



VOL 39 NO 2
July 2022
ISSN 1321-0599

VADSA BULLETIN

NEWSLETTER OF VOLUNTARY ASSISTED DYING SOUTH AUSTRALIA INC. (VADSA)

The Voluntary Assisted Dying Act 2021: Implementation stage

VADSA's March 2022 Bulletin reported on the November 14th meeting held at the Goodwood Community Centre, attended by over 120 people. The meeting was in response to the community's urging for a speedier implementation phase of the *Voluntary Assisted Dying Act*. This Act came into law on August 24th 2021, following Royal Assent after passage through both chambers of the South Australian Parliament on June 24th. Despite community advocacy, the Act was not expected to become operational until March 2023; 21 months after its passage.

The Voluntary Assisted Dying Taskforce, of which VADSA's President Frances Coombe is a member, has been meeting since February this year, along with the nine associated Working Groups. As reported by Stephanie Richards in the independent online news bulletin *InDaily*, Attorney General and architect of the VAD legislation, Kyam Maher, is seeking to bring forward the implementation date with the support of Health Minister Chris Picton.

Kyam Maher stated that South Australia was on track to be the slowest state to implement VAD laws, with progress 'stagnated for many, many months'. He stated 'It's not good enough that we will take 100 days longer than Victoria and WA, and 200 days longer than Qld in our implementation'... 'If there's any way, given the very slow start, we're keen to make sure South Australians can use the laws'.

VADSA's president Frances Coombe told *InDaily* that she 'welcomed Maher's comments, reiterating that advocates wanted the laws to be implemented before the Christmas break (2022) to avoid further delay'. She said that other states had shared information and resources about how they implemented their voluntary assisted dying laws

and South Australia 'didn't need to reinvent the wheel'.

An important proviso of our *Voluntary Assisted Dying Act* is that doctors are prohibited from initiating discussion of VAD as part of overarching information provision on end-of-life care. *It is up to you to ask your doctor about VAD. Spread the word.*

Public information meetings

VADSA has hosted three public meetings throughout the implementation stage to inform members and the general public about moving from law reform to VAD access. The first was the previously mentioned meeting in November 2021 urging the then Health and Wellbeing Minister, Stephen Wade, to expedite the implementation phase due to the unwarranted delay which is causing anger and distress for terminally ill people who desperately seek to use the law.

On April 3rd this year VADSA invited Cheryl McKenna to speak about her and her late father Jim's experience of using Victoria's voluntary assisted dying law that has been in operation since 2019. Jim had cancer, and his VAD story began in a hospital in Melbourne and then moved to his home town in Warrnambool, Victoria. This was so that he could be with his close friend: his dog Dudley.

Cheryl gave a very warm and emotional account of what she perceived to be the 'highs' and 'lows' of her father's experience when seeking to use the law. She stated, however, that 'Every single interaction we had with any of the VAD staff was positive, informative, non-judgemental, thorough and reassuring'.

It was pleasing that staff from SA Health who are directly involved in implementing the Voluntary

Assisted Dying legislation attended the meeting and could gain some ‘take home messages’ for this state. A full account of Cheryl’s story is available on the *Dying With Dignity Victoria* website at Cheryl’s Story – Dying With Dignity Victoria (dwdv.org.au)

On Sunday June 5th VADSA then hosted a public meeting attended by over 50 people who heard Dr Chris Moy, Federal Vice President of the Australian Medical Association (AMA) and Chair of the Voluntary Assisted Dying Implementation Task Force give an overview of the progress to date. Also speaking, and answering wide ranging questions from the audience, were Adam Monkhouse, Penny Thyer, and Jane Lucas from the SA Health Voluntary Assisted Dying implementation team. VADSA appreciates their time and effort for keeping members updated.

SA Health is currently assessing applications for membership of the Voluntary Assisted Dying Review Board, following an Expression of Interest published in April 2022. The Review Board will be responsible for the review of functions and powers exercised under the *Voluntary Assisted Dying Act* 2021. Membership of the board is expected to be announced later in July.

VADSA’s main aim remains to support those who desperately seek to access their now legal right,

and will continue to advocate for the earliest possible implementation date.

