forums. She was instrumental in the University providing the venues free of charge as part of their community engagement. This was a very valuable contribution.

Information from the sessions is also being taken into account in our planning for 2010, particularly in relation to the clear need for more information to people on enduring guardianship. The aim is for other meetings to be held in the North and North West in the next year and possibly for groups to be formed and to meet regularly.

## **Australian Voluntary Euthanasia Societies National Conference Adelaide, 23 – 25 October 2009**

The Australian Voluntary Euthanasia Societies National Conference was held in Adelaide for 2 ½ days from Friday 23 October to Sunday 25 October 2009. It brought together 32 people from dying with dignity/voluntary euthanasia organisations in all States and Territories. DwDTas was represented by Margaret Sing, and Committee member, Beatrice Bentley.

The organisation by the South Australian Voluntary Euthanasia Society (SAVES) was first rate. There was a positive atmosphere of great commitment to our cause, as well as a spirit of cooperation, friendliness and generosity. There were many opportunities for discussion and getting to know everyone. Above all, there was a sense of a collaborative national coalition coming together for the first time, with a shared purpose and a positive impetus towards achieving our objective in at least some States in the foreseeable future.

The program was interesting and wide ranging and was designed for maximum participation and input from all States and Territories. It included discussions on the situation in each State and Territory, including the barriers to getting Bills passed and ideas for overcoming them, as well as funding considerations. There were excellent speakers on a range of topics, including politicians talking about their recent VE Bills in Australia, and expert speakers on laws in other countries, palliative care and other medical issues, such as neurology and prescribing restricted drugs, and religion and euthanasia issues, including information on Christians Supporting Choice for VE and why suicide is not a sin. There was also an informative session on 'Motivating the Masses', using publicity and marketing techniques.

The positive sense was contributed to by the presence of two trustees of the Clem Jones Trust, David Muir and Dr Maurice Heiner, and the information they provided on the Trust, the distribution of the \$5 million left by Clem Jones for VE law reform and their positive impressions of the Conference and the State and Territory groups.

There was one formal proposal put to the meeting, to form an ongoing national coalition, and this was adopted unanimously. At this stage, it is likely that a relatively informal approach for communication and sharing of resources is considered preferable to a formal organisation which would require a lot of work to form and run.

It was also decided that there should be a national meeting in October 2010, in Melbourne, in the few days before the international Conference of the World Federation of Right to Die Societies.

In all, the conference was inspiring and motivating – the information and ideas, the relationships that were formed and the offers of assistance to us will be of great ongoing benefit to DwDTas.

Report by Margaret Sing (Vice President)

### **NEWS ON V E FROM AROUND AUSTRALIA**

#### **South Australia**

Proposed legislation to allow voluntary euthanasia in South Australia was narrowly defeated in State Parliament by a vote of 11 votes to 9. The defeat was unexpected – a Liberal unexpectedly changed his vote at the last minute.

The instigator of the legislation, Parnell, said it was a big disappointment for those in the community who had been striving for the law reform over many years. However, he added,

"Yet, to come so close is a sure sign that one day, very soon, the South Australian Parliament will pass death with dignity laws. This is by no means the last time this issue will come before the Upper House. I intend to work with other supporters of VE to have another try next year after the March 2010 election. The vast majority of South Australians want Voluntary Euthanasia law reform. I strongly believe it's just a matter of time before compassionate legislation is passed in our state."

Mr Parnell said he would reintroduce the bill after the State election in March next year. By then it may well be that the seats of certain retiring MPs will be filled by politicians who have indicated that they would support the legalisation of voluntary euthanasia. Conservative columnists such as Christopher Pearson, predict that "In the life of the next parliament, ... a new private member's bill will be introduced and is likely to be passed after a conscience vote."

## **Western Australia**

The WA Greens are paving the way for euthanasia to be legalised in WA after a study showed almost nine out of 10 West Australians support voluntary death. Greens Upper House member, Robin Chapple, has introduced the Bill in State Parliament.

"This legislation will provide piece of mind to terminally ill people in pain and suffering."

He explained the Bill was very limited in terms of who it applied to and restricted by a number of safeguards. The Bill would allow any West Australian who was of sound mind, 21 years or over, can communicate his or her intentions, has a terminal illness that would cause death in two years and was experiencing pain and suffering, to make a request to a medical practitioner for the administration of euthanasia. The request must be witnessed by two independent and unrelated people.

Premier Barnett will allow Liberal MPs a conscience vote but has Indicated that he does not believe the Bill will be successful.

## **Victoria**

In Victoria, Attorney General Rob Hulls has declined to meet with [Dying With Dignity Victoria](#) to discuss the Government's intention regarding the future of the Physicians Assisted Dying legislation which was debated in parliament in 2008. DWDV wrote to Rob Hulls politely asking for a meeting to discuss the Government's intention regarding the future of the legislation.

It now appears the Victorian Government will abandon any debate on the dying with dignity issue despite the overwhelming number of Victorians (85% per cent) who are strongly in favour and who are asking for their right to die with dignity.

Mr Hulls is reported as stating that: "The Government believes that current provisions in Victorian law broadly reflect community expectations".

## **EXIT INTERNATIONAL - RAID**

Recent raids on the Melbourne offices of Exit International and the home of a Sydney member of the organisation, amid an investigation into the death of Brisbane man Frank Ward, 76, in June of this year, are a cause for concern for all of us.

