



Dear Colleagues in the Medical Profession

As you may know during 2018 and 2019 I whole-heartedly supported the campaign to introduce voluntary assisted dying legislation in Western Australia, and this compassionate end of life choice will be a reality when the *Voluntary Assisted Dying Act 2019* becomes effective next year.

Health professionals are integral to the safe operation of the new law, and none more so than doctors. Two independent doctors who hold the qualifications set out in the Act<sup>1</sup> (section 17) must assess any person seeking access to VAD to ensure that he or she meets all the relevant eligibility criteria (section 16). This means that doctors will be needed from all over the State to alleviate end of life suffering for those who choose this path.

If you are willing to participate in the scheme in principle, please fill in the short survey attached and either:

- give it to the person who gave you this letter; or
- return it by mail to Steve Walker, President, Dying with Dignity WA at PO Box 7243, Cloisters Square, Perth 6850 ; or by email to him at [president@dwdwa.org.au](mailto:president@dwdwa.org.au); or return it by mail to Dr Richard Lugg, WA Convenor of Doctors for Assisted Dying Choice, 42A Hooson Way, WILSON WA 6107 or by email to him at [rlugg@iprimus.com.au](mailto:rlugg@iprimus.com.au).

In this first half of 2020, the demands of COVID-19 have placed a heavy burden on everyone in the community, and most especially on our medical practitioners and others in the front line. I salute all of you for your dedication and courage.

An extreme event like this brings closer thoughts of our own mortality and is a reminder of the new options for a good death that will open up under the Act. As doctors we are being asked to facilitate a transition to the availability of these options for those dying from an illness causing them great suffering, and who wish to choose a peaceful death.

With best wishes

Professor Fiona Stanley AC, FAA, FASSA, FAHMS

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.legislation.wa.gov.au/legislation/prod/filestore.nsf/FileURL/mrdoc\\_42491.pdf/\\$FILE/Voluntary%20Assisted%20Dying%20Act%202019%20-%20%5B00-00-00%5D.pdf?OpenElement](https://www.legislation.wa.gov.au/legislation/prod/filestore.nsf/FileURL/mrdoc_42491.pdf/$FILE/Voluntary%20Assisted%20Dying%20Act%202019%20-%20%5B00-00-00%5D.pdf?OpenElement)

## SURVEY

Name and qualifications:

Street or postal address:

Email and/or mobile contact details:

1	Are you willing to participate in assessing patients who seek access to VAD under the <i>Voluntary Assisted Dying Act 2019</i> ?	Yes Yes, for patients I know No
2	If yes, are you willing to have your name added (publicly or anonymously) to a list of health professionals willing to participate in the VAD assessment process? <b>You will be notified as soon as the requisite training is available.</b>	Yes, publicly; or Yes, anonymously (if this option is chosen your name will be given only to DWDWA President Steve Walker and Dr Richard Lugg, one of whom will contact you).
3	If no, would you be prepared to refer a patient requesting access to VAD to a doctor willing to provide an assessment?	Yes No
4	If no to 3, is this for conscientious or other reasons?	Conscientious reasons Other (please specify) Reason: _____ Do not wish to specify
5	Are you willing to contact your colleagues in WA to ask if they are willing to participate in VAD when it is a lawful end of life option?	Yes (please advise contact details for Steve or Richard if successful) No

We would also value your input in providing answers to our further questions below:

6	Would you like your name to be added to the DWDWA supporters' database to receive regular updates during the implementation phase of VAD?	Yes No
7	If not a member of Doctors for Assisted Dying Choice, would you be willing to join (publicly or anonymously)? <b>Links:</b> Home page: <a href="http://drs4assisteddyingchoice.org/">http://drs4assisteddyingchoice.org/</a> Signup: <a href="http://drs4assisteddyingchoice.org/user/register">http://drs4assisteddyingchoice.org/user/register</a>	Yes, publicly Yes, anonymously Already a member No
8	Are you willing to have your name added (publicly or anonymously) to a list of health professionals who support VAD on a national website? This will advance the cause of VAD in states in which it is not yet lawful. <b>Links:</b> Home page: <a href="http://www.hpadchoice.org.au/">http://www.hpadchoice.org.au/</a> <b>explains why this is important</b> , and you can sign up at: Signup: <a href="http://www.hpadchoice.org.au/join_hpad">http://www.hpadchoice.org.au/join_hpad</a>	Yes, publicly Yes, anonymously No

**THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS SURVEY!**