



6 Reasons to Vote No to the End of Life Choice Act

1. This Act is bad law

Whatever your views of death and dying, this Act is poor legislation because it does not sufficiently protect people from being killed against their will. New Zealanders are at risk of a wrong diagnosis, an incorrect judgement about how long they have to live and pressure from uncaring or abusive family members. Leading lawyers such as Grant Illingworth QC describe this Act as 'dangerous'.

3. Doctors oppose this Act

Almost all palliative care professionals and most Doctors oppose this Act because it changes their profession from being preservers-of-life to enders-of-life. Doctors and Nurses believe the compassionate thing is not to kill their patients but to make them comfortable and peaceful until death occurs naturally.

5. Under this Act people will die early

The Act says two Doctors must agree the individual has six months to live. But prognosis is a guess rather than a science. There can be no guarantees that a person will die within six months. Some people go on to live full and worthwhile lives for many years.

2. This Act will put vulnerable people at risk

No one wants to be a burden. Being ill, old, disabled or dependent can create feelings of guilt and worthlessness. This is exactly the time you need protection, love and care. Instead, this Act places the vulnerable at risk of pressure and coercion by their own feelings of being a burden, or from uncaring or greedy relatives.

4. This Act risks making New Zealand's suicide problem worse

Doctors in New Zealand have raised concerns about conflicting health messages whereby suicide becomes acceptable in certain circumstances, and the impact this may have on impressionable groups such as youth. Jan Latten, Head of the Dutch Bureau of Statistics, believes that even speaking about assisted dying leads to more death wishes which are being reflected in an increased suicide rate in the Netherlands.

6. This Act will not contribute to better end of life care in NZ

What is going to improve end of life care is knowledge, understanding and support for skilled carers. We also need to invest more into providing accessible, high-quality end of life care for all. In short, better care leads to better deaths.