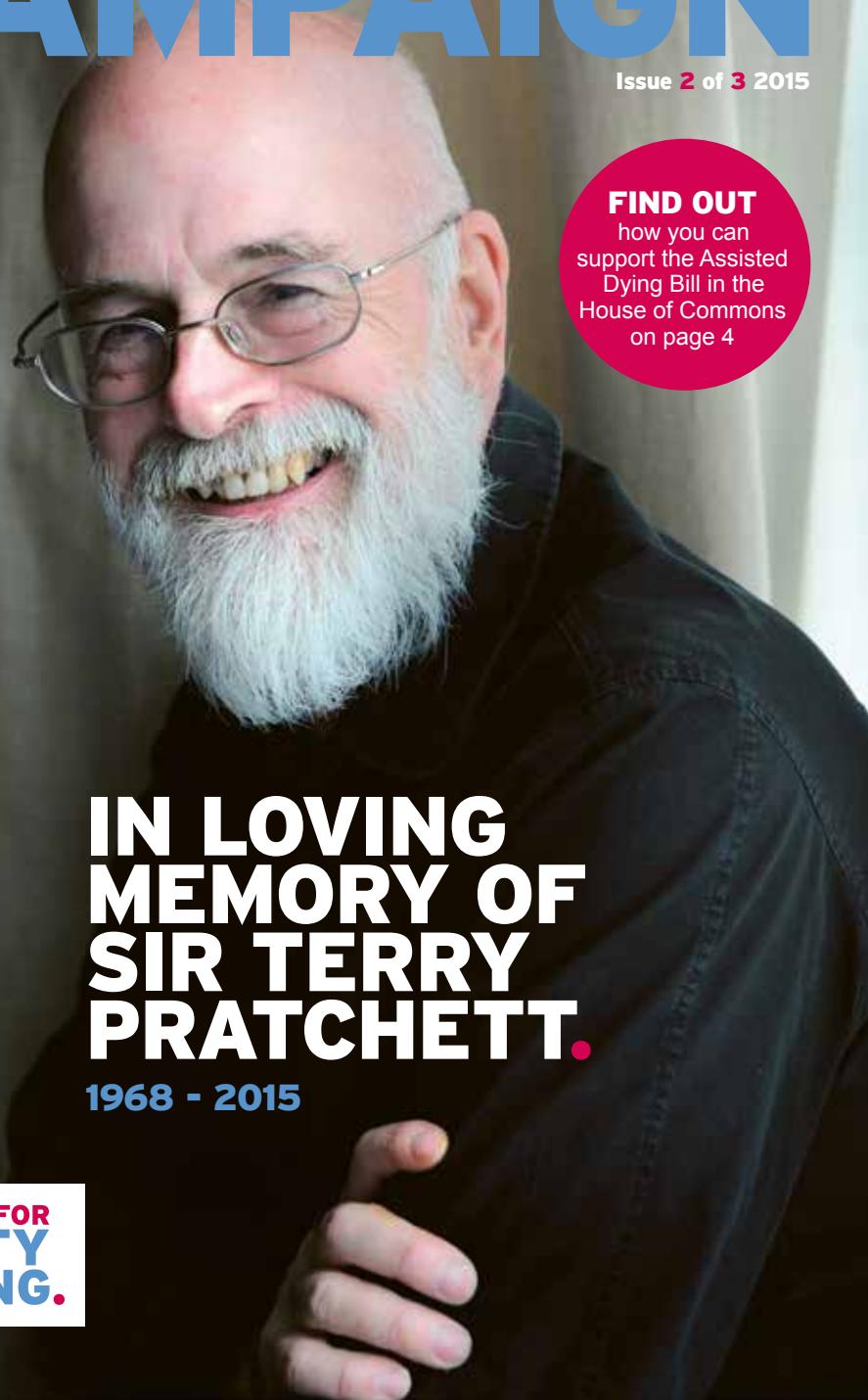


# CAMPAIGN

Issue 2 of 3 2015



## FIND OUT

how you can  
support the Assisted  
Dying Bill in the  
House of Commons  
on page 4

**IN LOVING  
MEMORY OF  
SIR TERRY  
PRATCHETT.**

1968 - 2015

**CAMPAIGN FOR  
DIGNITY IN DYING.**

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## Editor Mike Hamilton

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**SARAH WOOTTON**  
Chief Executive

## WELCOME.

**O**n 9th June, the day of our AGM, we were excited to announce that Rob Marris MP will be taking the Assisted Dying Bill in to the House of Commons. He came top in this year's Private Member's Ballot for backbench legislation, giving the Bill the best possible chance of getting through the various parliamentary stages.

