

SHEDDING LIGHT ON ASSISTED SUICIDE IN AMERICA

The Euthanasia Prevention Coalition has produced a new pamphlet, *Shedding Light on Assisted Suicide in America*, to counter the myths that assisted suicide laws are safe and without abuse.

This pamphlet explains how the assisted suicide laws in Oregon and Washington State work and why they provide no effective oversight.

Shedding Light features the story of Dr. Charles Bentz, who tells how his depressed patient died by assisted suicide in Oregon.

The pamphlet also features a story by Kathryn Judson, about how her husband was pressured to consider dying by assisted suicide in Oregon. She was afraid to leave her husband alone with doctors and nurses.

Finally, it features the story of Jeanette Hall and how Dr. Kenneth Stevens cared enough to gently convince her not to give up on life. Jeanette is happy to be alive!

Order the pamphlet, **\$35 for 100 copies**, **\$90 for 300 copies**, or **\$150 for 600 copies** (+ shipping + taxes on all Canadian orders). Further bulk orders are available upon request (**1-877-439-3348**).

Does legalizing assisted suicide provide freedom and control or is it dangerous by giving control over your life and death to physicians?



The producers of *The Euthanasia Deception* documentary (www.VulnerableFilm.com) are working on a new film dealing with the effects of assisted suicide in America.

Assisted suicide is currently legal in the states of Oregon, Washington, Vermont, California, and the District of Columbia.

If you or a loved one has felt coerced, experienced abuse, or come back from the brink of death by assisted death, we would like to hear from you.

Email a brief description with contact information to VulnerableStories@gmail.com.

ONTARIO “DEATH HOTLINE” DOES NOT PROVIDE CONSCIENCE PROTECTION FOR PHYSICIANS

On April 2, *The Canadian Press* reported that the Ontario Ministry of Health was setting up a toll free number to provide access to “medically assisted death,” euthanasia and assisted suicide in Ontario.

The Canadian Press reported Ontario Health Minister, Eric Hoskins saying:

...a ‘care co-ordination service’ for medically assisted death will be up and running as early as May.

The service will allow patients to contact central staff who will connect them with health-care providers prepared to handle requests for a medically assisted death.

‘That patient, or their family members or their caregiver would have the ability to be in contact with the care-co-ordination service directly,’

The article suggests that the hotline will enable people to bypass doctors who conscientiously object to killing

...see Ontario on page 04



BRITISH HIGH COURT DISMISSES ASSISTED SUICIDE REQUEST

The UK High Court decided to dismiss a request by Noel Conway to hear his challenge of the assisted suicide law.

The High Court decided that it is the role of Parliament to make law and not the role of the Court.

The UK Supreme Court made a similar ruling in the Nicklinson case, when it upheld the assisted suicide law in June, 2014. In the Nicklinson decision the Court asked Parliament to debate assisted suicide.

One of the deciding factors in the decision was that in June, 2015, the British parliament overwhelming rejected an assisted suicide bill by a vote of 330 to 118. Parliament debated assisted suicide and it decided to uphold the assisted suicide law.

Disability activists in the UK remain strongly opposed to assisted suicide.

The British Medical Association has also debated assisted suicide on several occasions and has rejected it.

The Care Not Killing Alliance stated:

This was a troubling case that sought to usurp the democratic will of Parliament.

'The current laws on assisted suicide and euthanasia are simple and clear. They exist to protect those who are sick, elderly, depressed, or disabled from feeling obliged to end their lives.'

The UK Court is acting responsibly by limiting its role to interpreting law, but not making it. Conway has stated that he will appeal the decision.

MINNESOTA SUPREME COURT REJECTS REVIEW OF 2015 CONVICTION OF ASSISTED SUICIDE GROUP

On Tuesday, March 14, 2017 the Minnesota Supreme Court declined to review the conviction of the *Final Exit Network*.

On May 14, 2015, the *Final Exit Network* was found guilty by a jury of assisted suicide. They were sentenced on August 24, 2015.

