



Coalition for the Defence of Human Life

Newsletter October 2017

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Euthanasia Inquiry Established by WA Parliament

As you may be aware, the WA Parliament has recently commissioned an 'Inquiry into the need for laws in Western Australia to allow citizens to make informed decisions regarding their own end of life choices'. Its terms of reference include the assessment of current practice surrounding the management of end-of-life care; to review current and proposed legislation in other jurisdictions; consider what legislative changes may be required in WA; and examine the role of Advanced Health Directives, Enduring Power of Attorney and Enduring Power of Guardianship laws as well as the impact of proposed legislation on these.

Remarkably, when the inquiry was put before Parliament, a proposed amendment to consider the risks and dangers of



euthanasia and physician assisted suicide was voted down. This inquiry, it would seem, is nothing but a preparation for euthanasia and/or assisted suicide legislation to come before the WA Parliament, consistent with the Labor Government's election commitment.

As such, it is imperative that as many submissions as possible are given, which outline the problems with legalising physician assisted death, and affirm the role of good palliative care in providing dignity for those who are dying.

Further information on making a submission is available overleaf. Template submissions are also available at cdhl.org.au

'Pulse' Pro-Life Leaders Internship is Calling All Young People!

LifeChoice Australia is excited to announce that with the generous support of the CDHL and Knights of the Southern Cross, the first Pulse Pro-Life Internship program to be held in Perth will be happening this February!

The Pulse Internship program has been held every year in Sydney since 2012, and has since branched to Melbourne and Brisbane, equipping many young people with the skills, knowledge and confidence to be a voice for life in our culture.

The Pulse Internship is open to young adults, particularly university students, who have a passion to become part of a movement for positive change. This live-in program includes in-depth discussion of pro-life issues, media training, leadership skills, and workshops with other pro-life organizations.

For more information and to register your interest, please contact Isabelle Lindsey on 0432 776 449 or email LifeChoicePerth@gmail.com

Born Alive and Left to Die: Almost 7, 000 Signatures Re-

A massive THANKYOU from the bottom of our hearts to everyone who signed and shared the recent petition circulated by the CDHL regarding the tragic issue of babies who are being born alive after an attempted abortion, and given no medical care or legal protection.

Thanks to the efforts of all of you, over 6, 800 signatures are now ready to be brought before Parliament. When presented, it is anticipated that an Inquiry will be commissioned to investigate the systemic failures which resulted in the deaths of at least 26 infants, and measures to ensure any child born in this situation receives the medical attention they need.

At the time of writing, a date for the petition to be presented has not been set. We will certainly keep you informed of further developments!

How do I write a submission?

Writing a submission to a Parliamentary Inquiry doesn't have to be difficult! Here's some tips and pointers to help you.

Who can make a submission?

Any individual or organisation (including Churches) can make a written submission.

Where do I send my submission?

Submissions can be sent to: The Principal Research Officer, Select Committee on End of Life Choices, Legislative Assembly, Parliament House, Perth WA 6000 or emailed to: eolcc@parliament.wa.gov.au

When do I need to make my submission by?

Submissions to the Inquiry into end-of-life choices must be received before the 23rd of October.

What should I include in my submission?

All submissions should include:

- Your name and contact details
- If relevant, the organization you are representing and your position within that organization
- The name of the relevant committee and inquiry (i.e. Joint Select Committee on End of Life Choices; Inquiry into the need for laws in Western Australia to allow citizens to make informed choices regarding their own end of life choices)
- Whether you, or other representatives of your organization, wish to appear before the committee in person

The body of your submission should address your general attitude towards the issues under inquiry, as well as address the specific terms of reference for the inquiry, which are as follows:

“to inquire and report on the need for laws in Western Australia to allow citizens to make informed decisions regarding their own end of life choices, in particular, the Committee should –

(a) assess the practices currently being utilised within the medical community to assist a person to exercise their preferences for the way they want to manage their end of life when experiencing chronic and/or terminal illnesses, including the role of palliative care;

(b) review the current framework of legislation, proposed legislation and other relevant reports and materials in other Australian States and Territories and overseas jurisdictions;

(c) consider what type of legislative change may be required, including an examination of any federal laws that may impact such legislation; and

(d) examine the role of Advanced Health Directives, Enduring Power of Attorney and Enduring Power of Guardianship laws



and the implications for individuals covered by these instruments in any proposed legislation.”