Reference:

Richards, S ‘Maher looks to fast-track euthanasia laws’
Indaily 4th May 2022

Vale Emeritus Professor Graham Nerlich

It is with sadness that VADSA advises the death of our patron Professor Graham Nerlich in March. Graham was Hughes Professor in the University of Adelaide Philosophy Dept between 1974 and 1994 when he retired. He was elected a Fellow of the Australian Academy of the Humanities in 1978. Graham became a SAVES patron in 2005 and addressed the November public meeting.

In a candid discussion of his boyhood, Graham recounted how his ‘elders and betters’ believed in God, but he found that he could not, and was reproved as an ‘unbeliever’. He experienced the beginnings of philosophical thought at a very young age and understood that good cannot be delivered solely by commandment, and that ethics is created through mutual guidance rather than through blind obedience.

He spoke about what it means to ‘lead a life’, a uniquely human capacity. He said that we are,

VADSA 2022 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

VADSA’s next public meeting will be the 2022 AGM to be held on

Sunday 6th November at 2.15

at

The Box Factory 59 Regent St South, Adelaide

Further details will be provided in the next Bulletin.

VADSA’s public meetings are held twice-yearly. These are important forums for updating members on the organisation’s activities, legislative issues and relevant local, national and international events and initiatives. Guest speakers provide further interest, as well as informal discussion.

We look forward to seeing you there!

and should be, the ‘moral captains’ of our lives; arguing:

Our life is our own work of moral art and when we lose the ability to lead a life, our world collapses into mere existence; pain, ethical misery, humiliation, and squalor’.

He strongly supported VADSA’s aims, stating that it is profoundly important to have the choice to ‘bow out’ in our own way; our final choice in ‘leading a life’.

VADSA appreciates the representations made by Graham advocating for legislative change. Frances Coombe attended Graham’s funeral and conveyed our sincerest sympathy to his partner Margaret Rawlinson and his wider family. He will be sadly missed.

VADSA honorary life membership for Ian Wood

Ian Wood has been given honorary life membership of VADSA in recognition of his long-standing advocacy as national coordinator and contact person for the group *Christians Supporting Choice for Voluntary Assisted Dying*. Ian’s advocacy stemmed from the cruel reality of his mother’s death from Alzheimers disease in 2004. Ian’s activism really began in 2008, when VADSA’s President Frances Coombe asked him and the late Rev. Trevor Bensch, former Minister at North Adelaide Baptist Church, and Baptist Chaplain at two major hospitals, to consider forming a Christian support group.

Rev Bensch had previously written letters to SA MPs in support of VAD, and had been quoted by the Hon Mark Parnell (Greens) in Parliament. The group *Christians Supporting Choice for Voluntary Euthanasia* was officially formed on the 9th Feb 2009 and was reported on in an article in The Advertiser on 23rd Feb by Jill Pengilly. Since this time Ian has been a tireless advocate for VAD law reform in the media and in many state campaigns.

Reference

Christians Supporting Choice for Voluntary Assisted Dying – Formerly known as Christians Supporting Choice for Voluntary Euthanasia (christiansforvad.org.au)

Success in New South Wales!

The NSW *Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill* 2021 has finally passed. It was introduced into the lower house by Independent MP Alex Greenwich in October last year, and was co-sponsored by 28 MPs from across the political spectrum. This was the highest number of co-sponsors for any Bill in an Australian parliament. Its introduction followed a petition of more than 100,000 signatures supporting legislation.

The passage in the upper house on May 19th followed a vote of 23-15. Within two hours the lower house agreed to the upper house amendments and the VAD Bill was finally passed. *Dying with Dignity NSW* President Penny Hackett stated ‘We congratulate members of the Legislative Assembly who have acted in good faith and respectfully worked their way through what has been a challenging and emotional debate’. It had been six months since the bill passed the lower house on 26th November 2021 with an overwhelming majority of 52-32; despite opposition from both the premier, Dominic Perrottet, and the Labor leader, Chris Minns.

Go Gentle Australia explained that 75 per cent of NSW voters made it clear that they did not support a bid by religious health care providers to ban access to VAD in the aged care facilities which they operate. A state-wide telephone poll of 915 people was conducted on 13th and 14th May by Redbridge polling on behalf of Go Gentle Australia. It found that 74.9% of surveyed voters claimed that dying people should have access to all legal medical treatment options in the privacy of their own home, even if this is an aged care facility.