On December 19, 2016, the Minnesota Court of Appeals upheld the conviction of the *Network* in the assisted suicide death of Doreen Dunn who died on May 30, 2007.

In a press release, the *Network* stated that the Supreme Court of Minnesota declined to review their conviction so they would be asking the Supreme Court of the United States to review it.

During the 2015 trial, *La Crosse Tribune* reported:

Dakota County prosecutor Elizabeth Swank told jurors that the evidence showed that two members of Final Exit Network went to Dunn's home in Apple Valley to assist her suicide. They then removed the equipment that she used for suicide so that it appeared she had died of natural causes.

Dunn's husband of 29 years arrived home on May 30, 2007, to find her dead on the couch. Swank said Dunn had a blanket pulled up to her neck with her hands folded on her chest.

Swank said that despite Dunn's pain and depression, she had no life-threatening illness and her family was puzzled by her death. There were good things happening in her life: Her daughter who had been in Africa for about a year was coming home the next day and her son's fiancée was scheduled to give birth that week. However, her husband was also planning to move out, the prosecutor said.

The *Final Exit Network* has been prosecuted in several assisted suicide cases. In Georgia, John Celmer, who was depressed after recovering from cancer, was helped by the *Network* to commit suicide. Celmer's widow, Susan Celmer, testified against them. This group takes advantage of people at the most vulnerable time of their lives. Larry Egbert, the former medical director for *Final Exit Network*, lost his medical license in Maryland.

THE EUTHANASIA DECEPTION

A 52-minute documentary featuring powerful testimonies from Belgium, Canada and beyond, exposing the deceptions used by the euthanasia lobby.



Version with French subtitles (avec sous-titres en français) now available.

VulnerableFilm.com

NEW MEXICO SENATE REJECTS ASSISTED SUICIDE BILL

The New Mexico Senate defeated assisted suicide bill 252 by a vote of 22 to 20 on March 15, with 7 Democrats voting with 15 Republicans.

Steve Terrell, for *The Santa Fe New Mexican* stated:

Sen. Craig Brandt, R-Rio Rancho, countered that he couldn't support the bill because of its inherent risks. Doctors, Brandt said, make mistakes every day. Someone diagnosed as terminally ill could actually recover, he said.

Democrats who voted against Stefanics' bill were Pete Campos of Las Vegas; Carlos Cisneros of Questa; Richard Martinez of Española; George Muñoz of Gallup; Clemente Sanchez of Grants; Benny Shendo of Jemez Pueblo; and John Arthur Smith of Deming.

One Republican, Sen. Sander Rue, of Albuquerque, voted for the bill.

On June 30, 2016, the New Mexico Supreme Court in a 5 to 0 decision upheld the New Mexico Court of Appeal decision that assisting a suicide is a crime in *Morris v. Brandenburg*. The Supreme Court decision overturned an activist lower court decision that found a right to assisted suicide in New Mexico.

New Mexico Governor Susana Martinez has said she would have vetoed the bill.

HAWAII ASSISTED SUICIDE BILL DEFEATED

On March 23, Hawaii assisted suicide Bill 1129 was defeated by a 7 to 0 vote to send it back for amendments. Hawaii political leaders listened and understood that the bill was not what the assisted suicide lobby was saying.

The paternalism of the assisted suicide lobby astounds me. They assume that legislators will not read the language of the bill but vote based on sound bites alone. Hawaii legislators read the bill.

Hawaii News Now stated:

On Thursday, March 23, Hawaii lawmakers said the assisted suicide bill is poorly written and would need considerable changes.

The House Health Committee deferred the bill, which essentially killed it.

Washington State lawyer, Margaret Dore, successfully uncovered the truth. Dore wrote in her analysis that “choice” is a big fat fib.” Dore’s assessment was correct and the committee agreed.

