

To the NSW Coroner:

Dear sir or madam, if you are reading this it is no doubt because I have made an attempt at voluntary euthanasia and I sincerely hope I have been successful.

I experienced my first physical MS symptom in 2007 and since then (nine years!) I have experienced progressive loss of function, with the accompanying loss of my social roles and my capacity to complete the activities of daily living. I have multiple, seriously disabling symptoms, and I am in chronic unrelieved pain, wheelchair bound and mostly housebound.

With primary progressive MS, Medical science has nothing to offer me, not even effective palliation of pain or symptom relief. If I had some hope at all, perhaps I would be encouraged, but all I can expect is a continual decline over who knows how many years until death claims me. As one doctor expressed it, "MS is like dying in slow motion".

Where I am in the disease course now is unenviable, but the next stages of this disease are truly horrifying. However, in the absence of voluntary euthanasia laws in this country, I have no option but to experience whatever the disease imposes on me, or to turn to self-help.

Some time ago I downloaded the Peaceful Pill Handbook, and asked my doctor to let me try Endep, ostensibly for neuropathic pain and to help me sleep. Instead of taking the Endep after I had gotten into bed at night to 'help me sleep', I hoarded it.

Once I had enough Endep, I had to wait until my family went on respite, because the handbook said that I needed six to twelve hours undisturbed (closer to 24 hours if possible), and so I had to be sure that my wife and children would be out of the house for more than a day, because I could not risk anyone coming into my room after I had taken the Endep, and an ambulance being called.

I felt obliged to make this attempt perhaps sooner than I should have, because my arms and hands were getting worse, and I had to be sure that I had sufficient fine motor skills left to me so I could take this action myself. MS is unpredictable and in my circumstances, opportunities for getting close to 24 hours undisturbed are rare. I felt I had to act now, before the opportunity was lost.

If we had a compassionate voluntary euthanasia process in this country I would not have had to approach my doctor with a hidden agenda, make preparations secretly, or to do this alone and without medical supervision. I have had to do this dreadful thing without the formal approval of society, without the ability to prepare my family, and my very limited options for finding the time and place to do this means that a carer is likely to be the one to find me, and no doubt involve emergency services, and I would have spared everyone from experiencing things this way if I could have. I am truly sorry.

I know that some 2500 people take their lives in Australia every year, in lonely and often violent circumstances. Many are the chronically or terminally ill, or the very aged. I hope your position and conscience allows you to speak for these voiceless, and for compassionate voluntary euthanasia laws to be enacted soon. I also hope that you will permit my death certificate to state my death was by heart failure as I believe Endep will have that effect, or from 'the complications of MS', not suicide.

Sincerely,

*SB Daniel*

*24-09-16*

*I CERTIFY THIS TO BE A TRUE COPY OF THE ORIGINAL*

*SB Daniel 24.09.16*