

**From:** [Maggie Crewes](#)  
**To:** [LA VAD](#)  
**Subject:** Submissions into the inquiry on Voluntary Assisted Dying.  
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Dear Committee leading the inquiry into VAD in NT,

**I would like to register my personal opposition to any proposed bill.**

I work with Aboriginal people here in Alice Springs, and have a background in health and cross cultural community work. I observe through both my own experience and anecdotal evidence from others, of both families and individuals who struggle to navigate medical, educational, social welfare and legal systems (to name just a few of the major ones), and who are required to sign consents for bail orders, medical treatments child care orders, domestic violence orders and many other important life issues ... and even with the aid of an interpreter, will tell me that actually they have little or no idea what they just signed, nor the meaning of it.

I hear of Aboriginal people expressing their deep suspicion and fear of a government bill in regard to VAD, that this will be used against them to kill off their elders and the many chronically sick people who suffer from chronic diseases, and hold fears that in the name of an Australian law, the government will use this proposed bill to legalise a form of denying them the right to a dignified life, even in the midst of chronic illness.

Currently in NT, the only Palliative care options for terminally ill patients or those with severely debilitating, long-term diseases, is available only in Darwin and Alice Springs, and yet we hear that VAD may be introduced and available in many other smaller regional centres throughout the Territory if it were introduced, and yet where there is no alternative to ease any pain, suffering and physical and emotional support during their chronic sicknesses.

IF VAD is presented as the ONLY option available and there is no alternative, credible, accessible palliative care or support services in these very remote locations being offered to relieve pain and suffering and so that people can live out their final days in dignity, being surrounded by loved ones on their home country, and in their communities (which is what most Aboriginal peoples want), then this is a denial of a true and credible choice. and yet again, disenfranchises Aboriginal peoples from their choice and rights.

**Therefore, I repeat, I would like to register my personal opposition to any proposed bill.**

Sincerely,

Maggie Crewes  
