



# End-of-Life Choice

February/March 2014

Voluntary Euthanasia Society of New Zealand, Inc.

Issue 34

## Moving Forward Through 2014

As we come into election year we look forward to the Maryan Street sponsored End-of-Life Choice Bill being returned to the Ballot Box in Parliament. Maryan has undertaken to ensure this happens as soon as feasible once the new Parliament convenes. I would encourage all of you to think positively and work towards this – the EOLC Bill is not dead! It is also clear that momentum is rising within the public and media environment. Increasingly we have articles and opinion pieces supporting the right to have medically assisted death in terminal illness and major unrelieved suffering. Even the columnists are starting to support the cause and starting to attack the politicians for their tardiness. Overseas debates and court procedures are increasing as it becomes so obvious to individuals that our cause is just and right.

In our VESNZ affairs we are having some changes. We have been increasingly conscious that our funds have been decreasing at a rapid rate. For this reason we have decided that we are unable to support a full time executive position in the future, and Yvonne Shaw who has been in this position, has now ended her contract. We thank her for her significant contributions and hard work. We wish her well as she returns home. We have appointed a part time Administrative Officer, Eileen Howarth, who will work from her home for 20 hours per week.

The National Committee is very aware of our stewardship of your money in the Society. We do need gifts to Society funds from you as members. There will be regular requests for donations and bequests in the newsletters, and we will also post several requests for donations separately. We raise money in other ways including sales of the 'Guide to Dying' and local fundraising events. When the Bill comes out of the Ballot we will need funds to fight what will be an undoubtedly strong opposition. We have purposely kept the subscription rates low in the past, so I request that you support the Society funds as well as you can in additional ways. We recognise 'donor fatigue.' So give just what you can – ignore the requests if it is not possible for you!

The National Committee has had some changes in membership. Unfortunately Don Grant has had to resign from the President position. Some others have shifted on. The present members (10) are a talented committee group and will work well together. I am writing this editorial because I have been appointed Interim Chairman until the AGM. Carole Sweney is now Acting Secretary, Kieron Howarth Acting Treasurer, and Mary Panko the Acting National Membership Secretary. Profiles of the Committee Members can be found on the Web Site. Thank you for those who have contributed as NC members, but have had to leave the group.

Remember that there have been lots of just causes where groups such as ours have had to fight hard and long to achieve what they know is right. So we move forward optimistically, with courage and persistence – maybe next year will see a passing of this enabling legislation.

Jack Havill

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# Your Final Wish: Making a Bequest

Bequests are vital to the survival of any non-profit. Bequests provide ongoing funding streams. They make it possible to create long-term plans. They are the cornerstones of non-profits like EOLC because they provide stability.

If you can see yourself saying, "This is what I support, and I want this issue to be important, even after I'm gone," then please consider making EOLC a beneficiary of your will by creating a bequest. Ours is a unique issue; one in which our most ardent supporters might not be with us for long. And our fiercest opponents might later turn to us for help. Please take the step to support end-of-life rights in your will.

## Canada – Bill 52 Quebec

On October 29 2013, the Quebec National Assembly adopted 'in principle' Bill 52, which provides the legal framework by which a medical practitioner may help a patient, who meets criteria under the law, to end their life. The Bill had the support of all parties and was adopted by a vote of 84 to 26.

Bill 52 also focuses on palliative care, and would require all hospitals to offer improved quality of care for terminally ill patients.

The 'in principle' approval of Bill 52 means that Quebec is one step closer to legalising voluntary euthanasia. At the moment the Bill has passed through the 'Committee Stage' where it was studied clause by clause, before returning to the Quebec National Assembly for the 'report stage'. The Bill is expected to be passed during March 2014 when the National Assembly reconvenes.

It is expected that the Canadian Federal Government may challenge the decision because it has been under extensive pressure from religious and some medical groups.

The Bill's sponsor is Ms Veronique Hivon who is Quebec's Minister for Social Services. She asserts that Quebec has jurisdiction over Voluntary euthanasia on the grounds that it is a medical act. The proposed end-of-life treatment would be the last point in a continuum of health care, and as health falls under the jurisdiction of provincial governments, that would make it a provincial matter. The Canadian federal Government may argue that the Bill contravenes federal criminal law.

Ms Hivon also says that Quebec is considering giving an added protection to doctors by offering not to prosecute them, even if they are in breach of the federal law.

### *Donations*

*You can make a contribution in any amount of your choice...in single, monthly or yearly donations.*

*Payments can be made by cheque or directly into our account  
ANZ 010527 0085629 00*

*Your donations will help us to continue to expand our work and help us to continue to work for your right to make decisions for your End-Of-Life-Choice.*

## Branch Events

### WELLINGTON

1. An exciting Wellington Public Meeting on Saturday 22 March 2014 at 2pm. Special guest speakers Prof. Lloyd Geering and Rev. Sande Ramage-Hospital Chaplain, will speak about their personal thoughts on "End of Life Choice."

Venue - Hall at St Andrew's on The Terrace, 30 The Terrace, Wellington.

Questions from the floor will be welcome, and there will be afternoon tea.

