

From: [REDACTED]
To: [LA VAD](#)
Subject: Submission - Parliamentary Inquiry into Voluntary Assisted Dying
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To the Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee:

This is our submission to the Inquiry into VAD.

We support the re-introduction of VAD in the Territory (it should never have been repealed in the first place many years ago), and therefore, we would like the LCA Committee to hear our views on this matter:

- The Northern Territory Government must make VAD legal in the Northern Territory;
- This issue is **not** a political nor a religious one and must never be treated as such;
- The wishes of the constituents must prevail.
- Each member of Parliament must consult their constituents to find out what their views are and not simply rely on a Parliamentary inquiry. (As elected members, they must know their constituents, their views and wishes, (not just on VAD but on all matters affecting them));
- The application to access VAD must not be an onerous process, with as much red tape removed as much as possible; and
- Decisions to grant access to VAD must be made in a timely manner.

- The **eligibility criteria** that people should meet before accessing VAD must include **ALL** of the following:
 - They must have a terminal illness confirmed by 2 medical professionals;
 - They must be of sound mind and capable of making their own decisions;
 - Their decisions must be made voluntarily; and
 - They must be residents of the Northern Territory and have lived

here continuously for 12 months or longer.

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- The **VAD process** should involve:
 - **For terminally-ill people accessing VAD:**
 - Confirmation of a person's terminal medical condition by two medical professionals (GP and or specialist); and
 - Confirmation that the terminally-ill person has fully understood the VAD process.
 - **For the medical profession/health department:**
 - GPs and specialists, nurses and other health professionals in both public and private health sectors should be able to provide advice and information to patients wanting to know about accessing the VAD option;
 - These health professionals should be able to confirm a person's terminal medical condition; and
 - There must be **support services** across the NT for people who wish to access VAD, and for the families whose family member had accessed VAD. These should include counselling, advice, information, on-going support;
 - **For the general community:**
 - Information/educational sessions to be provided to communities **throughout the NT** before and after VAD becomes legal in the NT;
 - Up-to-date information on the VAD process to be made accessible to a terminally-ill person who wishes to access VAD;
 - **Using interpreters** during all interactions with a terminally-ill person should language be a barrier. This applies to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people from non-English speaking backgrounds, and people from the Deaf community); and
 - **Written information** (factsheets, FAQs etc) on the VAD and the processes involved should also be made available in languages other than English, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages, and **videos in Auslan** for the Deaf;

- **For people living in remote communities:**
 - They should have better access to telehealth, video conferencing or other means of communication with medical professionals and support services based in major NT centres – they should not have to wait for medical professionals to visit the remote communities before any action is undertaken;
 - There should be no need to transport patients to a major centre for assessment; and
 - Local public/private medical clinic staff should be part of the VAD process, be involved in information-giving, receiving and sharing, as they are usually the first point of contact for local residents;

We would appreciate being kept informed of the results of the inquiry and subsequent steps to be taken by the NT Government.

Kevin and Aurora Quinn

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