

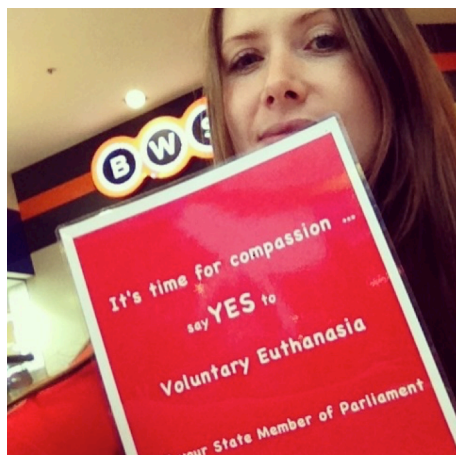
# End of Life Choice

Dec 1

Newsletter on current debates: **young people have a say on voluntary euthanasia**

## Amy Orange, Convenor, SAVE-YA

82% of young Australians believe in an individual's right to a peaceful and dignified death in the event of incurable illness and intolerable suffering (Newspoll, 2012). Young people are not often associated with voluntary euthanasia, but they are just as affected as elderly people by the lack of legal choices at end of life. Young people experience serious and terminal illness which can result in a long and painful death. Young people have accidents which leave them with no quality of life. Sometimes the only legal option to end the suffering is to starve and dehydrate to death, which can take weeks and be extremely traumatic.



Young people are also affected through the trauma of watching a loved one suffering, or from finding out a terminally ill friend or relative has taken their own life in a lonely and violent way because there is no legal option for a peaceful and dignified death. In the event of incurable illness and unbearable suffering, young people want the right for themselves and for their loved ones to choose to end their life peacefully on their own terms, with medical assistance and with loved ones by their side. It is our last and most personal right, and should be respected and acknowledged by law. Legislation would include safeguards, regulation, transparency and accountability. **It's time to say yes to voluntary euthanasia.**

## Ian, 32

*I would like to see the laws changed to allow terminally ill individuals the right to choose (through the use of proper psychological screening process) when they die. There is no law against suicide, yet if you are terminally ill and physically unable to end your own pain and suffering you are not allowed to seek assistance. That is not to say that because you are entitled to take your own life you will actually do it, but I think the choice should rest with the individual, not society as a whole.*



## Jacinta, 26

Youth today live in a world with seemingly endless personal choices. We are thrown into life and make choices regarding our education, employment, relationships, religion, politics, fashion & bad hairstyles. We all hope to live a long and happy life but the reality is this is something we are unable to control. So should the day come that myself or those I love are faced with the progression of a debilitating medical condition, I hope there is a choice. A choice to die like we lived, with dignity.

## Dave, 31

*Voluntary euthanasia law reform always seems to draw a passionate response from people no matter what side of the fence they sit. Personally, I am a big believer in freedom and being able to make my own decision, no matter the circumstances. I cannot see why people with terminal illnesses should suffer through the last days of their life in crippling pain, even if they want to end their suffering. If they as an individual make the decision to end the suffering, that is their choice, and the law and society should not dictate their decision making process.*

## Angela, 27

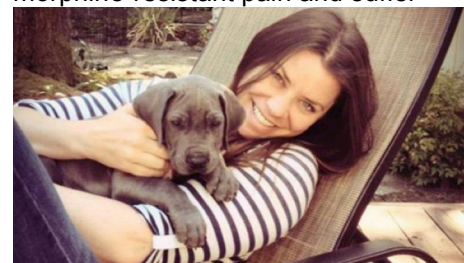
I care about VE because I believe that the state should not force people to suffer for no reason. This is the exact same principle that leads to the illegality of torture. It doesn't matter whether it's something you've experienced personally or not. We all die, so this could affect anyone.

## Ashlee, 26

*Voluntary euthanasia is an important issue for young people because they should not have to see their family and friends suffer. Everyone should have the choice to end their lives on their own terms if they are facing intolerable physical and psychological pain and suffering.*

## Brittany Maynard, 29 (from Oregon)

"Goodbye to all my dear friends and family that I love. Today is the day I have chosen to pass away with dignity in the face of my terminal illness, this terrible brain cancer that has taken so much from me ... but would have taken so much more," she published on Facebook in November 2014. "I considered passing away in hospice care, but even with palliative medication, I could develop potentially morphine-resistant pain and suffer



personality changes and verbal, cognitive and motor loss of virtually any kind," she wrote in an op-ed for [CNN](#) in October. "Because the rest of my body is young and healthy, I am likely to physically hang on for a long time. I probably would have suffered in hospice care for weeks or even months. And my family would have had to watch."

*Brittany Maynard (pictured before treatment) was diagnosed with a stage 4 malignant brain tumour in April. She died at her home in Oregon in November using drugs made legal to her by the state's Death with Dignity Act.*

# South Australian Voluntary Euthanasia Society

[saves.asn.au](http://saves.asn.au)

SAVES was established in 1983 by volunteers to campaign for a South Australian law that provides for "medically assisted" end-to-life, as a right, in appropriate circumstances, and with defined safeguards. SAVES aims to raise public debate to a point where our Members of Parliament enact a VE law which provides everyone with the choice to end prolonged and painful suffering.



## Doctors for Voluntary Euthanasia Choice

[drs4vechoice.org](http://drs4vechoice.org)

We are a national organisation of Australian medical practitioners, both current and retired, who are committed to having a legal choice of providing information and assistance to rational adults, who, for reasons of no realistic chance of cure or relief from intolerable symptoms, would like to gently end their lives. Assistance may be by doctor provision of medication for the patient to consume, or by doctor-administration.



## Christians supporting choice for Voluntary Euthanasia

[christiansforve.org.au](http://christiansforve.org.au)

We are Christians who believe that, as a demonstration of love and compassion, those with a terminal or hopeless illness should have the option of a pain-free, peaceful and dignified death with legal voluntary euthanasia. The overwhelming majority of Australian Christians support choice for voluntary euthanasia.



## SAVE-YA Syndicated Australian Voluntary Euthanasia Youth Advocates

Facebook: Support SAVE-YA Law Reform

A national youth lobby group which aims to provide a youth voice in support of legalising voluntary euthanasia in all Australian States/Territories. Members between the ages of 18 and 35 are encouraged to join and make contact with their local MP's to inform them of their support for voluntary euthanasia law reform.



## Lawyers for Death with Dignity

acknowledges the need for people with profound suffering to have the legal choice for a medically assisted and dignified death. The current law says suicide is not illegal, but assisting suicide is. In many cases, those who are in terminal states have profound, unbearable suffering and are put in the undignified position of being unable to end their life without assistance. The medical profession has advanced their discipline to improve life expectancy, but appropriate changes have not been reflected in the South Australian law to deal with an often forgotten deterioration of quality of life that this may bring.

[saves.asn.au/lawyers](http://saves.asn.au/lawyers)



## South Australian Nurses Supporting Choices in Dying

Facebook: SA Nurses Supporting Choices in Dying

We are a group of passionate nurses who believe in our patient's right to choose the end of life care that they wish. The group provides a forum for the nursing voice and perspective on the legislation of voluntary euthanasia and other patient choices in end of life care in South Australia.