

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [LA VAD](#)  
**Subject:** VAD in the NT  
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Good evening,

My name is Sylvia Kendall and I live in [REDACTED]

1 **Question 1: Do you support making VAD legal in the NT?**

I oppose introducing VAD in the Northern Territory. We don't need more avenues for killing our people; we already kill untold numbers via abortion and other 'legal' means! We need much better and more available palliative care to be made available to all sick people as they approach the natural end of their lives. Many, many people experience real terror of being old and becoming sick and helpless, yet their lived experiences are undoubtedly of great value to the younger generations. Much more attention needs to be paid to support for depression, loneliness and fear of abandonment, safety of all people especially those most vulnerable who are so often targeted in their homes. This isn't just a matter of money; the selection of the most appropriate and caring people to work in this industry is needed. Support for the natural caregivers among the family members needs to be provided. Many families may be more willing and able to assist with this care if their financial needs were considered realistically. A world has been developed where it is no longer possible for a family to support themselves adequately unless both partners are working. This is so wrong and has been justified by the unceasing claims that there is no value in raising your own children and parents who want to do this are devalued by our society. This means that whole generations of children are basically raised by the State! And the natural caregivers in the families are no longer available to care for their elderly or sick relatives. How much is it costing society to pay for the increasing problems of kids with no effective parenting due to the unrealistic expectations engendered in our current society. The vast sums spent on things like this would be far better spent on looking after our elderly and sick through really good palliative care and support rather than fostering a feeling of being unwanted in their minds and, perhaps unknowingly, engendering the belief that they owe it to their families and to society to just 'go to sleep' and resolve the societal problem they may have come to believe their continued existence is creating.

2 **Question 2: What eligibility criteria should a person need to meet before they can access VAD?**

- At least 18 years old.
- Mental competence to consent.
- Diagnosed to die within the next 6 months.
- Experiencing intolerable suffering in relation to the terminal diagnosis.
- Have had access to adequate palliative and aged care services for a minimum specified period.

- Mental health assessment must be done to rule out mental health causing the wish to die.
- Support services offered as an alternative to VAD.
- In all cases, family needs to be informed and consulted.

I have personally heard Indigenous people in hospital saying they hate coming to hospital as they believe that they won't ever go back home but will be killed while in hospital. It is totally unacceptable in our society to know that sick people are scared to seek medical care in hospital in case they are killed!

**3 Question 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 area, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people?**

- Remote areas should be excluded as dying substances should not be allowed in remote communities.

**4 Question 4: How could the NT monitor the process to ensure VAD is delivered safely and effectively?**

- The oversight boards needs to include multiple people who oppose all VAD to ensure adequate scrutiny as these boards can often act as an advocacy group recommending expanded access. There should be representation from the Christian community and Aboriginal community who oppose VAD for belief and cultural reasons.
- All requests to be logged online to ensure cooldown periods are being adhered to and not just being backdated.
- All statistics and timeframes should be publicly available including misuse.

These statements are consistent with my strongly held beliefs and I am sure there are many others who hold similar views. There are far too many in society who seem to think they are the sole arbiters of what is right or wrong, and unfortunately, their loudly voiced opinions backed up and repeated ad infinitum by the main stream media, too often hold sway. Many people are intimidated and feel helpless to protest. I hope there are enough of us to bring back some sanity and morality in our society. I know this is in many hearts and most people genuinely want to do what is right. All need to understand that the politicians and others in public office should be genuine reflectors of their constituents wishes not campaigning to shape those wishes to their preconceived ideas. There are also those in power who are reluctant to speak out against the current mood for fear of loss of reputation and position. And the general population needs to understand that their voices are very important and that they can speak up without being afraid of censure and/or cancellation in our current world. I hope this last sentence is still true in the current trend to ban any and all semblance of free speech.

Regards and in hope,  
Sylvia Kendall