



Great News! The Dying with Dignity Bill is DEAD in Ireland

A message from Hope Ireland, published on July 22, 2021

We are very pleased to inform you that the Oireachtas Committee on Justice has refused to progress the Dying with Dignity (DWD) bill any further, and recommended a special parliamentary committee examine the whole area of “assisted dying”. This is the second time that the DWD bill has failed to progress to completion through the Dáil (first in 2015).

This is a significant victory. It means euthanasia/assisted suicide proponents will be back to square one—and their path is less clear now: they could either reintroduce a “narrower” version of the bill, or else wait for the government to set up a special committee to examine the issue. We welcome the Committee’s report.

It is interesting to note that the Committee already produced [a report](#) on the whole issue of “assisted dying” in 2018 and concluded that it was “not in a position to recommend legislative change at this time.”

The 2020 DWD bill passed Second Stage last October, and since then the Committee on Justice had been engaged in “pre-legislative scrutiny” on the bill, in order to determine whether it should proceed to committee stage. Today’s report is clear that the bill will not be progressing any further.

The [Committee’s report](#) on the bill is well worth reading to get a flavour of what were the main arguments in the submissions on both sides of the debate. The report is helpfully divided into legal/personal/medical/religious submissions, etc.

Many thanks for all the support over the past number of months. There is so much more I could say, but for now, take a moment to be thankful—we have a victory!

For those who are writing about this victory, the following are helpful points to note:

- A majority of individual medical submissions were against the bill. Nearly all medical stakeholders were against it.
- The report noted that, “A point that was repeated frequently throughout submissions in all categories was concern that this bill could result in abuse of the sick and vulnerable, who may perceive themselves to be a burden on their family and feel pressured into opting for assisted dying.”
- The report noted that, “In some submissions, elderly people expressed their personal dismay, as they felt that after working hard all of their lives, the prospect of this bill being passed made them feel as if society was demonstrating that they were of little value.”
- [The Irish Human Rights & Equality Commission criticised the lack of “safeguards” in the bill.](#)
- [Over 2,500 healthcare professionals signed a public letter rejecting the bill.](#)
- [Experts in palliative medicine strongly criticised the bill in principle and in practice.](#)
- Disability rights advocates strongly criticised the bill in *The Irish Times* ([Conor Lynott](#) and [Kathleen Rogers](#)).
- Euthanasia laws are not safe for people who are at a vulnerable time in their lives.

Again, thank you so much for your support over the past year, and we will keep you updated as developments progress. Please use our victory today to help generate a bit of momentum, especially in the UK, where another assisted death bill is being proposed.

Hope Ireland (www.hopeireland.org)

Promoting positive care pathways at the end of life

The Euthanasia Prevention Coalition exists to protect people by building a well-informed, broadly-based network of groups and individuals for an effective social resistance to euthanasia and assisted suicide.

Euthanasia (MAiD) Deaths in British Columbia

The British Columbia (BC) government released the euthanasia (MAiD) stats to Terry O’Neill, a reporter for *The B.C. Catholic*. O’Neill [states in his article](#) published on July 28, 2021:

The B.C. Catholic requested the detailed provincial statistics after the federal government’s last two annual reports on the contentious subject failed to break down provincial statistics by health region.

The BC government released the data for the first six months of 2021 indicating that there were 923 reported MAiD deaths.

On June 30, Health Canada released the [Second Annual Report](#) on euthanasia and assisted suicide (MAiD) which indicated that the number of assisted deaths in Canada increased more than 34% in 2020 to 7,595 reported assisted deaths, up from 5,660 in 2019.

The BC data indicated that there were 1,572 assisted deaths in 2020, up from 1,280 in 2019. The Health Canada report stated that BC had the highest rate of euthanasia in Canada at 4% of all deaths.

The new BC data indicates a 16% increase from 2020.

