

ASSISTED SUICIDE (AS) AND YOU

Did you know?

1. The Canadian Senate studied the legalization of assisted suicide (helping someone take their life) and euthanasia (ending someone else's life). It rejected both, saying AS would lead to euthanasia, and the **lives of vulnerable persons would be placed at risk**.
2. In the country with the longest experience with legalization – Holland – AS led to voluntary euthanasia followed by **non-voluntary euthanasia** for disabled persons and children.
3. In rejecting assisted suicide, the Supreme Court of Canada warned (1993) that legalization would undermine the country's core policy that human life has **inherent dignity**.
4. There is widespread fear among disabled persons that legalization would lead to their lives being **devalued** – and subsequently put at risk.
5. In 2008 there are effective pain and palliative measures for almost all forms of pain.
6. Experience with AS elsewhere shows it offers a “quick fix” but **undermines the care of the dying**: e.g. hospice beds and palliative care specialists become rare.
7. A request for AS usually indicates a lack of psychological support and effective palliative care. When this care is provided, **almost all patients change their minds**.
8. **One in 10 Canadians experience suicidal thoughts** at some time in their life, especially when they are given very bad news, such as a terminal diagnosis. These feelings are normal but transient. A legal option for AS traps people into following through on their otherwise treatable suicidal thoughts. It compounds their feelings of loneliness and despair. Is this any way to die?
9. **All patients in Canada have the right to refuse treatments** which they feel are excessively burdensome. Many people fear that they will be forced to undergo futile treatments in the event of terminal illness. This is not so.
10. Public support for AS **greatly declines** as people become better informed.

We believe:

- The legalization of AS would create immense pressure on those who, due to advanced age, illness or disability, are made to feel, or consider themselves a burden to others.
- It would aggravate the problems of teen suicide and suicide among seniors.
- It would create economic pressure to end the lives of sick and disabled persons rather than care for them.

***Do we really want doctors to be involved in killing patients?
Assisted Suicide legalization would be bad medicine. If you share
our concerns, please let your Member of Parliament know.***

***A message from Carrefour Humanisation Santé; LifeCanada/VieCanada; Mouvement en
faveur de la vie; Respect for Life - Education Movement; Campagne Québec-Vie***