**Template letter for your MP**

**Dear Ms/Mr X**

**I am writing to you about the topic of Assisted Dying/Suicide.**

**I (**live /work) **in your constituency (postcode) and am a GP/**Pharmacist/Nurse (add in your details). **I work day-to-day with** (or I have x years’ experience working with) **patients** who are elderly/have learning disabilities/frequent suicidal ideation (delete/add your specialty experience) or

**I am concerned that**…. (choose 2 or 3 using illustrations from your practice/ experience) – *keep it short – and personalised. Your own words are powerful*.

* Patients can feel they are a burden (almost a half of those dying by assisted suicide in Oregon) and that they ought to take their own life.
* Patients need to be confident that their doctor will do all to improve their quality of life, not be tempted to hasten death as a shortcut in care
* Society prejudice against the elderly, frail, terminally ill or disabled will worsen, as the Danish Ethics Council report states.
* It is difficult to assess mental capacity, and poorly understood.
* Without additional resources for psychological assessment, this will fall to GPs who do not have adequate time to make such assessments.
* Canada has shown how rapidly this is extended to those who are chronically ill, or with mental illness, on grounds of equality, if justified on grounds of degree of suffering.
* Treatable depression is poorly diagnosed in those with physical illness.
* Life expectancy is impossible to predict – prognosis is a ‘best guess’ at best but can be very wrong.
* Diagnostic errors are not uncommon.
* This will be extended to younger teenagers or disabled babies, as in the Netherlands.
* Doctors will leave the practice of medicine due to moral distress eg by early retirement
* It will be difficult to recruit doctors to palliative medicine.
* The drugs used to end life have never been evaluated or licensed for use to end life.
* The high complication rate and prolonged time to death seen in Oregon is worrying.
* The drugs used in euthanasia are similar to those that have been used in judicial executions in the US.

**Instead, we need timely access for all to specialist palliative care. Too many people are not getting the care they need at the end of life. I would strongly ask you to vote against the introduction of doctor-assisted suicide to health care.**

**I would be glad to discuss my concerns about the Bill with you at a surgery or by appointment, in person or by zoom.**

Many thanks

**Name, (General) Job description, (General Area)** eg Consultant Psychiatrist, Dundee.

You should not give details of your workplace unless you have discussed it with your employer.

Please do contact us for any help about this issue or contacting your MP.

Dr Gillian Wright info@ourdutyofcare.org.uk

Dr Nicky Wilderspin connect@ourdutyofcare.org.uk

Mrs Deanna Greaves support@ourdutyofcare.org.uk

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