

August 29th, 2025

Dear Sir/Madam,

I wish to state my opposition to the Voluntary Assisted Dying legislation being considered by the NT government.

My name is Iain Radvan. I am a Catholic priest. I live in [REDACTED]

I have had more than one experience of accompanying a person who was considering choosing death as a way to relieve them of their suffering. Loneliness, chronic pain, a loss of purpose in life all pressed them to imagine suicide. But in fact, they did not want to die; they wanted relief from their symptoms and a positive change to their circumstances. My caring attentive presence each day gave them hope for a better future, alive.

If the NT territory were to fund better palliative care, and better mental health support, there would be no need to fund assisted dying programs.

Assisted suicide encourages a culture of death, that is, it creates a culture in which suicide is a normal option for anyone to take when under extreme stress, with legalised assistance or not. Again, more government support for mental health programs would obviate this mindset.

There are many other reasons not to support VAD anywhere in Australia that others have submitted, including loss of trust in doctors by the indigenous population, and the concern that the mentally ill, frail aged and disabled would choose VAD so as to lessen their burden on society.

Sincerely

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]