Dore’s analysis of SB 1129 stated:

- The act is sold as providing a voluntary patient choice, but the bill doesn’t even have a requirement of being voluntary, capable or consenting when the lethal dose is administered.
- People who ask about the act will lose their right to informed consent: They will lose the right to be told about alternatives for cure.
- The claim that self-administration is required is not true. The act says that a patient “may” self-administer the lethal dose. There is no language that administration “must” be by self-administration.
- Administration of the lethal dose is allowed to occur in private without a doctor or witness present. If the patient objected or even struggled, who would know?
- The death certificate is required to list a terminal disease as the cause of death. The significance is that prosecution will not be possible, no matter what the facts. The death will be a terminal disease (not murder) as a matter of law.
- Enactment will create the perfect crime to put older people in the crosshairs of their heirs and other predators.
- Elder abuse is already not a well-controlled problem. Passing the proposed act will make the situation worse.

Thank you to everyone in Hawaii who worked so hard to get the legislators to read the bill and then reject it.

their patients, while protecting the conscience rights for healthcare professionals.

This hotline does not protect conscience rights for medical professionals in Ontario, even though it will reduce the likelihood that doctors will face disciplinary hearings for not referring their patients to death doctors.

The Ontario College of Physicians and Surgeons still requires physicians, who will not kill their patients, to “effectively refer” them to a doctor who will.

Further to that, even though the death hotline will be promoted throughout Ontario by the Ministry of Health, doctors will be forced to provide information about it to patients who ask about death by lethal drugs.

The Canadian Press article also stated that from June, 2016 to March 30, 2017, 365 people died by euthanasia in Ontario.

The death hotline will accelerate the number of assisted deaths by streamlining the process of finding a doctor who will kill. It will not protect conscience rights for medical professionals in Ontario.



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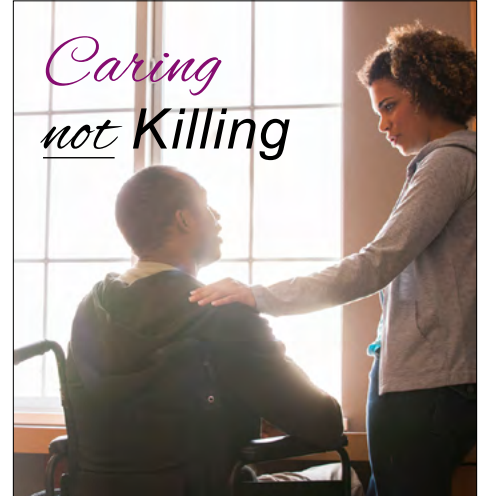
DUTCH DOCTORS GROUP REJECTS SEPARATE RULES CONCERNING EUTHANASIA FOR “COMPLETED LIFE”

Last October, we reported that the Dutch government was planning to expand their euthanasia law to include people who are not physically or psychologically suffering but who believe that their “life is complete.”

DutchNews.nl reported that the Dutch doctors association (KNMG) was not in favour of developing a section of the euthanasia law to prescribe lethal drugs for “completed life”:

Last October, health minister Edith Schippers and justice minister Ard van de Steur said in a briefing to MPs that ‘elderly’ people with a consistent and well-considered wish to die—whether ill or not—should be able to take a drug to end their lives.

The practice would not be considered euthanasia, in which the patient is said to be suffering unbearably, and in which doctors have an active role, and family members would not be allowed to administer the drug.



The KNMG stated that expanding the euthanasia law for reasons of a “completed life” would undermine the current euthanasia law.

DutchNews.nl stated:

However, separate legislation for people with ‘no medical grounds’ for the wish to die could have an undesirable social effect, by stigmatising the elderly, the KNMG said. Instead, the government should invest in measures to make sure the elderly do not feel their lives are pointless.

The expansion of euthanasia rules is likely to become part of the current coalition government talks. D66 is the driving force behind the changes and the VVD have said they will support them. However, the Christian Democrats, who do not back change, are set to have a key role in the new government.

Once killing becomes an acceptable solution to social problems, the only remaining question is what problems will killing become a solution for?

2017 NATIONAL EUTHANASIA SYMPOSIUM

SAVE
THE DATE:

Saturday October 28, 2017
Toronto, Ontario