Sir Richard Ottaway, the former MP who's done so much for the assisted dying campaign in the Commons, and also stepped down at the General Election, said to me that we could wait a decade for this sort of opportunity to come again.

The Bill is expected to be debated on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> September so we need your support to make sure that it has the best chance of succeeding. Please write and meet your MP to discuss the Bill, explaining the arguments around why the law needs to change and that has the support of 82% of the population. Our combined efforts in the House of Lords has shifted the House from 2:1 opposed to 2:1 in support. We need to do the same in the Commons. You can read more about how to support the Bill on page 4.

Dignity in Dying has been encouraged by the success of our counterparts in Canada and South Africa who have both received supportive judgments in recent months – Canada's government has until February 2016 to introduce assisted dying legislation (page 6). In June last year the UK the Supreme Court issued a final warning to Parliament to act on this issue. We are considering potential ways forward to build on this judgment and experiences from abroad.

We were shocked and saddened by the death of two of our most prominent campaigners earlier this year. First, former Dignity in Dying Chair and outgoing Compassion in Dying Chair, Nick Moore, died after a short illness at the age of 65. His intelligence and professional experience is a huge loss to the campaign and the office. His generosity and kind spirit will be

sorely missed by everyone that knew him (page 21). In March Terry Pratchett died peacefully, with his family by his side, several years after being diagnosed with a rare form of dementia. Terry was a committed campaigner who did an enormous amount to bring the campaign to the public's attention (page 12). With Debbie Purdy's sad death at the end of last year it's important to acknowledge the huge contribution made to the campaign by all three.

Just before the General Election in May Dignity in Dying commissioned the UK's largest ever poll on assisted dying (5,000 participants), which confirmed that 82% of the British public now support a change in the law when presented with the evidence; in addition 53% of people would think more positively about a supportive MP describing them as "compassionate" and "caring" (page 10). This shows overwhelming support for change, which decision makers can no longer ignore. Please make sure your local representative is made aware!

Best wishes,

# SUPPORT THE ASSISTED DYING BILL IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

BY TOM DAVIES

## THE BILL WILL BE DEBATED ON FRIDAY 11TH SEPTEMBER, 2015.

Rob Marris MP announced on 9th June that he will introduce a Private Member's Bill on assisted dying. The Wolverhampton South West MP came top in this year's ballot for backbench legislation which means that a Second Reading debate for his Bill is due on the 11th September. This Bill will essentially be the same as the Assisted Dying Bill introduced by Lord Falconer which made historic progress through the House of Lords last year, but ran out of time before the General Election.

In the last Parliament, the campaign to allow assisted dying progressed further than it ever had before in the UK. In the year running up to the election, (before the Bill ran out of time) Lord Falconer's Assisted Dying Bill received support from a majority of members of the House of Lords – a fact acknowledged even by the Bill's opponents –

The last major debate in the House of Commons on the subject of assisted dying took place in March 2012. At that debate, without opposition, MPs endorsed the

principle that someone helping a loved one to die for compassionate reasons should not be prosecuted. This was a welcome step forward, but it leaves some dying people in the unenviable dilemma of either suffering against their wishes, dying without the support of healthcare professionals, or travelling to another country to die.

## WE NEED YOUR HELP: PLEASE WRITE TO YOUR MP.

Your help is vital. MPs must respond to correspondence from their constituents. As a supporter of Dignity in Dying, you can be a powerful advocate to get the Bill through its first stage in the Commons. Please can you contact your MP – by letter, by email or by attending weekly surgeries – to ask whether they will support the Assisted Dying Bill. Please also make sure to tell them why you support a change in the law.

A poll undertaken on behalf of Dignity in Dying in March (more on page 10) showed that 82% of the British public believes the law should be changed to allow terminally ill, mentally competent adults to ask

for medical assistance to end their lives. For too long MPs have been influenced by the tiny minority – just 12% of the public – who don't want to see the law changed.

Dying adults should not have to suffer against their wishes in the last days and weeks of life. With a safeguarded assisted dying law, we can give choice and control to dying adults so that they can die in a place of their own choosing with medical assistance, rather than having to take matters into their own hands or travel overseas to die in another country.