All welcome and do bring a friend.

2. U3A Kate Sheppard Meeting on Thursday 20 March 2014 at St Christopher's Church, 244 Avonhead Rd. Christchurch Rt Hon Maryan Street will talk on "End of Life Choice"

3. Pencarrow Rotary Club Monday 17 March 2014 at Lowry Bay Yacht Club, Seaview. Suzy Austen will talk about "End of Life Choice".

### KAPITI

1. Kapiti-Horowhenua Branch A.G.M. is to be held on Saturday 29 March, 2014 at the Kapiti Community Centre, 15 Ngahina Street, Paraparaumu at 2p.m. Local solicitor Jane Stevenson will speak on Enduring Powers of Attorney, their function, format and the essential reasons that we all must have one.

2. Publicity Stall at the Easter Market Mahara Place, Waikanae on Saturday 19 April.

3. May 15 a Fundraising event at the Shoreline Cinema, Waikanae. Further details - performance, time etc. will be available shortly.

## Branch Events

### AUCKLAND

1. Friday 21st March (1.00 pm–3.00pm):

"Getting your House in Order" continued. Popular demand brings back Lawyer Shane Henderson!

Shane is a Legal Education Coordinator of the Waitakere Community Law Service. He will guide us through Power of Attorney, and Enduring Power of Attorney as it affects your Advance Directive (Living Will), This will be an interactive session.

2. Annual General Meeting to be held on Sunday 25th May 2012 from 1pm - 3pm at the War Memorial Community Centre, Main Highway, Ellerslie. Election of officers and Committee members.

### WAIKATO

1. The Waikato Branch EOLC (VESNZ) meets at 2pm on the last Sunday of each month CCS Building 17 Claudelands Rd Hamilton. This is a business meeting but open to the public, and we normally have an educational topic. Everybody welcome.

2. Annual meeting of Waikato Branch will be held on the 30 March 2pm CCS Building 17 Claudelands Rd Hamilton

3. Public Meeting April 12th Sat 2pm Celebrating Age Centre 30 Victoria St Hamilton. Speaker: Carole Sweney, Secretary and Ex President of EOLC (VESNZ)

Topic: Where are we at with Voluntary Euthanasia in the World and NZ?

## Annual General Meeting 2014

This will be held at Hamilton Airport Motel on Saturday 21st June. The conference complex is a few hundred meters from the airport. Accommodation is available on site. The Waikato branch can supply a limited number of billets.

Programme

10am Morning Tea

10:30-12:30 annual meeting

12:30 Lunch

1:30-3:30 Public meeting—2 speakers and a forum involving local politicians and speakers.

## NATIONAL COMMITTEE

**Jack Havill, Interim Chairman.** Jack is a retired Intensive Care Specialist, and Secretary and Representative of the Waikato Branch

**Carole Sweney, Acting Secretary.** Carole is a past President of VES NZ and part of the Kapiti/Horowhenua Branch. She has a Nursing and Radiography background

**Kieron Howarth, Acting Treasurer.** Kieron is a Chartered Accountant and has a lot of experience with company computer systems. He is part of the Auckland Branch

**Mary Panko, Acting National Membership Secretary.** Mary works with Unitec (Auckland) and has a lot of experience with voluntary bodies. She is part of the Auckland Branch

**Kevin Stone, Elected Member.** Kevin is a business man and has stood for parliament in NZ with NZ First. He is a member of the Waikato Branch

**Tess Nesdale, Elected Member.** Tess is a nurse with a lot of experience in rest homes. She is Chairperson of the Bay of Plenty Branch.

**Peter Cowley .** Peter has a large experience in not for profit organisations and works with both St Andrews on the Terrace and the United Nations Association. He is representative of the Wellington Branch

**Sue Reynolds.** Sue managed the Frederick Wallis Trust House, an ecumenical retreat centre in the Hutt Valley, for many years. She is the representative of the Kapiti/Horowhenua Branch

**Toni Brown.** Toni is a lawyer specialising in family law. She is the representative of the Bay of Plenty Branch

**Sara Heslop.** Sara has a background of business and cost accounting. She is Chairperson and representative of the Auckland Branch.

**CENTRAL OFFICE** has moved to Auckland and is staffed by Eileen Howarth, Administrative Officer. Eileen's background is in management, training and education.

## Contact Us

### EOLC CENTRAL OFFICE

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## Guide to Dying—Your Way

### Guide to Dying – Your Way

End-of Life Choice has teamed with medical and legal experts to assemble a comprehensive step-by-step guide to help you create an Advance Directive that reflects your wishes. It also contains information on choosing an Agent, someone you entrust to ensure your wishes are carried out. It answers important questions you may have about writing an Advance Directive that meets your personal wishes, tips for relief of pain and suffering, the legality of an Advance Directive in New Zealand, and keeping your Advance Directive up to date.

Order your Guide and Advance Directive today on the Web Site as:

1. an instantly downloadable PDF for \$20 (credit card) or
2. a hard copy which will be posted to you within 10 days for \$27 (personal cheque or direct debit).

You may also send the money and order the hard copy by surface post.

These prices are a special offer until the end of May 2014.