A similar strong majority (74.1%) said if the dying person lived in an aged care home, management should not be allowed to stop them accessing VAD. This strong support for universal access to VAD was recorded across the political spectrum from Liberal, Nationals, Labor, Greens and independent voters. As Go Gentle Australia’s founding director Andrew Denton argued:

People don’t like being told what they can and can’t do in the privacy of their own homes. It is deeply unpopular and goes against mandated

aged care standards for an aged care provider to have the power to decide who in their care gets access to legal end of life treatments.

It is people, not institutions, who suffer at the end of life. When they move into aged care, it is often their last permanent home – it's just plain wrong that management of these facilities could be allowed to dictate what legal medical treatments they have.

Go Gentle Australia also made the salient point that 'This celebratory moment is also tinged with sadness as we remember the many individuals, loved ones and carers for whom this law did not come soon enough'.

The law will come into effect in 18 months time, and while this may seem quite distant, the experience of other states shows that there is little time to waste. As reported in the online journal *The Conversation*, in WA there was higher-than-anticipated early demand. Within the first four months of the law being implemented, 50 terminally ill people chose to die under the law. NSW has a much larger population and should be anticipating greater numbers and plan to expedite the process accordingly.

References

VADSA website VADSA - NSW VAD Bill passed by Lower House - Voluntary Assisted Dying South Australia
'NSW passes voluntary assisted dying laws after marathon upper house debate' MacGowan M, & Rose, T *The Guardian*, 19th May 2022.

White, B & Willmott, L, 'Voluntary assisted dying will soon be legal in all states. Here's what's just happened in NSW and what it means for you'. *The Conversation*, 19th May 2022.

VADSA membership renewals are due in February each year

We look forward to your continuing support.

When making payments to VADSA through EFT please ensure that you include full details of your name and contact details

Thank you!

Increased support for NSW palliative care services

In a media release on the 9th June by the Premier, Treasurer, and Minister for Health following the successful passage of VAD legislation, NSW residents were advised of increased access to the highest quality care and pain management services at the end of life. Over the next five years, specialist health services and palliative care are to receive a record \$743 million increase in funding. Premier Dominic Perrottet said the 2022-23 funding boost is in addition to the \$300 million invested in palliative care each year by the NSW Government. Treasurer Matt Kean said:

The funding boost will allow us to employ an extra 600 nurses, allied health professionals, doctors and support staff to care for people at their most vulnerable time, who will be of great comfort to patients and families alike... This funding will allow more people to live at home and close to loved ones when they need them most. It will improve access to new treatments, world-leading pain management services and medications, and community-based services to reduce unnecessary stays in hospitals.

Health Minister Brad Hazzard said the investment will also increase the number of short-term, high-care beds in rural, regional, and metropolitan hospitals. This increased funding for palliative care in NSW follows a pattern found across multiple global jurisdictions, including in SA, following implementation of VAD laws.

Several of VADSA's 117 one-page newsletters sent to SA MPs each month during the six years between 2014 and 2021 either supported and advocated for better palliative care, or advised MPs of the financial benefits to palliative care following law reform.

Palliative Care Australia's 2018 commissioned report concluded that:

Assessment of the palliative care sectors following the introduction of voluntary assisted dying in the jurisdictions of Oregon and Washington (USA), The Netherlands, Belgium, Canada and Quebec 'provided no evidence

to suggest that palliative care sectors were adversely impacted by the introduction of the legislation. If anything, in jurisdictions where assisted dying is available, the palliative care sector has further advanced.

References:

\$743 million to enhance end of life care in NSW Press release 9th June 2022

Palliative Care Australia: Experience internationally of the legalisation of assisted dying on the palliative care sector FINAL REPORT 28 October 2018 Aspex Consulting Report (palliativecare.org.au)

Advocating choice for Territorians

Previous VADSA Bulletins have reported on the long-standing difficulties faced by people in the territories in gaining equal rights to those in the states by being allowed to craft their own VAD laws. A positive sign is that in the lead up to the federal election, the now Prime Minister, Anthony Albanese, promised to allow a vote to restore the Territories' rights to legislate on VAD, claiming that this would be a priority if he won.

All three ACT political parties Labor, Greens, and Liberal unanimously agreed that the Federal Government should restore the Legislative Assembly's power to determine its own policy on VAD. *The Euthanasia Laws Act 1997*, ('the Andrews Bill') introduced under the Howard Government, prevents Territory parliaments from legislating on the issue. Prime Minister Albanese has committed to allowing Labor members a conscience vote. Putting VAD law reform into wider context, ACT independent member David Pocock said that while it is an important first step, the issue for the territories goes beyond this:

Personal views aside, this is about territories having the same rights as states to make those laws... All Australians, no matter where they live, should have elected representatives with the ability to debate issues affecting them.

