

Hon Peter Gutwein  
Premier of Tasmania  
address

Dr Mr Gutwein

**Re: Euthanasia and Physician Assisted Dying**

The Christian Medical and Dental Fellowship of Australia CMDFA is a national organisation of healthcare professionals who are concerned about the implications of legalisation of euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide for the Tasmanian public. We believe that such legislation will have serious consequences for many citizens, which should be carefully reviewed before any parliamentary debate on this issue commences.

We are aware that a member of the Tasmanian Parliament has expressed his intention to introduce a Private Members Bill in the upper house which proposes the introduction of voluntary assisted dying. We are concerned that there has been inadequate opportunity for public consultation before the introduction of legislation which would represent a significant alteration of end of life care for the people in Tasmania.

Such an opportunity has been made available by other State and Territory Governments in Australia who have begun their consideration of this issue through a rigorous Parliamentary Inquiry process over a period of about 12 months. The terms of reference of such inquiries usually include a range of end of life issues such as access to Palliative Care and other support services.

Other State and Territory governments have only formed their position on legislative change once this process of consultation is concluded. Given that such Parliamentary Inquiries were conducted in Victoria, the ACT, Western Australia, South Australia and Queensland it seems that the same process is also appropriate in Tasmania. In particular, it would be important to hear from the whole Tasmanian community about their experience of palliative care services and whether there are any gaps in access.

The members of CMDFA call on the Tasmanian Government to support any motion moved in the Legislative Assembly seeking establishment of a Parliamentary Committee of Inquiry into 'End of Life Decision Making and Care' with broad terms of reference and a reporting period of approximately 12 months. We trust this process will not be hurried in the current climate when public hearings would be hampered by the need to limit travel and observe social distancing.

We attach our organisation's policy document on Euthanasia for your information. Thank you for considering our request.

Yours sincerely