

Parliamentary Inquiry into Voluntary Assisted Dying

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Submission from Lori D Martin, Aged 70years, Post Code [REDACTED]

I support making Voluntary Assisted Dying legal in the Northern Territory as do the vast majority of Territorians. Between 73 and 85% at 2024 count.

Eligibility should be based on persons who have a serious and incurable condition which is causing intolerable suffering to the individual. It should be available regardless of a person's life expectancy timeline. Only those who are suffering greatly can be aware the full extent of a prolonged, drawn out and painful death and they should be offered the choice of dying with dignity.

Persons over the age of 16 years and those who have resided in the NT for a minimum of one year.

Advanced Care Directives should be accepted in all cases including dementia and other loss of decision-making capacity.

As per 2024 Final Report into VAD in the NT: "The NT should develop and fund a single, centralized service for the delivery of VAD. This should include VAD practitioner's, pharmacists and care navigators. Due to the very specific cultural safety concerns related to provision of VAD, the service should stand alone and clearly separate from existing NT Health facilities."

Monitoring safe and effective delivery could include a two-stage assessment by suitably qualified medical practitioners followed by issue of prescription subject to reporting, supply, storage and disposal or use of substance. Legislation should include provision for a responsible contact person for those who elect self-administration for VAD.

The recommendations provided in the completed 'Report into VAD, Final Report 2024 are extensive. This publication after considerable consultation with numerous and varied professionals takes into account the varied peoples and remote places of the Northern Territory.

I thank you for the opportunity and trust the NT government will act favorably on this without delay.

I have made the Northern Territory my home and contributed since 1982. I am now neither physically able to move, nor do I wish to die anywhere other than my beautiful Territory. My chronic illness is stripping the life away from me in stages as each day passes. It is eroding life's small pleasures one by one. Only those who have experienced this or witnessed a loved one's decline can understand that palliative care is not an option for everyone. Please give me some hope. No-one wishes to leave a corpse for paramedics and police to have to deal with. Please allow me the choice of a dignified death.