Mr Pocock had met with terminally ill patients and their families who wanted all end-of-life options and stated that this is 'an important starting point (in the rights debate)'.

Speaking on behalf of those in the ACT Dying with Dignity ACT cites Article 26 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights on its website:

All persons are equal before the law and are entitled without discrimination to the equal protection of the law'... In this respect, the law shall prohibit any discrimination and guarantee to all persons equal and effective protection against discrimination on any ground, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

Kristy McBain (ALP), the newly appointed Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories, has stated she would collaborate with the crossbench to repeal laws that disallow the ACT and the NT from implementing VAD.

Council of the Ageing (COTA) Australia is also supporting a change to the legislation. Its 2022 report on policy recommendations from the perspective of older Australians states in Recommendation 37:

The 47th Parliament should repeal the Federal Euthanasia Laws Act 1997, to allow Australian citizens in the ACT and NT the same rights as those in States to decide whether or not to adopt Voluntary Assisted Dying laws.

Hopefully, this wide-ranging growing momentum means that the issue will soon be dealt with effectively on the legislative agenda.

References:

Bladen, L 'David Pocock pledges bill to restore territory rights if elected to Federal Parliament' The Canberra Times, 10/5/22

Go Gentle Australia website: NSW voters reject moves to limit aged care residents' access to VAD 17 May, 2022

COTA Australia (April 22) 'An Agenda for Government from Older Australians': Policy recommendations for the 47th Parliament'.

Former Archbishop of Canterbury speaks out

On 16th May 2022 Lord George Carey, former Archbishop of Canterbury, wrote an open letter to all NSW MPs urging them to back the *Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill 2021*. Lord Carey stated that he did not intend to ‘interfere in a matter that properly belongs to Australian citizens’ but was writing as someone who had experienced a ‘radical change of heart’ on the issue of voluntary assisted dying.

He stated that Christian and religious leaders do not ‘speak with one mind’, and that:

Many ordinary Christians have experience of loved ones who have suffered from intractable and untreatable pain and suffering. They know that advances in medicine, which have greatly lengthened life, have also led to many instances of prolonged, painful and unhappy deaths.

In an interview published in The Australian newspaper, George Carey addressed the issue of whether aged care facilities run by the Catholic and Anglican churches should be allowed to stymie access to VAD for residents in their care. He argued:

Any such attempt would be cruel, monstrous, unethical and un-Christian...No care home should take such control of a mature, rational person in full command of his or her faculties that the person's rights are taken away.

VADSA Bulletin is available by email

Please consider this option to reduce postage costs. Email info@vadsa.org.au to receive future editions by email.

Thank you.

He stated further that ‘dogma should never trump compassion’, and he believes that ‘voluntary assisted dying will lead to much more open dialogue... better conversations, better treatment and more openness and honesty.’ His letter to NSW MPs concluded with the statement:

Finally, it is often said by religious leaders that the answer to the problem of intractable pain which they know is a real issue is to have the best palliative care. I've always been a great supporter of the hospice movement, but I have talked to pain specialists and learned that even the best palliative care cannot deal with many instances of pain and suffering. Christian believers should not fear death and should not cling to it at any cost. We know that it is not the end. I urge you to please support both better palliative care and also assisted dying for terminally-ill Australian citizens.

Reference:

‘Former Archbishop George Carey champions vote for euthanasia, The Australian, 15th May 2022

A doctor shares his personal insights on VAD

Dr James Hurley, a general diseases physician at Ballarat Health Services with over 25 years’ experience, has shared some personal insights on undertaking VAD training to better assist people at the end of life. In a recent edition of the Medical Journal of Australia he explained that he was a ‘late convert’ to the concept of VAD, as he considered that his medical training would have equipped him for any situation. However, this was tested by the reality of end-of-life experiences of four close family members over five years.

While two had positive experiences of dying at home, one who died in a hospice, and one in a hospital were distressing for all concerned. This led Dr Hurley to undertake VAD training and he has now assisted more than 50 people; only some of whom have proceeded to take the medication.

As has been shown internationally, approximately one third of people who have been assessed and have access to VAD do not take the medication.

The assurance that people are able to do so if needed gives peace of mind, enabling them to live longer: a true palliative effect.