Considering that the data from Ontario indicates that there were 1,251 reported euthanasia deaths in the second half of 2020 and 1,127 in the first half of 2020, it is likely that, compared to the first half of 2020 (we do not have the data) that 923 reported deaths in the first half of 2021 is likely greater than a 16% increase compared to the first half of 2020.

Canada’s federal government and the Québec government have both established committees to discuss [the further expansion of euthanasia in Canada](#). They are discussing euthanasia for incompetent people who requested death in their advanced directive, euthanasia for children and the rules to implement euthanasia for people with mental illness alone.

The current Canadian government is committed to more killing. We need your help. We can change the culture with real life stories.

If you have a story about someone who died by euthanasia who may have been depressed, had questionable competency or felt subtly coerced, email Alex Schadenberg at info@epcc.ca or call 1-877-439-3348.



Table 3.1: Total Reported MAiD Deaths in Canada by Jurisdiction, 2016 to 2020

MAiD	NL	PE	NS	NB	QC	ON	MB	SK	AB	BC	YT	NT	NU	Canada
2016	–	–	24	9	494	191	24	11	63	194	–	–	–	1,018
2017	–	–	62	49	853	839	63	57	205	677	–	–	–	2,838
2018	23	8	126	92	1,236	1,500	138	85	307	951	10	–	–	4,478
2019	17	20	147	141	1,602	1,788	177	97	377	1,280	13	–	–	5,660
2020	49	36	188	160	2,268	2,378	214	157	555	1,572	13	–	–	7,595
TOTAL 2016–2020	109	70	547	451	6,453	6,696	616	407	1,507	4,674	50	–	–	21,589

EXPLANATORY NOTES:

1. MAiD cases are counted in the calendar year in which the death occurred (i.e., January 1 to December 31), and are not related to the date of receipt of the written request.
2. For 2016 - Québec data begins December 10, 2015 when its provincial Act respecting end-of-life care came into force. Data for the rest of Canada begins June 17, 2016.
3. Previous years’ reporting has been revised to include corrections and additional reports.
4. This chart represents MAiD deaths where a report was received by Health Canada by January 31, 2021 (7,384 deaths) as well as additional MAiD deaths reported by the jurisdictions (211 deaths) where the report was not yet received by Health Canada, for a total of 7,595 MAiD deaths in 2020.
5. Cases of self-administered MAiD are included in this chart. They are not identified by year or jurisdiction in order to protect confidentiality.
6. Due to small numbers, some data have been suppressed to protect confidentiality (represented by dashes).

Table 3.1 from the [Second Annual Report on Medical Assistance in Dying in Canada, 2020](#)

Québec Mother Wants Euthanasia for Her Four-Year-Old Son

An article by [Fabienne Tercaefs for Radio-Canada](#) on August 12, 2021 (translated by Google) concerns Karie-Lyn Pelletier, from the L'Islet region in Québec, who wants her son to die by euthanasia (MAiD).

Karie-Lyn's son, Abel, is four years old. He has MEDNIK syndrome which is an incurable genetic disease. According to the article, Abel is severely disabled, he is deaf, lives with a severe intellectual disability and has daily intestinal problems. He has already come close to death several times. His mother stated that, "There is no possibility that my son will recover from his illness. No possibility that his quality of life will improve."

The current euthanasia law permits euthanasia (MAiD) for people who are at least 18 years old and either capable of consenting, or had been approved for euthanasia while capable of consenting. Clearly, Karie-Lyn is challenging the law.

Abel has been close to death on several occasions. When he has another medical crisis why not allow him to die a natural death rather than lethally injecting him?

On Wednesday August 11, Karie-Lyn invited her Member of Parliament Bernard Généreux (CPC) and Senator Pierre-Hugues Boisvenu to her home to discuss extending euthanasia to her son.

