

Dear Members of the Victorian Parliament

We as doctors encourage you to apply your conscience and vote in favour of the introduction of voluntary assisted dying legislation in Victoria this year.

You have the opportunity to reduce the suffering that is currently occurring as terminally ill patients face fear, uncertainty and pain in the final phase of their life.

The introduction of a voluntary assisted dying law would enable terminally ill Victorians to have more open conversations with their medical practitioners and to seek advice on the options available to them.

A voluntary assisted dying law would also ensure doctors no longer operate in a legal grey area when it comes to assisted dying. A more regulated framework would seek to ensure that the vulnerable are provided with more protection. These safeguards are missing at present.

In the absence of a law, patients will continue to resort to violent, lonely suicides to end their own lives causing distress to their families and those medical practitioners that care for them.

A Parliamentary Inquiry and report by a Ministerial Advisory Panel has been conducted over the last two years, and included extensive public consultation and access to expert advice both within Australia and from overseas. The result is a proposed legislative framework with rigorous safeguards, transparency and accountability. It supports medical practitioners existing therapeutic relationships with patients and their families, while making it entirely voluntary for those who do not want to participate.

With these two comprehensive reports, you have access to the information necessary to make an informed decision.

Please give Victorians a choice and medical practitioners the ability to provide humane options to those with significant suffering at the end of their lives.

Yours sincerely