

By e-mail to: PDAM@parl.gc.ca

January 31, 2016

Kenneth and Jana Abramson

Dear Special Joint Committee on Physician-Assisted Dying,

The wise decision of the Supreme Court of Canada to allow assisted dying was very welcome to us although neither of us now suffers from a terminal illness.

However a member of our family died by suicide while he was under the care of a psychiatrist. If he had the choice at the time to take advantage of this type of legislation he may not have taken his life or he could have chosen to die painlessly with his family at his side.

Another member of our extended family died from ALS after suffering in pain for a long time.

Please consider the following points:

1. We believe that the legislation **should not** contain a list of approved qualifying conditions which would unfairly impede access for patients who are experiencing grievous and irremediable suffering.
2. We have prepared Advanced Directives which clearly state that we do not want to continue living if we are diagnosed with severe dementia. We fully expect that our Advanced Directives will be followed. Therefore the legislation must allow assisted dying in conditions such as dementia if the patient had provided clear, written consent before becoming ill.
3. **All Canadians** must have access to physician-assisted dying. Physicians, hospitals or other facilities caring for the ill must provide a qualified medical professional (including healthcare practitioners such as nurses and physicians' assistants) who can assist a person who wishes to end his/her life provided two physicians can verify free and informed consent.

Thank you for your consideration.

Kenneth and Jana Abramson