Assisted dying as an issue is devolved to the Scottish Parliament and Northern Ireland Assembly, meaning that the debate in Westminster will only affect England and Wales. However, MPs from Scotland and Northern Ireland will have the right to participate in and vote on debates regarding assisted dying in Westminster. Therefore it is important that they, too, know the strength of feeling of their constituents, so please do contact your MP whichever part of the UK you live in.

Please let the Dignity in Dying office know where your MP stands on this issue, by email, letter or by phoning the office.

*Rob Marris MP (right) is bringing an Assisted Dying Bill to the House of Commons this year.*

## THE NEW PARLIAMENT.

The General Election in May produced a surprising result, giving the Conservative Party a majority of seats in the House of Commons and a large number of seats to the SNP, now the third-largest party in Westminster. The new balance of MPs means we need to find out where support lies.

A quarter of those elected in 2015 were elected to the Commons for the first time. Even those who were MPs before will not have had the opportunity to debate the issue of assisted dying since 2012.

So we need to know where MPs stand on assisted dying. Perhaps more importantly, we need to make sure that our recently elected MPs are aware of the strength of feeling in support of a change in the law.

For more information or to inform Dignity in Dying of your responses please get in touch:

T 020 7479 7730

E [info@dignityindying.org.uk](mailto:info@dignityindying.org.uk)

W [www.dignityindying.org.uk](http://www.dignityindying.org.uk)



# PROGRESS IN CANADA: CARTER LEGAL CASE.

BY DAVINA HEHIR

In February 2015 the Supreme Court of Canada (SCC) unanimously concluded that the Canadian Parliament needed to address the issue of physician assisted dying. The court ruled that the existing law which bans assisted dying did not prohibit physician assisted dying for "mentally competent adults who seek such assistance as a result of a grievous and irremediable medical condition that causes enduring suffering intolerable to the individual." They concluded that a properly

administered regime that regulated physician assisted dying was capable of protecting vulnerable people from abuse.

As a result of the case, the SCC declared the current law in Canada was incompatible. This means that the Canadian Parliament has a year to change the law after which the judgment will have no effect.

The judgment came after a long consideration of evidence from Canada and other jurisdictions where physician assisted dying has been legalised. The discussion covered medical ethics, end-of-life practices, risks, safeguards and the effectiveness of existing laws.

The consideration by the original trial judge of the evidence in the

case showed that a properly designed and administered system is capable of protecting vulnerable people from abuse or error. While properly qualified and experienced physicians can reliably assess patient competence and whether they are acting voluntarily. They can also tell whether there is suspected coercion or undue influence. There was no evidence from the other jurisdictions that people with disabilities were at a heightened risk the legalisation of physician assisted dying.

The judge rejected the contention that bias by physicians against disabled people would undermine the assessment process. She also concluded that physicians were better able to provide overall end-of-life treatment once assisted dying

was legalised and that there was no compelling evidence that permitting physician assisted dying in Canada would result in a practical slippery slope. Nor was there evidence of an unreasonable impact on socially vulnerable populations (such as the elderly or disabled) in jurisdictions that permitted physician assisted dying. She also concluded that there is no ethical distinction between physician assisted death and other end of life practices where the outcome is highly likely to be death.

# PROGRESS IN SOUTH AFRICA: THE STRANSHAM-FORD CASE.

On 30<sup>th</sup> April 2015, in South Africa, a judge made a court order which allowed Mr Stransham-Ford to be assisted to die. The order stated that Mr Stransham-Ford was mentally competent, had made a clear, settled and voluntary decision to ask the court that he be assisted to die, was terminally ill with prostate cancer and was suffering persistently.

Although emphasising that the primary responsibility for law reform lay with Parliament, the judge concluded that the current law in South Africa which prohibits any form of assistance to die was not compatible with Mr Stransham-



Ford's rights. The current law was deemed to be too broad and as such went against the rights to human dignity and freedom of bodily and psychological integrity protected by the South African constitution.

The order stated that assistance be provided by a willing and qualified medical doctor, who would not be subject to prosecution. The order also said that no doctor was obliged to agree to the request.

Sadly, Mr Stransham-Ford died of natural causes a few hours before the order was made, but the judge, Justice Fabricius, refused to cancel the order when the Government and Health Professions Council asked him to. He stated that the ideal situation would be for the South Africa Parliament to consider the issues and produce a Bill. He expected the Constitutional Court to consider the topic in due course.

