



## **NSW Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill: How can you help?**

During May 2017 a Bill was put forward in NSW by the 'Parliamentary working group on assisted dying' to allow voluntary assisted dying for the terminally ill. Being sponsored by MPs from the range of political parties gives this Bill its greatest chance of success, and we are seeking your help to lobby NSW MPs. We expect it to be put up for debate in August or September 2017.

### **Personal letters to local members of Parliament**

We have been advised that the best way to persuade NSW MPs to vote for the Bill is through handwritten letters from constituents. MPs are answerable to their electorates, and we must let them know how we feel on this issue. To assist, we have prepared a letter writing guide (see the back of this page). Please be sure to use a respectful tone whilst explaining the reasons why you support the Bill. If you have a personal story about why you support voluntary assisted dying, please describe or refer to it in your letter.

Also included is a list of NSW Electorates and their MPs, with the postal address of their electorate offices. MPs in marginal electorates have been identified, and letters to those MPs are particularly important. (We have also included email addresses for those supporters who are unable to send a handwritten letter).

### **LETTER WRITING GUIDE: Key points to make**

**Addressee:** Your Local MP c/o their electorate office. (See their address On the enclosed sheet)

**Sender:** Your name and address at the top.

#### **Introduction:**

- State why you are writing. *For example:*

'I am writing to ask you to support the Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill 2017, which is going to be introduced into the NSW Upper House during the spring session of Parliament'.

- Very briefly describe the Bill. *For example:*

'The Bill will allow the terminally ill who face unbearable suffering to end their lives peacefully,

at the time of their choosing’.

‘The Bill has strong safeguards, including assessment by two doctors and a psychiatric review to confirm that the patient is mentally competent, and is making their request voluntarily, without coercion’.

**Your Personal Story or reason why you support voluntary assisted dying:**

- If you have a story about a personal experience that has influenced your thinking on this issue, please describe it. If not, just provide reasons why you support the Bill.

**Closing Points**

- Restate what actions you would like your MP to take. *For example:*  
‘This bill is very important to me, and as my local member, I am asking you to support it when it comes to a vote’.  
‘As our elected representative, I urge you to take the views of your constituents into account’.
- If you are comfortable to do so, ask for a meeting with your MP. For example: ‘I would be very pleased to meet with you, so that I can tell you more about why this bill matters to me’.  
(Consider taking a friend or family member, if this makes it easier for you).
- Sign off with your name. Include your phone number and/or email address so they can reply to you.

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**Request a meeting with your local members of Parliament**

We would be thrilled if you would consider requesting a meeting with your local MP to discuss the Bill and tell them your personal story. You can use the attached contact details for your MP to call or email, and request a meeting at their electorate office. This is a very powerful way to advocate for law reform.

If you require any further information to assist you in writing to your Member of Parliament, or to prepare for a face-to-face meeting with them, please contact Dying with Dignity NSW VIA email: [dwd@dwdnsw.org.au](mailto:dwd@dwdnsw.org.au) or phone: (02) 9212 4782.

If you get a response from a politician, please pass the details on to us via email or post (PO Box 25 BROADWAY NSW 2007).

Thanks for your support with this important campaign,



Sarah Edelman  
President, Dying with Dignity NSW  
On behalf of the Board of Dying with Dignity NSW