Can I talk about my own personal experience and concerns with these issues?

Yes, you may most certainly speak from your own experience of navigating issues surrounding end-of-life care and decision making, whether that be for yourself or family members. You may also speak from your experience in the medical or legal fields. We also encourage you to voice the personal concerns you have regarding any changes to the law in this area, in particular, why you oppose the legalisation of euthanasia and/or assisted suicide.

I'm still not really sure what to write.

At the CDHL website (cdhl.org.au), you can find several prepared template submissions which you can adapt or send directly to the Parliamentary Committee, in only a few clicks!

You may also find the following websites and resources helpful in writing your own submission:

Hope Australia: noeuthanasia.org.au

Euthanasia-Free NZ: euthanasiadebate.org.nz

Euthanasia Prevention Coalition: www.epcc.ca

How can I encourage other people I know to make a submission on this important issue?

While it may have come at a time when it is overshadowed by other issues, the question of upholding the true dignity of human life at every stage remains the single most important issue challenging our society. As such, it is important that as many submissions are made as possible.

Here are some ways to help engage others in this critical issue:

- Talk with your family, friends and Church members about the current Inquiry, and what it will mean for all West Australians
- Spread information on the issues before this inquiry: either by printing and distributing resources, or sharing via email or social media

101 Victorian Oncologists tell Victorian Parliament: Euthanasia is Dangerous and Unnecessary

On the 19th of September, over 100 cancer specialists sent an open letter to all members of the Victorian Parliament, urging them to reject the 'Victorian Assisted Dying Bill 2017' which is soon to be debated.

While the medical community in general is divided over the issues of euthanasia and assisted suicide, those who are most involved with the provision of end-of-life care are consistently opposed to it. The following letter outlines why:

Dear Victorian Parliamentary Representative,

We, the undersigned 101 Victorian Oncologists (cancer specialists), request that you vote AGAINST the proposed Victorian Assisted Dying Bill 2017.

As 80% of those who access physician assisted dying legally overseas have cancer, we feel our perspective on this issue should be heard.

We add our voices to the 100 palliative care specialists who have already corresponded with you requesting that you oppose the passage of this bill.

We collectively represent a significant proportion of the oncology workforce in the state of Victoria.

We do not believe that it is possible to draft assisted dying laws that have adequate safeguards to protect vulnerable populations, especially those with incurable cancer, progressive neurological illness, the aged and disabled. These groups of people experience high rates of depression and isolation. The risks that such legislation poses for the majority of these outweigh any benefits for the few in our opinion.

Physician assisted dying places people at risk of coercion that is both active and passive. As a consequence of assisted dying laws, society re-assesses the value of life; and the individual is taught to devalue their own life. Those with serious illness may perceive that they are a burden on society or their carers and come to feel that assisted dying is appropriate for them.

Assisted dying laws are easily challenged from a human rights and equality perspective. Indications over time will be extended beyond adults with terminal illness, to those with mental illness alone, dementia, disability, children and the healthy elderly who have "completed lives". In Oregon USA in June 2017 the senate debated a

bill that would allow demented patients and others with "mental incompetence" to be starved to death. Oregon is not a lead that we wish to follow.

Physician assisted death is not, by definition, medical treatment. It is not palliative care. We as doctors and medical specialists do not want to intentionally end the lives of our patients, or provide them with the direct means to do so. Assisted suicide is in conflict with the basic ethical principles and integrity of medical practice and undermines trust in the medical profession. We

strive to eliminate suffering but not the sufferers themselves.

Where cure of cancer is not possible, we seek optimal palliative care services to support and care for patients and their families at the end of life. Without easy access to quality palliative care, some may request physician assisted dying as they feel they have no other choice. This is especially so

for people who live in rural, regional and remote areas and for people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities who have less access to palliative care services.