He discussed constraints associated with institutional conscientious objection; the time-consuming application process; and the particular difficulties faced by people living in rural or regional areas. He makes a plea for health practitioners with a conscientious objection to not block patients' wishes. This very personal article will arguably be a positive influence on other doctors who may also decide to take on the role. As Dr Hurley argues:

At the end of the day, is not the relief of suffering for an incurable illness, on the terms that the patient requests, and to likewise provide comfort to their families, part of being a physician?

Reference:

Hurley, D 'My experience as a VAD practitioner' Medical Journal of Australia 'Insight' 13th June 2022. Read the full article at My experience as a VAD practitioner | InSight+ (mja.com.au)

Research on views of participating doctors

In 2021 research was published on the perspectives of doctors who are involved with VAD in Victoria. Thirty two doctors who had participated in the first year of operation were interviewed, with three key themes being identified. One was the problems associated with doctors being prohibited from broaching the issue of VAD as part of overarching information provision on end-of-life care. A second was the requirement of the Dept of Health and Human Services that all interactions with patients be face to face. A third related to aspects of implementation in respect of documentary evidence, the efficacy of an online portal, and resource issues.

The researchers concluded that doctors had limited concerns about the legislation itself, but maintained that improved processes and systems, and potentially some legislative changes, would mitigate these problems.

Such research is invaluable for practitioners in other jurisdictions who can learn from the experience of Victorian doctors who were the first to assist their patients under law.

References:

Willmott, L; White, B; Sellars, M & Yates, P; 'Participating doctors' perspectives on the regulation of voluntary assisted dying in Victoria: a qualitative study' Med J Aust 2021; 215 (3): 125-129. || doi: 10.5694/mja2.51123 Published online: 28 June 2021 This article is available in full online: Participating doctors' perspectives on the regulation of voluntary assisted dying in Victoria: a qualitative study | The Medical Journal of Australia (mja.com.au)

International news

United Kingdom

A debate on voluntary assisted dying will be conducted in the House of Commons on 4th July, after receiving an official government petition by Dignity in Dying UK which gathered more than 140,000 signatures; more than the 100,000 required for consideration of debate on any particular topic.

A private member's bill which had been introduced in the House of Lords by Baroness Meacher, Chair of Dignity in Dying, fell when parliament was prorogued on the 28th April this year. This was despite the Bill passing its Second Reading in the House of Lords in October un-opposed, with huge public and parliamentary support.

Dignity in Dying UK also reported in a press release on 24th May 2022 that a private member's bill on voluntary assisted dying will be tabled in the Isle of Man after a landslide vote in its parliament. MPs voted overwhelmingly in favour (22-2).

MP Dr Alex Allinson's Bill would enable terminally ill, mentally competent adults the choice of an assisted death, subject to strict safeguards and alongside end-of-life care. A draft bill is anticipated by the end of the year. An opinion poll in 2021 revealed that 87% of islanders support a change in the law on VAD.

A citizen's jury held in Jersey, another British Crown Dependency which can legislate on assisted dying independently from Westminster, informed parliamentary approval of the principle of VAD. Legislation is to be drafted later in 2022 for debate in 2023.

Recent data from the UK Office of National Statistics (ONS) has indicated that terminally ill people are more than twice as likely to take their own lives than the general population. The data comes after several suicides and suicide pacts involving terminally ill Brits have come to light.

Dignity in Dying research estimates that up to 650 terminally ill people are taking their own lives every year in the UK due to the lack of a safe, legal choice for VAD. Before the pandemic, an average of 50 British people travelled to Switzerland for an assisted death (costing at least £10,000). A further 6,400 suffer in pain each year in the UK despite access to the best possible palliative care. In the absence of access to VAD in the UK 'suicide pacts' between couples who wish to die are becoming increasingly common, according to a coroner. This reality followed the inquest into the death of a couple from Wiltshire who were found dead in their home in December 2021.

The World Federation of Right to Die Societies

Founded in 1980 the World Federation of Right to Die Societies is an international federation of associations that promote access to voluntary assisted dying. It holds regular international meetings on dying and death. The World Federation consists of 57 right to die organizations from 28 countries.

Coroner Ridley stated 'People want to take control over the end of their lives into their own hands - maybe that is a failing on the part of parliament that they don't provide support for people'. The coroner remarked that the UK did not have anything equivalent to the Swiss assisted dying clinic Dignitas.