In the reasons given for the order, the judge focused heavily on the right to dignity promoted by the South African constitution. He emphasised how well-informed Mr Stransham-Ford, a lawyer, was of the nature, cause and prognosis of his illness, as well as the legal, clinical and ethical aspects of assisted suicide.



## WHAT DO THESE CASES MEAN FOR OUR CAMPAIGN?

The recent developments in South Africa and Canada shows the global debate around the right for terminally ill adults to control the manner and timing of their death.

The UK Parliament must listen closely to the outcomes of these court cases. The judgment in South Africa highlights that it is possible to strike a balance between the State's duty to protect and its duty to respect the rights of its citizens. The Canadian judgment emphasises that it is also possible to strike this balance without risking the safety of potentially vulnerable people.

Essentially, when the evidence is examined, arguments against a change in the law do not stand up to scrutiny. Last year the UK Supreme Court warned Parliament that this is an issue that must be addressed. As these cases show, if Parliament does not act, the courts will.



# THOUSANDS SUPPORT ASSISTED DYING ONLINE.

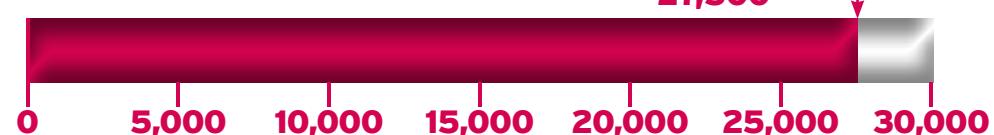
BY ZACH MOSS

**B**ack in March we launched a new campaign website enabling our supporters to pledge their support for assisted dying. We decided to create a way for supporters to add their voice to the thousands who want to see choice and control at the end of life.

Following on from the **#untiltheend** campaign last year in which party leaders were sent over 40,000 emails demanding a change in the law, nearly 30,000 people have pledged their support for assisted dying so far.

As well as being able to sign the pledge, supporters can view key campaign facts and a helpful timeline showing the campaign highlights of 2014 as they unfolded.

### NUMBER OF SUPPORTERS



Many people are proud to say they support assisted dying, which is why we wanted to create a 'supporter's wall' where people can upload their photos to publicly show their support for the campaign – we've been delighted with the response, with over 1,700 people uploading photos to the website so far.

Being able to effectively demonstrate that the overwhelming majority of the British public support assisted dying will be key to keeping up the pressure on the new Government to act, so if you haven't already you can pledge your support online here:

**W** [www.bit.ly/pledge-support](http://www.bit.ly/pledge-support)

# OVERWHELMING SUPPORT FOR A CHANGE IN THE LAW.

BY PHILIP SATHERLEY

**82%**  
OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC

**79%**  
OF RELIGIOUS PEOPLE

**86%**  
OF DISABLED PEOPLE

**SUPPORT THE CHOICE OF ASSISTED DYING FOR TERMINALLY ILL PEOPLE.**

In May we commissioned the largest ever poll on assisted dying. 5,000 people were asked whether or not they supported a change in the law to allow mentally competent, terminally ill adults the choice of an assisted death, subject to upfront safeguards.

82% of the public answered “yes” and this figure was consistently high regardless of age group, socio-economic background or political preference.

There is a common misconception that religious people oppose a change in the law but our poll confirmed that this is not true. 79% of religious people support assisted dying, their views clearly echoing those of eminent religious figures such as the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Carey, and former Archbishop of Cape Town, Desmond Tutu.

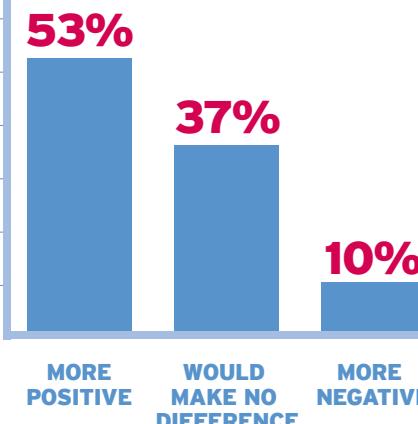
**“The old philosophical certainties have collapsed in the face of the reality of needless suffering.”**  
**LORD CAREY.**

Support amongst disabled people is in line with the population as a whole.