According to Tercaefs, Généreux stated:

The Conservative member believes that the subject must be broached, even though it is a delicate and, above all, very emotional issue. "These are not easy subjects, as a parliamentarian. There is no such thing as perfect law in this area. You have to go to people who have extraordinary experiences,"

More concerning are the comments by Senator Boisvenu who wants to champion the cause of child euthanasia. Tercaefs reported that:

He wants Karie-Lyn Pelletier to testify before the Senate to explain what she wants and, perhaps, to help change attitudes around end-of-life care. When we call on families who are going through the tragedies to which the laws must address, it is truly our experts at heart who make sure they will influence senators.



Tercaefs reported that Michel Bureau, President of the Commission on End-of-Life Care said that the issue of child euthanasia was being debated:

...Michel Bureau recognizes that medical assistance in dying for children remains a taboo subject. In addition, he specifies that one must be extremely careful to avoid eugenics. "This is what is dangerous; a slippage that only allows those who are beautiful and perfect to live," warns the president of the Commission on End-of-Life Care. "We must take the time to look at the question. This problem is even more complicated than that of mental health."

As stated before, when Canada legalized euthanasia it crossed the clear line in the sand by allowing medical killing. Crossing the line eliminates the clear boundary. Euthanasia was sold to Canadians as being only for competent people who freely consent, but that negates all of the people, including children, who have grievous conditions but are not competent or who cannot freely consent.

Our current government wants to further expand euthanasia in Canada. It is our fear that this story, or a similar one, will cause parliamentarians to agree to expand euthanasia to children.

Canada is having an election. Clearly, change is necessary.



Jean Echlin
(1931-2021)

*We Celebrate her Life
& Mourn her Death*

By Alex Schadenberg

Jean Echlin passed away on July 16, 2021.

Jean was a past president and founding vice president of the Euthanasia Prevention Coalition (EPC). She was a past director of the Hospice of Windsor and was awarded the Dorothy Ley Award in 2005 for excellence in palliative care in Ontario.

Jean was an extraordinary woman who I first met through Mark Pickup. Mark is a disability writer and activist who told me, many years ago, that Jean Echlin was the most compassionate woman. After meeting her I had to agree; Jean was the most compassionate and caring woman I have ever known.

When I wanted to found the EPC, I was looking for a few people who would be committed to the cause, who had incredible experience and would be willing to work together. I found those qualities in Dr. Barrie deVeber as the founding president and Jean Echlin as vice president.

Jean was more than just a partner in the cause; she was a speaker, a writer, a leader and a truly compassionate and caring woman. She made me feel like I was her son.

In October 2010, Jean Echlin and Joanne St. Pierre wrote the booklet, "Palliative Care, Not Euthanasia," as a submission to the Parliamentary Committee on Palliative and Compassionate Care, an all party committee formed in response to the defeat of euthanasia Bill C-384 by a vote of 228 to 59.

In November 2011, Jean [wrote about her concerns](#) related to the *Carter* court case in BC that led to the legalization of euthanasia in Canada:

With the advent of *Carter versus the Attorney General of Canada*, Canada's laws prohibiting euthanasia and assisted suicide are being challenged again. This despite the fact that our federal Parliament vetoed Bill C-384 that sought to legalize assisted suicide and euthanasia by an overwhelming vote of 228 to 59 in 2010.

If the pro-killing side gets its way, five people on the Supreme Court can overrule Parliament and demand change in the *Criminal Code* that forbids euthanasia and assisted suicide. What would this scenario do to our democratic process and the rights of a majority of Canadians?

Who would be at risk? You are. So is everyone in this country.

In April 2016, in response to Bill C-14, the bill that legalized euthanasia in Canada, [Jean wrote to the Minister of Justice](#):

How dare we ask our doctors and nurses to put patients to death when a safer option exists. Healthcare providers must never assume the role of killers or refer to another who will provide the "death management". Trust and legal issues will make more problems for our sick and elderly.

We will send you a copy of the booklet, "Palliative Care, Not Euthanasia" when you [make a donation](#) in memory of Jean Echlin.

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