



**CAMPAIGN FOR  
DIGNITY  
IN DYING.**

**Join the  
movement for an  
assisted dying law**

# Dignity in Dying

The campaign to end the blanket ban on assisted dying by allowing the choice for terminally ill, mentally competent adults



# What do we mean by assisted dying?

**It's complicated – there are lots of variations!**

- When a **terminally ill, mentally competent adult** takes prescribed medication which will end their life
- Under an assisted dying law that **Dignity in Dying** is calling for, two doctors would be required to assess the patient to confirm that the patient is mentally competent, is making their own choice and that their condition is terminal. Additional safeguards include a mandatory cooling off period and possibly judicial oversight
- Other organisations campaign for broader laws

# Where assisted dying is legal

**Assisted dying** – when terminally ill, mentally competent adults control manner and timing of their death

**11 jurisdictions in the USA including California, Oregon and Washington DC. The whole of New Zealand and all Australian states.**

**Broader laws** – ‘assisted suicide’ or ‘euthanasia’ when those with incurable and unbearable suffering may be able to have their lives ended by themselves or a doctor

**Luxembourg, Netherlands, Belgium, Switzerland, Canada, Spain, Portugal and Colombia**

# What is the current law in the UK?

- The UK bans someone assisting another person to die
- Nonetheless, **the law will turn a blind eye** to compassionate amateur assistance to die
- However some still face traumatic investigations for simply following their loved ones wishes.  
**Compassion is not a crime**
- The current law does nothing to protect **vulnerable people**
- The current law does not allow dying patients to **seek advice on an assisted death** from their healthcare professionals



## Time for Choice:

The truth about  
the UK's ban on  
assisted dying



Current law is  
**unjust, unfair  
and  
unregulated**

- Up to 650 terminally ill people a year take their own lives in this country, with many more attempts
- 17 people a day will suffer as they die, even with the very best care
- Around one person per week travels for an assisted deaths in Switzerland



# Parliament & the Courts



# Prue Leith, Esther Rantzen and late Diana Rigg back assisted dying

Surge in media attention as important public figures come out in support





# Challenging the law through Parliament

## Health and Social Care Committee inquiry:

- Urged Government to engage in debate and prepare for law change across the UK.
- Over 60% of contributions to the Committee were supportive of law change.
- Confirmed that palliative care is not harmed by assisted dying, in fact it improves when law change is introduced.

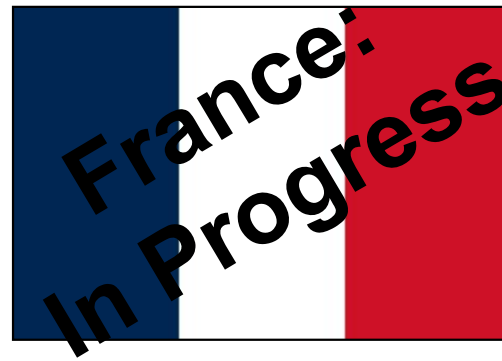


# Current Parliamentary Situation



- On July 26<sup>th</sup> 2024 Lord Falconer introduced a new Private Members' Bill through the House of Lords, with a second hearing **15<sup>th</sup> Nov**
- The Commons Private Members' Ballot is scheduled for 5<sup>th</sup> Sept, and may also produce a Bill
- The new parliament has more MPs who are supportive of a change
- The PM Keir Starmer has confirmed he would allow parliamentary time for a free vote

# Progress in and around the British Isles



# Faith and Assisted Dying



- **80% of people of faith still support assisted dying**  
*Populous survey 2019*

- Archbishops Carey and Tutu both support compassion and choice



- Rabbi Romain is on the board of Dignity in Dying
- A local member who accompanied her father to Dignitas has a letter of support from their Vicar
- More strongly religious countries like Spain and Portugal have still embraced choice



# The medical profession has shifted

## Healthcare Professionals

- The **British Medical Association** (BMA) moved its position from official opposition to neutral in 2021
- The **Royal College of Surgeons** of England is the most recent College
- Nearly all Colleges and medical bodies are now neutral on assisted dying



Royal College  
of Physicians



# Biggest ever public poll on assisted dying confirms every constituency backs law change



Three-quarters of respondents (75%) said that they would support making it lawful for someone to seek assisted dying in the UK, with just 14% against. March 2024

# Dying Matters - Other things to consider:

You can state your wishes for your care if you are not able to communicate them yourself:

- **Advance Decision to Refuse Treatment (Living Will)** – if you do not want life sustaining treatment in some circumstances
- **Advance Statement** – if you want to document how you would like to be cared for

See [www.compassionindying.org.uk](http://www.compassionindying.org.uk) or [www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk)

# Do you Agree? Can you help us?

- Check out the website [www.dignityindying.org.uk](http://www.dignityindying.org.uk) or social media
- Sign up to e-newsletter, follow on social media, tell your friends and family
- Become a member or donate to the campaign
- Join up with other supporters to campaign in your area – join the Yorkshire group!  
[yorkshire.group@dignityindying.org.uk](mailto:yorkshire.group@dignityindying.org.uk)
- **Write to your MP** - share your personal story

**We need your support today.**



# Thank You

*... any questions?*

***Check the website for more information***