86% of disabled people support assisted dying. This group of people recognise that a change in the law would have no effect on them unless they had less than six months to live. We already know that there is no evidence to suggest there would be a “slippery slope”, i.e. that the parameters of an assisted dying law would be extended to people with chronic conditions who are not dying; these results confirm that disabled people recognise this argument as mere scaremongering.

We also asked a number of other questions to gauge the public mood towards the new Parliament. What is clear from the results is that new MPs cannot shy away from this debate.

**% The public were asked: ‘if your MP were to vote in support of assisted dying, would you feel more positive or negative towards them?’**



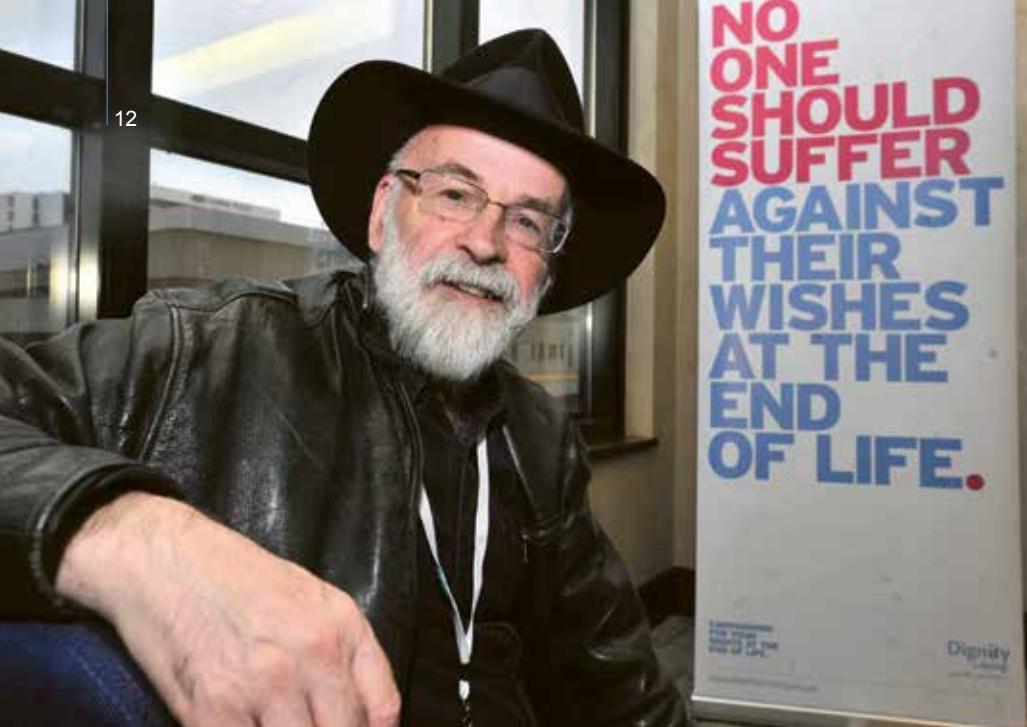
79% of people think that the House of Commons should allocate time for a full and comprehensive debate on the issue of assisted dying.

As expected, with such overwhelming support for change and an eagerness for the debate to take place, the public would be much more likely to view an MP favourably if they were to vote in support of an Assisted Dying Bill.

The public were asked; if your MP were to vote in support of assisted dying, would you feel more positive or negative towards them? 53% more positive, 37% would make no difference, 10% more negative.

Significantly, 44% of the public would consider breaking the law to assist a loved one to die. How can anybody justifiably argue that the status quo is adequate when the current law clearly no longer commands the respect of the British people?

This snapshot of public opinion serves to illustrate that society is beyond the tipping point on this issue. Unprecedented media coverage over the last 12 months, which has illustrated arguments on both sides of the debate, has resulted in an increase in support for a change in the law. The new Parliament must continue to debate assisted dying and, when they do, the will of the public must be at the forefront of their minds.



## MEMORIES OF SIR TERRY.

BY JO CARTWRIGHT

**S**ir Terry Pratchett was one of my favourite Patrons of Dignity in Dying. Not because I liked his books; when we first met I hadn't read any of them, or because he was a jolly man in a hat; he wasn't. It was because of his integrity and his (sometimes brutal) honesty.

My fondest memory of Terry is when I was sitting next to him, in the front row of a 'right to die' conference in Switzerland, headphones on - translating the assisted dying opponent's words into English for us non-natives, while in no uncertain terms, and several decibels louder than he would have done had he

not been wearing headphones, Terry shared with the room what he thought of the speech. I could not have agreed more, and I imagine the entire auditorium was in total agreement that the speaker was talking utter rubbish (Terry chose a more colourful description). However, everyone else sat in polite silence as Terry's choice words reverberated around the room.

