

# Speaking to your MP about assisted suicide

MP Kim Leadbeater has proposed [a bill that](#) would legalise assisted suicide for terminally ill people. MPs will likely debate and vote on this bill before Christmas.

The time to speak up is now.

If the UK introduces assisted suicide, vulnerable people will be pressured to end their lives, and our laws will send the message that suicide is a legitimate solution to pain and suffering.

We must unite once again to stand for life by personally voicing our concerns and asking our MPs to vote to protect life.

## How to speak to your MP

### Visiting a surgery

Most MPs hold surgeries, where you can meet them and tell them your concerns. This is the most powerful way to ask your MP to oppose this bill.

By attending your MP's surgery, you can gently present your view to them, and they will be required to consider what you say and may even be confronted with a perspective they had not considered.

You can find out who your MP is and how to contact them through '[Find my MP](#)' on the official website for parliament. MPs usually share how to attend a surgery on their own websites, but you can always email them to ask.

Below you can find some of the reasons for opposing assisted suicide that you might want to share with your MP. You can find [more resources to help you prepare on our website](#).

### Writing a letter or email to your MP

If you are writing to your MP, it is good to include a personal message to let your MP know you are praying for them or to encourage them in their role. This helps the MP know that you mean what you say and are seeking to help them serve your community.

Later in this document, there are various paragraphs covering arguments against assisted suicide. You can use whichever of these you feel are the most important to you.

This is an example of how to structure your letter:

Dear *\*Your MP\**,

Personal introduction and encouragement

Argument 1

Argument 2

Argument 3

Conclusion

Yours sincerely,

*\*Your Name\**

Please also include your address so that your MP knows you are in their constituency.

You can [find your MP's details on the parliament website](#).

## What to say

These are some of the points you may like to make, whether you are attending a surgery or writing a letter, along with example paragraphs you could adapt and use.

### Assisted suicide will put a burden on the most vulnerable in our society

For the most vulnerable, the mere option of legally condoned suicide exerts substantial pressure. Even those with supportive friends and family may feel guilty about the care they require and feel under significant pressure to seek assisted suicide, to avoid burdening their family or the NHS.

This has been shown overseas. For example, in Oregon, after which the UK proposal is modelled, feeling like a burden is listed as a motive for many of those who end their life.

#### Example paragraph:

*I am deeply concerned about the pressure that the Assisted Dying Bill would exert on the most vulnerable people to consider the "option" of assisted suicide. In places where the law has changed, being a burden on family, friends and caregivers is consistently cited as one of the main end-of-life concerns for those dying under those laws. In Oregon, which is the model for the legislation being considered here, almost half of recipients of lethal drugs cited this as one of their primary concerns. Changing the law here would make it very clear that we have become a nation that sees our most vulnerable people as disposable, rather than in need of our best protection and care. The terminally ill deserve holistic emotional, mental and physical support to make the most of the life they have left, NOT encouragement to cut it even shorter. It is their right to life that we want to uphold, not a responsibility to die.*

### Legalising assisted suicide will increase the already extreme pressure placed on the NHS

The NHS is already struggling under immense pressure to provide an acceptable level of care. Adding assisted suicide as an acceptable solution to suffering will prove disastrous in an underfunded, understaffed, and overcrowded healthcare system.

## Example paragraph:

*At a time when the NHS is under extraordinary pressure, and the hospice and palliative care sector is at risk of collapse due to underfunding, it is particularly risky to legislate or facilitate suicide in this way. With an aging population, and in these precarious conditions, any legalised 'right' to die will inevitably become seen by those who are most vulnerable in our society as a responsibility to die. Assisted suicide must not come to be seen as a convenient solution to the two issues of individual suffering and an overcrowded healthcare system – and yet, as Canada proves, these two separate issues are all too easily conflated. The case of a man in Canada diagnosed with terminal COPD and euthanised within 48 hours, whose later autopsy revealed that he did not in fact have COPD at all, is just one of countless examples of the abuses that follow from the convenience of assisted suicide winning over a dedication to high quality medical practice. In a country where the NHS already struggles to provide an acceptable level of care, it is incredibly dangerous to take even the smallest steps towards making life easier to dispose of. The doctor's vocation is to help their patients to live as long and as well as possible - do we want to turn them into killers?*

## International models prove safeguards are challenged and weakened

The Oregon law (which the UK bill is expected to copy), has reinterpreted assisted suicide to include individuals with fewer than six months to live *without life-saving treatment*. This means that chronic but not terminal diagnoses, such as diabetes or an autoimmune disease, are reason enough to [commit suicide](#).

