

Voluntary Euthanasia Bill 2016

Key points

- Criteria of “unbearable and hopeless suffering”
- “Unbearable” means the person determines that their suffering is no longer bearable
- “Hopeless” means that the treating doctor can identify no further treatments acceptable to the person which would make the suffering bearable
- Emphasis is on the person requesting euthanasia being the decision maker, not a doctor who decides
- Requirement to meet the criteria of unbearable and hopeless emphasises the relationship between the doctor and the patient - a negotiation and discussion between the doctor and the patient
- Diagnosis confirmed by two independent doctors
- If a doctor is unsure of the mental capacity of the person to request assistance to die, then the person must be referred for a psychiatric assessment
- Request to be witnessed by two independent witnesses
- Person must be an adult and resident of SA for at least six months
- Drugs can be self administered (physician assisted dying) or by a doctor (euthanasia)
- 48 hours to elapse from formalizing the request to taking the drug