Terry fully understood that being 'Sir Terry Pratchett' gave him certain opportunities that us mere mortals didn't have, and without too much arm twisting he gave his time, energy and incredible brain, to making the most of every single one, in order

to progress the campaign to make assisted dying a reality in the UK.

In 2007 Terry was diagnosed with a rare form of Alzheimer's disease; Posterior Cortical Atrophy. Terry regarded himself as lucky that he'd got this form of Alzheimer's as the way it affected him meant he was able to continue writing until very near to the end of his life.

Terry's interest in the assisted dying debate stemmed from his early work as a reporter in his local coroner's court, and was reignited when he had to face up to his own mortality. We all know Dignity in Dying's campaign wouldn't extend to people with Alzheimer's if they weren't also terminally ill and had maintained their capacity. However, the more Terry got involved with Dignity in Dying, the more furious he became about the injustice of the current law. His experiences in making the BBC documentary *Choosing to Die* only served to reinforce his view that assisted dying for terminally ill people was a 'no brainer'.

**“...he was desperate not to end up stuck in his own imagination, unable to find his way out, and he didn't want to die badly.”**

Terry more than earned his position as a patron of Dignity in Dying. In the six years he was involved in the campaign he took part in numerous media interviews, wrote some superb comment pieces, spoke at

events – later roping his assistant Rob in to speak his words when he was unable to, auctioned an evening with himself to the highest bidder to raise money for the campaign, part-funded Lord Falconer's Commission on Assisted Dying, dedicated his Dimbleby lecture to the cause, wrote the foreword to *Assisted Dying; Who Makes The Final Decision* (a book which I co-edited with Patron Lesley Close), and presented a documentary showing the reality of assisted dying in Switzerland for Britons. He said yes to everything we asked him to do that he could physically fit in to his ridiculously demanding schedule, and he did it with great humour. I loved working with him.

I found myself in a not entirely unfamiliar quandary when Rob called to tell me Terry had died; I was sad for me, and sad for Dignity in Dying – we lost a huge force for good, and I'd lost my friend. But I also knew it was what Terry wanted – he was desperate not to end up stuck in his own imagination, unable to find his way out, and he didn't want to die badly. As it was he died peacefully in his sleep, with his cat on his bed, and still recognised his loved ones until the very end. He had a good death, and I will take comfort from that, and inspiration from his honesty and integrity as we continue to fight for a time when we can all have the kind of death Terry was fortunate enough to experience.

# FAMILY MAN ENDS HIS LIFE AT DIGNITAS.

BY MICKEY CHAROUEAU

**J**effrey Spector travelled to Dignitas in May and was accompanied by his family – he had an incurable tumour on his spine. He gave an interview to the Blackpool Echo where he blamed the current UK law for forcing him to have an assisted death earlier than he wanted to. His story featured on the front page of the Daily Mirror and the Daily Mail and the week in the media was dominated by the issue of assisted dying.

Mr Spector said:

**“If the UK law was changed I would go down the surgery route to take the tumour out – get rid of it. Conventional wisdom says I won’t improve. But I don’t want to take the chance of very high-risk surgery and find myself paralysed. You are left with the choice someone else must take over. If the law was changed I would not have gone when I did. It is the law in the UK making people go before.”**

Lord Falconer said:

**“Jeffrey Spector’s case is yet another example of the cruelty of the current English law. A loving father and husband had his last supper miles from home, months before he was ready, because he feared he might lose control over his death here in the UK.**

Current legislation has gone by the board. It has been replaced by the discretion of the Director of Public Prosecutions – discretion that would prosecute a doctor who helped someone take their own life but would sanction amateur assistance in the UK, or accompanying someone to Switzerland.

The law now has no ethical basis. It is cruel in its effect and Parliament should look at it urgently. It might yet conclude that no change should be made, but surely legislators must examine in detail the suffering our outdated laws are having on people like Mr Spector. Currently one Briton a fortnight travels to Dignitas in Switzerland, while a further 300 terminally ill people are ending their own lives behind closed doors at home each year.”



