

MEETING WITH POLITICIANS TO DISCUSS EUTHANASIA AND PHYSICIAN-ASSISTED SUICIDE

1. Arrange an appointment. If available, read the bill before your meeting so you are familiar with the contents. We also recommend you read the fact sheets on websites such as : HEALTH PROFESSIONALS SAY NO <http://www.healthprofessionalsayno.info/>
Contact details for all politicians are available on the relevant parliamentary website. See also under the 'Resources and Information' tab of this website.

2. On arrival, thank the politician for taking the time to meet, and explain that you are concerned about the bill and why you are qualified to discuss it. (you could consider sending a CV after an appointment is made).

3. Ask the politician what their understanding of euthanasia is, and gently correct any misunderstanding. Points you may need to cover are:

- The role of palliative care, and in particular that therapeutic doses of analgesia and sedation use at end of life does not kill patients
- The understanding that there are physiological changes at the end of life that means some patients lose a lot of weight, and that palliative care units do not 'starve their patients'
- The fact that not all EPAS deaths are peaceful
- Explain that even though the bills talk about assisted dying, it is in fact physician-assisted suicide, and euthanasia is included for patients unable to take medication themselves.
- Express concern that this bill will confuse the role of doctor as healer and doctor as killer of patients
- The risks of abuse – see notes on website
- The risks of normalisation of suicide as a solution to one's problems when such a law is passed, particularly in view of Australia's high suicide rate
- The risks to the disabled, that their lives may be considered by others to be 'not worth living', and increased discrimination in society as a result.

- Offer to answer any further questions the politician may have.

- Consider leaving written materials or access to 'Fatal Flaws' DVD.

4. You may or may not choose to offer to remain available to answer questions as they arise – if you do, leave contact details.