We are very disappointed that discussion of the Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill has dominated the agenda to improve end of life care in Victoria. We are dismayed that the multiple recommendations made by the Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into End of Life Choices (June 2016) to strengthen palliative care have not been actioned. Until this is addressed, discussing physician assisted dying is premature. ...

We call for improved funding of palliative care services in Victoria, for the benefit of all Victorians, but especially those who live with incurable cancer and their families. This will go some way to ensuring that fear of suffering does not dictate a person's final hours, nor the memories their loved ones will carry throughout their own lives.

The United Kingdom parliament resoundingly rejected an Assisted Dying bill in 2015 as there is no "safe system" and we urge the Victorian parliament to do the same.

Yours sincerely,

The undersigned 101 Victorian Cancer specialists.



Is it true that Australia can't handle the truth?

By Paul O'Rourke

It seems Australia "can't handle the truth", to borrow a line from *A Few Good Men*.

Channel 10 Perth decided at the 11th hour that our [Emily's Voice] latest ad featuring teen mum Nikki was too provocative for *The Project and Offspring*, despite having run similar ads during these programs in the past. ...

Ten gave a weak excuse two days before the ad was due to run for rejecting the *Offspring* ad, saying the content was "contradictory to the show's storyline", and didn't explain why we couldn't advertise during *The Project*. Maybe the content could offend hosts Carrie Bickmore and Waleed Aly?

We responded by moving our advertising spend to Channel Nine during *News, 60 Minutes and The Block*. Channel Seven had no qualms about running the ad during *Home and Away, The News and Sunday Night*.

There is a certain irony about Ten rejecting the ad considering the broadcaster passionately and eloquently defended our ads when a viewer complained last September that the content was political and should bear an authorisation. ...

A few weeks ago we were told our latest ad was unsuitable for Perth buses, despite the Public Transport Authority welcoming explicit ads for Sexpo featuring links to pornographic websites. The Sexpo ad also ran on commercial television. Complaints against the broadcast ads were dismissed by the Advertising Standards Bureau.

Our ads have already been banned on Government buses in other States. We were told that the policy in eastern states was to reject all advertising for contentious issues or products. At first the government bus companies in Tasmania and the Hunter Valley tolerated the ads, although we couldn't show polaroid ultrasound images of children in the womb.

Then the ads were rejected outright after a campaign featuring Madeleine, who had an abortion as a younger woman and regrets her uninformed choice. Apparently abortion grief is not something people should have to consider while heading to work, school or uni.

However, we have no such concerns about graphic ads warning of the dangers of smoking, speeding or excessive sun exposure.



APN Outdoor, the company responsible for selling bus advertising in WA, couldn't give a reason why our Perth ads were unsuitable, citing "contract confidentiality". However, we understand that an MP concerned about the Sexpo ad was told the transport authority did not wish to "censor" any content. Except ours.

Thankfully, billboard companies have no such concerns with our ads, including ultrasound images, proudly displaying them on main roads in Perth, Bunbury and Albany. They are eagerly accepted in Queensland, NSW and Tasmania.

A beautiful Father's Day ad honouring dads has been caught up in the hysteria of political correctness, with the TV regulator ordering Dads4Kids to add a political authorisation, ending its 13-year run of free publicity as a Community Service Announcement. The organisation can't afford to pay for the campaigns.

Google, Facebook and Instagram are also making it increasingly difficult for us to advertise, restricting the keywords and search terms we can use within campaigns. We can't for example, use "abortion" or "pregnant" to help people find us on Google. Facebook and Instagram effectively penalise us for using these terms as hashtags, favouring abortion providers over those trying to reduce abortions.

We continue to challenge the restrictions, both directly and indirectly through political and legal means, but the censorship is of concern as we seek to help women make an informed choice about an unplanned or crisis pregnancy.

Thankfully the rise of online and social media advertising provide an almost limitless range of options to share our message of truth and hope.

This article was first published at emilysvoice.com