Authorities have denied any connection between the raids. It is believed that NSW police confiscated the sedative Nembutal from the Sydney home of an Exit International member. Exit International

director Philip Nitschke told The Weekend Australian that he and his organisation had nothing to do with the death of Frank Ward, whose health had been deteriorating with a series of minor strokes.

Voluntary euthanasia campaigners say such raids show the need for clearer guidelines about when people will be prosecuted for helping others take their own lives.

president Terry O'Gorman, from the Council for Civil Liberties ,says it is a worry to see high-profile policing of what he says is a moral matter. "You have to be concerned when what is primarily a moral issue, namely a person being able to choose when they're terminally ill how they die, the circumstances under which they die. "

Dr Rodney Syme from Dying With Dignity Victoria is also concerned to hear about the two raids. "It's very hard to know whether this represents a change in police attitudes in general, or just a change in relation to the Queensland Police," he said. He went on to point out that in the UK, the Director of Public Prosecutions has recently issued guidelines about which alleged cases of assistance in suicide he will consider prosecuting. He says Australia needs similar guidelines.

## **NEWS FROM OVERSEAS**

### **Switzerland**

The Swiss government wants to tighten restrictions on assisted suicide. It is concerned that Switzerland is becoming a destination for "suicide tourism," and wants to tighten its decades-old assisted-suicide law, considered to be the most liberal of its kind in the world. As it stands, the legislation permits assisted suicide if a physician is convinced that the patient has no chance of recovery, that he or she is mentally and physically capable of making the decision to die and provided the patient self-administers the lethal drug—in a private residence.

Switzerland's law dates back to 1942. But the government now says it is too lax and that it's sometimes misused — for example, by allowing those who suffer, not from a terminal illness but from a chronic or mental illness to die. Among the proposed measures, still to be fine-tuned and debated in parliament, is the requirement that two different doctors attest to the candidate's suitability for assisted suicide and confirm the terminal diagnosis; currently only one physician's opinion is needed. Officials are also concerned about the influx of foreigners from nations where assisted suicide is illegal — Britain, France, Germany — who are coming to Switzerland to end their lives. Figures indicate that the vast majority of those using the procedure are foreigners.

### **The United States**

The United States Council of Catholic Bishops has ordered Catholic healthcare institutions to veto the [Advance Directive](#) wishes of millions of Americans on the refusal of tube feeding if they were to become permanently unconscious.

This order fails to take into account the fact that US [polls show](#) that at least 75% do not want to be kept alive artificially if they are in a persistent vegetative state. Most people who fill out advance directives indicate they do not want artificial feeding if they become permanently unconscious. However, the revised "Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services" (ERD) decrees those wishes will not be honoured at the 565 Catholic hospitals across the nation, by Catholic HMO's and health care plans and by millions of nurses, doctors and hospital workers who must follow the bishops' lead.

Removing all flexibility to respect the wishes of a patient or family, the revised directive creates “an obligation to provide patients . . . medically assisted nutrition and hydration” in all instances except when a patient is actively dying. Thus, Catholic hospitals and nursing homes will now be obliged to insert and maintain feeding tubes in all patients with severe advanced dementia, permanent unconsciousness and persistent vegetative state.

How will Oregon and Washington handle this?

**Dear Member of Parliament**

|   |              |
|---|--------------|
| Blow own head off with shotgun                    | <b>LEGAL</b> |
| Slam car into a tree at high speed                | <b>LEGAL</b> |
| Asphyxiate with head inside plastic bag           | <b>LEGAL</b> |
| Jump off a cliff                                  | <b>LEGAL</b> |
| Refuse to eat and die slowly from starvation      | <b>LEGAL</b> |
| Refuse to drink and die quicker from dehydration  | <b>LEGAL</b> |
| Be given extreme doses of pain reliever by doctor | <b>LEGAL</b> |

BE ALLOWED to DIE QUICKLY and WITH DIGNITY WHEN FACED WITH UNRELIEVED PAIN or MENTAL ANGUISH in a HOPELESS ILLNESS, USING NEMBUTAL

**ILLEGAL!**

**Could you please explain the rationale for this to me?**

**85% of Australians want this option NOW.**

Christians Supporting Choice for Voluntary Euthanasia  
429 Anzac Road, Port Pirie, SA 5540  
Email: [ChristiansforVE@westnet.com.au](mailto:ChristiansforVE@westnet.com.au)  
Website: [Christiansforve.org](http://Christiansforve.org).

## Application for membership of Dying with Dignity Tasmania

I/We wish to join the above society.

Name (Mr/Mrs/Ms): \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone no:

\_\_\_\_\_

Email:

(If you do not have an email address, newsletters will be sent by post)

\_\_\_\_\_

Age (optional):

\_\_\_\_\_

Single membership \$15 p.a.

Family membership \$20 p.a.

(Memberships can be accepted for 2 or 3 years in advance)

\_\_\_\_\_

Donation:

\_\_\_\_\_

Please send to: **PO Box 1022, Sandy Bay, Tasmania 7006, Australia**

When we receive this application you will automatically be placed on our mailing list for regular news letters.

If you would like an Enduring Guardianship form please tick here: [ ]

PO Box 1022 Sandy Bay Tasmania 7006 Australia [www.dwdtas.org.au](http://www.dwdtas.org.au)