# ASSISTED SUICIDE BILL IN SCOTLAND DEFEATED.

BY TOM DAVIES

**T**he Assisted Suicide (Scotland) Bill was defeated at its Stage 1 debate in the Scottish Parliament on 27<sup>th</sup> May. The Bill, brought forward by Patrick Harvie MSP after the death of the Bill’s original sponsor Margo MacDonald, was voted out by 82 votes to 36 and will not pass on to Stage 2 where amendments could have been tabled.

The defeat is disappointing as it means people in Scotland will have to wait for an assisted dying law. In voting against the principles of the Bill at Stage 1, members of the Scottish Parliament also voted to curtail an important debate on how a law to give choice to people at the end of life would work in practice.

That said, the vote is an improvement on the last time such a vote took place, in 2010 on Margo MacDonald’s End of Life Assistance (Scotland) Bill. That Bill was defeated at the same stage by 85 votes to 16, which means the share of the vote in favour has effectively doubled.

Before the debate a report from Holyrood’s Health Committee declined to direct MSPs on how they should vote on the Bill, giving MSPs

the opportunity to make up their own minds. The report stated there were ‘significant flaws’ in the Bill, but also recognised the diversity of strongly-held views on this important subject.

The Bill was voted out at the Stage 1 debate on its general principles, meaning there will be no opportunity to improve the legislation. We at Dignity in Dying supported the principles of the Bill but wanted to see amendments at later stages to tighten the eligibility criteria – a point raised by both opponents and supporters in the debate.

The campaign in Scotland has suffered a setback, and new legislation to provide choice to dying people will now probably not be forthcoming until after the Scottish Parliament elections in 2016. But we’ve seen progress and a new Bill in a new Parliament could be the turning point the vast majority of the public want to see.





*My Life, My Decision* is a new service from Compassion in Dying and funded by the Big Lottery's Silver Dreams Fund, delivered in partnership with seven Age UK branches across England. The outreach service provides one-to-one support to people aged 50+ to ensure their wishes for treatment and care are known and respected.

# SHHH! TALKING ABOUT SOCIETY'S LAST TABOO.

BY FRANKIE BENNETT

**D**eath is often described as the 'last taboo' of our society. However, Dying Matters Awareness Week, which takes place every May is trying to change that. Each year, events are held across England to encourage people to talk about death and plan ahead so that they can get on with living now. This is my first Dying Matters Week, and here is a diary of the various events I took part in and helped organise...

## Monday

To kick off the week, Sharon from *My Life, My Decision* in South Tyneside held a coffee morning at her local Age UK. Accompanied by plenty of cake, she hosted a drop-in service open to people wishing to plan ahead for their future treatment and care, such as an Advance Decision, an Advance Statement, or a Lasting Power of Attorney for Health and Welfare.



## Tuesday

Tuesday saw Penny welcome Paul Mayhew Archer, writer of *The Vicar of Dibley*, to the Oxford Town Hall for their event *Living Well, Dying Well: Let's have the last laugh*. The hall was packed with stalls from a number of different organisations.



Towards the end of the afternoon an expert panel convened to answer questions. Sir Muir Gray, a renowned doctor and author, emphasised the importance of making your wishes known to those around you for your future treatment and care. Verena Hewat, our Training Lead for *My Life, My Decision* in the South of England, was on hand to explain how people can do this in a legally binding way.

## Wednesday

On Wednesday, Janet travelled to Lancaster University to deliver their Lunchtime Lecture, accompanied by Esther Nimmo Training Lead for *My Life, My Decision* in the North. Their lecture asked *What does the Mental Capacity Act 2005 mean for you?* They explained how decisions are made for us if we can't make decisions ourselves anymore (known as losing capacity).



## Friday

Throughout the week, Ruth travelled around remote areas of South Lakeland with her local Age UK to promote the *My Life, My Decision* project. The Age UK Roadshow bus was a distinctive addition to the local market towns! Mina also held a stall throughout the week at her local library in Trafford. Dying Matters Week coincided with Dementia Awareness Week, which Mina felt brought the need to plan ahead to the forefront of people's minds.



## Thursday

On Thursday, Verena and I attended our first ever Death Café in East London. The Death Café movement was started in 2011 by a Swiss Sociologist called Bernard Crettaz who believes that attitudes towards death should be liberalised and we should all be talking more about dying (over plenty of tea and cake!). A Death Café is a safe, open and honest space where a group of people - often strangers to each other - can meet up and discuss all things to do with death and dying. There is a facilitator to prompt the discussion, but other than that it is up to the people there to steer the topics of conversation.

