

Submission to Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee re VAD

9th August, 2025

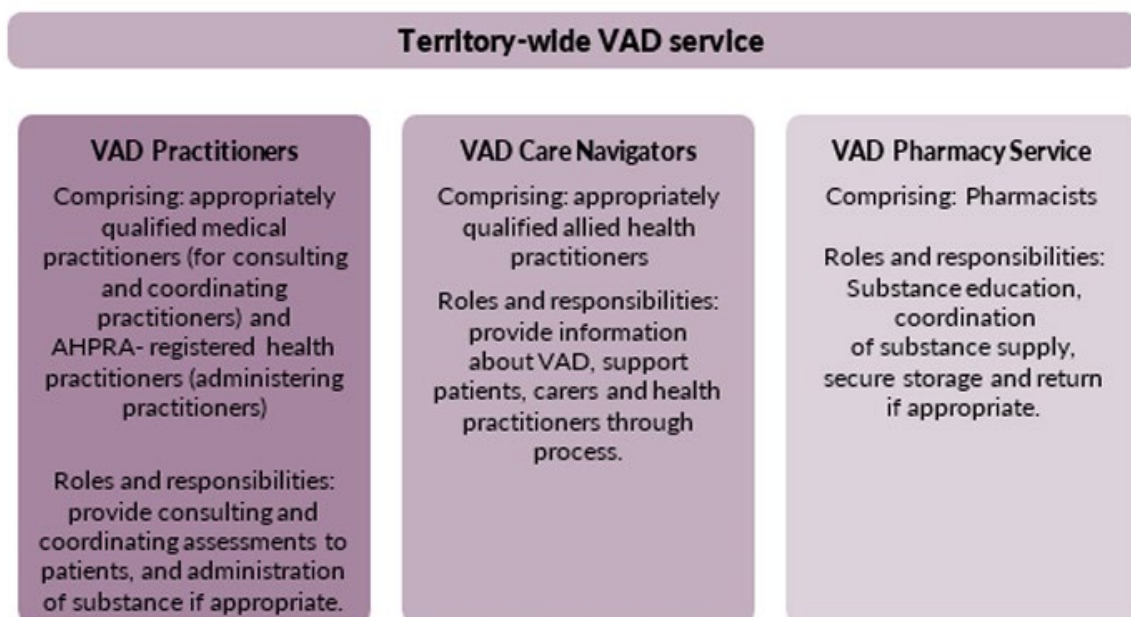
1. Do you support making VAD legal in the NT?

By all means I do. “The Northern Territory is now the only jurisdiction in Australia without a VAD law. In 2023, the NT Government assembled an Expert Advisory Panel to consider the legalisation of VAD in the Territory. The panel recommended the NT government draft a VAD bill to bring the Territory in line with the rest of the country. My fellow Aussies, who happen to live in the Northern Territory, fully deserve to have VAD in the NT.

2. What eligibility criteria should a person need to meet before they can access VAD? To access voluntary assisted dying, you must meet all the eligibility criteria: Have an eligible condition. Have decision-making capacity. Be acting voluntarily and without coercion. Be at least 18 years of age. Fulfil residency requirements. Have an eligible disease, illness or medical condition.

3. How could the NT make sure that an eligible person can access VAD in a safe and effective way, including people living in remote areas and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people? 2024 Expert Panel Recommendation: The NT should develop and fund a single, centralised service for the delivery of VAD. This should include VAD practitioners, pharmacists and care navigators. Due to the very specific cultural safety concerns related to provision of VAD, the service should be stand-alone, and separate from existing NT Health facilities Strait Islander people.

Proposed Model of VAD Service Delivery



Delivering VAD in remote communities

2024 Expert Panel Recommendation: *Subject to amendment of Commonwealth legislation, telehealth should be permitted for VAD purposes provided at least one assessment is conducted in person.*

Safely Regulate VAD

As **Professor Ben White and Professor Lindy Willmott** explained in their four year project, '**Optimal Regulation of Voluntary Assisted Dying**', which includes research into VAD systems in Australia, Canada and Belgium: "This project will make recommendations about how best to safely regulate VAD."

I personally believe that these recommendations will positively influence the safety and success of VAD in the Northern Territory.

<https://research.qut.edu.au/voluntary-assisted-dying-regulation/>

The project has two stages:

Stage one

Determine how current regulatory forces – including laws, guidelines and policies, ethical codes and training – work together to guide decision-making about VAD.

Stage two

Design an optimal holistic regulatory framework that strategically aligns regulatory forces guiding decision-making about VAD to promote high quality, patient-centred end-of-life care.

4. How could the NT monitor the process to ensure VAD is delivered safely and effectively? According to the 2024 Expert Panel a recommendation was made that an independent statutory body (Review Board) should be established to monitor compliance in every case and to review the operation of the Act. The functions, membership and responsibilities of the Review Board should be as outlined in Chapter 6 of the 2024 Expert Panel Report." Centralised model 2024 Expert Panel Recommendation: The NT should develop and fund a single, centralised service for the delivery of VAD. This should include VAD practitioners, pharmacists and care navigators. Due to the very specific cultural safety concerns related to provision of VAD, the service should be stand-alone, and clearly separate from existing NT Health facilities.

Dr Craig Glasby