Campaigners in the UK are already calling for the restriction of 'six months left to live' to be lifted. It is clear that if a law is passed, any 'safeguards' will immediately be challenged. MPs are not just voting for the proposal in front of them – they are opening the door to all kinds of future abuses.

## Example paragraphs:

*While legislators for assisted suicide always promise safeguards, its introduction in other countries proves how easily life is commodified, and how quickly people are made to feel that they have no other choice but to end their own lives.*

*In 2022, Canadian Paralympian and armed forces veteran [Christine Gauthier](#) requested a new wheelchair ramp to her house. She was instead asked if she had ever considered MAiD. Other veterans seeking support for their PTSD have also been offered MAiD unprompted.*

*[A 71-year-old man in Canada](#) was told he was terminally ill with end-stage chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and offered MAiD. He was euthanised within 48 hours of first his assessment, but autopsy revealed he did not have COPD.*

*In 2018, [Roger Foley](#) took legal action against his local hospital in Canada, other health agencies and both the state and federal governments on the grounds that he was not provided with the assisted home care support he wished for, but was instead offered MAiD. His lawyer, Ken Berger, commented: 'Here he is, needing society's help and care and we turn our back on him and we're in essence ... asking him if he is interested in assisted dying rather than working with him to provide the services he needs'.*

*[Kathrin Mentler](#), 37-year-old Canadian from Vancouver, last year (2023) visited a hospital seeking help for her suicidal thoughts. Instead of support, she was asked "have you considered MAiD?".*

*The reasons given for seeking assisted suicide in Oregon in 2023: loss of autonomy 91%, loss of enjoyment of life 88%, loss of dignity 64%, loss of control of bodily functions 47%, burden on family, friends/caregivers 43%, inadequate/concern about inadequate pain control 34%, financial implications of treatment 30%.*

*26% of those seeking assisted suicide in Oregon met the criteria for depression, but fewer than 3% of such patients were referred for formal psychiatric assessments.*

## Assisted suicide will have a negative impact on everyone involved

Assisted suicide will affect everyone. It is crucial to share with your MP how vulnerable people you know will be affected by this bill.

Personal stories have the potential to turn the tide on assisted suicide and your MP needs to hear them. Think about your friends and family, and how they may be impacted if a law is passed.

### Example paragraph (please use your own, real story):

*My grandmother died a peaceful, natural death in hospice care without the need for assisted suicide. She was grateful for every day that she had left with us, and despite initial fears when she was diagnosed with a terminal illness that she would experience unbearable suffering at the end of life, her needs were met by the hospice staff, and she was able to make the most of the time that she had left and die naturally without intervention. I am concerned that the availability of assisted suicide will eventually lead to the erosion of this kind of care and force people into premature deaths.*

## Assisted suicide will undermine high-quality end-of-life palliative care

In strained, underfunded healthcare systems, assisted suicide becomes a convenient cost-cutter that prioritises saving money over saving lives.

Health Secretary Wes Streeting has acknowledged that introducing assisted suicide in the UK would be [extremely dangerous](#) because of the dire state of the NHS. It is impossible to know how many lives will be lost for the sake of 'convenience' if assisted suicide is legalised.

### Example paragraph:

*Every life matters, and I am firmly of the view that assisted suicide will never solve the problem of suffering, or assuage concerns about how we care for people nearing the end of their life. The answer is first and foremost to affirm the value of every person's life, particularly including those who are dying, elderly, or otherwise vulnerable, and to do so by focusing on providing excellent care and social support, both physical and psychological. They must not be made to feel like a burden, but rather they should feel valued and supported all the way to the end.*

## Conclusion

Please sum up with your points and ask your MP to oppose the bill.

### Example paragraph:

*Constituents are relying on you to uphold the value of every life in this country, and I am praying for wisdom for you and for all the MPs involved in this decision. I urge you to think carefully about the ramifications of this bill, and I hope that you will prioritise first and foremost the safety and wellbeing of the most vulnerable under your care when voting in parliament.*

Yours sincerely,

\*Your Name\*