References:

Assisted dying bill set for Isle of Man after landslide vote today. Dignity in Dying website 24th May 2022

Assisted dying to be debated in Commons for the first time in two years next month as 140 thousand sign official petition. Dignity in Dying press release 14th June 2022

Belgium

The World Federation of Right to Die Societies advises that the Belgian Christian Democratic party (CD&V) plans to have a debate on allowing VAD for people with dementia. The move comes in response to a proposal led by the Flemish liberals. May 28th 2022 marked twenty years since the law was established. Three Flemish liberals Robby De Caluwé, Katja Gabriëls and Jean-Jacques De Gucht argue that patients should be allowed to sign a directive in advance to request VAD in the event that they become mentally incapacitated.

Reference:

World Federation of Right to Die Societies 'Belgium speaks about allowing euthanasia in cases of dementia' website May 1st 2022

Canada

The previous VADSA Bulletin discussed recent changes to eligibility requirements for accessing medical assistance in dying (MAiD) in Canada. It has recently been reported that Quebec has temporarily delayed the expansion of VAD eligibility criteria to include people with severe and incurable diseases such as Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, and dementia who could be allowed an assisted death before they become mentally or physically incapable of giving consent.

Health Minister Christian Dubé stated that that Bill 38 will not be voted on this session to allow greater time for reflection. He assured the population 'We have advanced it so far, and we will continue to work for the people of Quebec'.

Reference:

CBC News Jun 09, 2022 'Quebec puts expansion of assisted death legislation on hold until next session'.

An important new website

An important new website 'Voluntary Assisted Dying Australia and New Zealand' highlights a peer network of medical professionals who provide support and resources for those who are providing VAD in Australia and New Zealand. Founder and national director is Dr Cameron (Cam) McLaren who is also the Clinical Moderator of the *Voluntary Assisted Dying Community of Practice*, an online discussion forum for Victorian VAD-trained doctors to discuss cases and their experiences of being involved in the process. He said:

As doctors, we witness many deaths. A good death has often been regarded as quick, painless, and dignified. But these are all too infrequent. My experiences with death through the VAD legislation have all been positive, and it has been an honour to provide this service to Victorian cancer patients.

The network's goal is to ensure that every practitioner is equipped with the medical, practical, and professional support services needed to administer this important service to their patients. They discuss eligibility criteria across the different jurisdictions in Australia and New Zealand with patients, provide information on end-of-life planning, and information on how VAD may, or may not, be a suitable part of a particular end-of-life plan. They discuss with family or other supporters how best to support loved ones through the VAD application, what the experience may be like, and how to find support in what can be a challenging and conflicting task:

Our role is to facilitate shared learning between practitioners of varying experience levels in providing assisted dying services. Also central to our mission is education with regards to what VAD is (and isn't), who is eligible to access VAD, what the process involves, how to access VAD, how to support someone applying to access VAD, and how to support friends and family members of those who apply to access VAD. More broadly, we advocate for

individualised, holistic care of each person during all phases of life, including the dying process, and believe in all aspects of advance care planning and equitable access to quality palliative care.

Home - VADANZ

DONATIONS TO VADSA

Donations may be made as a one off gift, or a regular monthly donation. As we are a registered charity all donations over \$2.00 are fully tax deductible. A general donation or regular or monthly donations are greatly appreciated. Your gift will work towards the alleviation of suffering. A receipt will be issued for taxation purposes. Please let us know if you do not want a receipt.

Bequests

Different wording is used for a bequest of a specific sum or the whole of an estate. The wording for a gift of a specific sum is: 'I bequeath to Voluntary Assisted Dying SA Inc. the sum of \$.....' If you wish to leave your entire estate to VADSA the wording would read: 'I give and bequeath the whole of my real and personal estate to Voluntary Assisted Dying SA Inc'.

VADSA is staffed entirely by volunteers. Since its formation in 1983 as SAVES, VADSA has worked towards law reform that enables a compassionate and humane response to unbearable and hopeless suffering and has an ongoing role in the Implementation Stage and beyond.

Voluntary Assisted Dying Partnerships

By mid- 2021 every state in Australia had passed, or will be debating, a law to give people a compassionate choice to end their suffering.

12 million Australians now live in a state where VAD is legal.

VADSA partners with organisations and individuals in Australia and overseas who work to achieve legal voluntary assisted dying. Voluntary Assisted Dying South Australia is our facebook page. The page contains current information about developments around Australia and the world.

