

May 2, 2016

Re: Bill C-14

**Dear Honourable Members of the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights**

Thank you for your willingness to serve on this committee dealing with this sensitive matter of euthanasia and assisted suicide. May you receive guidance and insight to make decisions that are for the good of all Canadians.

**Erecting Safeguards on State-Condoned Killings**

If parliament rejects the still available option to prohibit all forms of assisted suicide, the following amendments to Bill C-14 will help reduce the practice of this irreversible procedure.

1. 241.2(3)(a): Replace “be of the opinion that the person meets all the criteria...” to “have documented proof that the person meets all the criteria...:
  - a. **Rationale:** If documented proof is not needed it will be nearly impossible to prosecute those who abuse assisted suicide.
  
2. 241.2(2)(c): remove the words “or psychological”. Add to s. 241.2(2) the following: “(e) a mental illness or psychiatric disorder is not a grievous or irremediable medical condition for the purposes of this section.”
  - a. **Rationale:** When people are suffering from terminal illnesses, family members and friends certainly know about their suffering since their condition is out in the open for all to see. These family members and friends can then offer help and assistance where needed to alleviate their suffering. Because of their help and care, decisions to pursue assisted suicide might be put off by the people suffering. However, many people with psychological disorders often suffer in silence with many friends, co-workers, family members not fully realizing their condition. If people with psychological disorders are given access to assisted suicide many will seek an end to their lives without first seeking help from those around them. If their lives are ended before seeking help from those around them who were unaware of their condition, it will only cause more psychological trauma for those who did not offer help and often times could not offer help to the people suffering. Those who have experienced the suicide of a friend, family member, or co-worker are often left with a burden of guilt as they wonder what they could have done to prevent this tragedy. This will only be compounded if access to assisted suicide is given to those with psychological disorders.

3. Add conscience protection language in order to protect those in medicine who feel strongly that assisted suicide is wrong
  - a. **Rationale:** We must protect our doctors who feel that practicing assisted suicide is committing murder. Never should anyone be forced to commit and act that they feel is murder. If we do not include conscience protection language in the law we will only force doctors out of Canada or out of the medical profession entirely. We will prevent many students from taking up this profession in Canada and will prevent foreign doctors who desire to practice medicine in Canada from coming here.
  
4. Remove 241.2(4) **Unable to sign**
  - a. **Rationale:** We must ensure that the person who seeks assisted suicide is the one signing the necessary documentation. If we do not, the final decision to pursue assisted suicide will often be made by a third party instead of the one suffering the terminally ill condition.