

South Australian Voluntary Euthanasia Society Inc.

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To all members of the Legislative Council

Dear member,

Survey of Oregon Nurses and Social Workers

The first attached paper details a recent survey in Oregon where the Death With Dignity Act, allowing choice for physician assisted dying for terminally ill patients, was voted into law in 1995.

I draw your attention to a couple of the significant findings:

- “Control over the timing and manner of death was repeatedly the most important reason that dying patients cited for their requests, while depression was rated the least important by hospice workers,”
- “The study also suggests that lack of social support or fear of being a financial drain on family members are the least important factors in the decision to request assisted suicide, contrary to the criticism from opponents of the law,”

This is one of a number of surveys demonstrating that the government in Oregon is responsibly monitoring their law and that the law is working within its set boundaries.

“The Task Force to Improve the Care of Terminally-Ill Oregonians”

This is a [multifocused](#) initiative, providing [a range of care options for the terminally ill in Oregon](#). The existence of this Task Force belies [the assertions of those who claim that assisted dying legislation would lead to a lack of care for the dying](#). [The enclosed paper explains the features of this Task Force](#), three of which I list here for your special interest:

- “The Task Force, remaining neutral on the issue of physician assisted suicide, has its overall goal to promote excellent care of the dying.”
- Its mission includes the sharing of information, experience and understanding of available resources for the care of terminally-ill Oregonians.
- There are 25 organisations involved in the Task Force, including the Oregon Hospice Association and the Oregon Medical Association.

This Task Force, with its strong and influential membership, is a most important safeguard.

The Dignity in Dying Bill 2002 also features similar strong safeguards with its Monitoring Committee and the Objects of the Act. Safeguards, of course, are of prime concern to all of us.

Yours sincerely,

Julia Anaf
Vice President