A Peaceful End facebook page is run by Angie Miller who became a VAD campaigner after the distressing death of her father over an extended period.

Accessible Voluntary Assisted Dying facebook page provides information on VAD, with a focus on equitable access to a medically assisted death for people isolated by distance or disability.

Advocacy Groups listed below represent different interest groups who advocate for VAD law reform.

- Doctors for Assisted Dying Choice
- South Australian Nurses Supporting Choices in Dying
- Christians Supporting Choice for Voluntary Assisted Dying
- Voluntary Assisted Dying Youth Advocates
- Lawyers for Death with Dignity
- Paramedics Supporting Choices in Dying
- Accessible Voluntary Assisted Dying

Go Gentle Australia was established by Andrew Denton to support VAD law reform.

The Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation supports VAD.

The website DyingForChoice was established by Neil Francis, a Melbourne based VAD advocate which provides important information and counters misinformation about VAD.

The World Federation of Right to Die Societies is based in The Netherlands. Its website includes links to societies around the world working towards legalising assisted dying.

VADSA's state and Territory Partners - each state and territory has an active group supporting VAD law reform

- Dying with Dignity NSW
- Dying with Dignity Victoria
- Dying with Dignity Tasmania
- Dying with Dignity Western Australia
- Dying with Dignity Qld
- Northern Territory Voluntary Euthanasia Society
- Dying with Dignity ACT

Advance Care Directives are a valuable tool to provide guidance to medical professionals and carers on your end of life wishes. Contact Service SA on 13 23 24 for further information.

Voluntary Assisted Dying South Australia Inc. Membership Form

Print and post or join online at <https://www.vadsa.org.au>

☐ New Membership

☐ Renewal

Surname, including Mr/Mrs/Ms etc

Given Name(s)

Address

Suburb/Town & Post Code

Telephone

Email address

Year of Birth (Optional)

Membership Payment:

Annual membership is due at the end of February. Payment for two or more years is welcome, and is calculated by multiples of the annual fee – please mark accordingly

- ☐ \$30.00 Single Membership (\$15.00 concession) -----
- ☐ \$40.00 Couple Membership (\$20.00 concession) -----
- ☐ \$350.00 Life Membership Single
- ☐ \$500.00 Life Membership Couple
- ☐ Additional Donation to support the work of VADSA-----
- TOTAL -----

Payment Options:

Cheques and money orders made payable to SAVES and send with this form to:

- ☐ **VADSA Membership Officer, PO Box 2151, Kent Town SA 5071**

Or pay by Electronic Funds Transfer:

- ☐ **People's Choice Credit Union BSB 805 050 Acct number 102500039**
Voluntary Assisted Dying SA

PLEASE LODGE THIS FORM, along with EFT payment advice either via email to info@vadsa.org.au or via Australia Post

How did you hear about us? _____

Do you have an area of expertise that could be of help to VADSA? _____

Do you wish to receive the Bulletin by post or email?-----

VADSA's members support the society's primary objective which is a change in the law, so that in appropriate circumstances and with defined safeguards, death may be brought about as an option of last resort in medical practice. These circumstances include the free and informed request of the patient and the free exercise of professional medical judgement and conscience of the doctor. VADSA IS NOT ABLE TO HELP PEOPLE END THEIR LIVES.

VADSA's Primary Objective:

A change to the law in South Australia so that in appropriate circumstances, and with defined safeguards, death may be brought about as an option of last resort in medical practice. These circumstances include the free and informed request of the patient and the free exercise of professional medical judgment and conscience of the doctor.



Committee:

President

Vice Presidents

Frances Coombe

Julia Anaf

Anne Bunning

Hon. Secretary / Minutes Secretary

Hon. Treasurer

Membership Officer

Frances Greenwood

Jo Hayhurst

Elice Herraman

Patrons

Emeritus Professor John Willoughby

Telephone

Frances Coombe **0421 305 684**

Internet

www.vadsa.org.au

VADSA Bulletin is published three times a year by Voluntary Assisted Dying SA Inc (VADSA). Letters, articles and other material for possible publication are welcome and should be sent to *VADSA Bulletin Editor, PO Box 2151, Kent Town SA 5071.*

The statements and views expressed by contributors do not necessarily represent VADSA official policy. Material in this publication may be freely reproduced provided it is in context and given appropriate acknowledgement.

Editor: Julia Anaf