I found my first Death Café very enjoyable, thought-provoking and therapeutic, and look forward to my next.

If you are aged 50+ and live in East London, Hillingdon, Oxfordshire, Lancashire, South Lakeland, South Tyneside or Trafford, *My Life, My Decision* can provide one-to-one support to record your wishes for the end of life in a legally binding way. For more information call Compassion in Dying's help Line on:

**T 0800 999 2434**



# MY LAST VOTE.

BY MICKEY CHAROUNEAU

**D**ignity in Dying released a video manifesto ahead of the General Election entitled *My Last Vote*.

My Last Vote features interviews with four campaigners, all of whom are terminally ill. We travelled across the country to hear their important voices at a time when the public were fully engaged with the political process. Lord Falconer's Assisted Dying Bill had achieved a number of successes in the last Parliament, and it was important to keep assisted dying high on the political agenda during the election period.

The video can be viewed here: [www.bit.ly/mylastvote](http://www.bit.ly/mylastvote)



**ROCH MAHER, FROM HOUNSLOW, HAS MOTOR NEURONE DISEASE AND BOTH HE AND WIFE DEIRDRE ARE COMMITTED CAMPAIGNERS FOR ASSISTED DYING.**

**“**It's going to affect everybody at some stage but the people that it affects at the time will always be a minority and it is disappointing for me that it is not seen as an important issue for politicians to get behind. I am comforted that it has cross party support but the next Parliament has to address this issue.

“I would like people, when they make decisions about the circumstances I am in, to try and step into my shoes.

“Assisted dying would be a great comfort. At the moment I have no control and face a future of deterioration but if I had the ability to bring that life to an end when it became intolerable, the anxiety about the end of my life would be taken away and I would be far happier, and those around me would be far happier too. **”**



**MARGARET JOHN, FROM YORK, HAS OVARIAN CANCER AND HAS PREVIOUSLY BEEN PART OF A LEGAL CASE AT THE SUPREME COURT.**

**“**Nobody now likes talking about death, we all know it happens but we don't want to talk about it. We are all going to die. My cancer has spread outside the pelvic area, there are a number of tumours and the doctor has said it is not curable.

“When you consider the fact that at the moment one person a fortnight from the UK is going to Switzerland for an assisted death and 300 terminally ill people are killing themselves every year in this country, it is obvious we should have the choice.

“We really want to be able to go with dignity and that's what this law is about. It would give us the choice to die in our own country, our own house, our own bedroom, with our friends and family around us. We need to get the Bill back in to the debate as we've made a lot of headway. **”**

**ALAN BAKER, FROM LEEDS, HAS RENAL CANCER AND WAS FORMERLY A JUDGE DEALING WITH IMMIGRATION AND ASYLUM ISSUES.**

**“**I was diagnosed in summer of 2013 with renal cancer and had a tumour the size of a bagpipe removed from my abdomen. It recurred 18 months later and I was told it was terminal. It was like the passing of a death sentence, you always know it's coming in reality but you hope and hope it doesn't.

“My father was diagnosed with bladder cancer and in the last few

months of his life he was begging to be allowed to die at any opportunity. The pain in his face, the pain in his voice and the pain in my heart as a result of that has never left me. Twenty odd years later I still have nightmares about it and I do not want the same situation to arise in my case.

"I hope that the next government will take in account the will of the people. It has worked in other parts of the world, we are clawing our way too slowly as it will be too late for me in reality but it can save those coming after me."

## FORMER BRIGHTON MAYOR GILL SWEETING HAS TERMINAL PANCREATIC CANCER AND HAD ATTENDED THE DEMO FOR LORD FALCONER'S ASSISTED DYING BILL IN NOVEMBER, A MONTH BEFORE SHE WAS DIAGNOSED.

"The prognosis that I was given was up to six months, of which I have had two and a bit.

"It's far more sensible to do it in a controlled way than do it yourself, which can go wrong and which is likely to be very messy, if you throw yourself under a train it mucks up a lot of people's lives.

"I always thought that by the time I needed assisted dying it would be legal, but it ain't."



*Alan Baker is dying from renal cancer*

"We really want to be able to go with dignity and that's what this law is about. It would give us the choice to die in our own country, our own house, our own bedroom, with our friends and family around us."



*Gill Sweeting is dying from pancreatic cancer*

## IN MEMORY OF NICK MOORE.

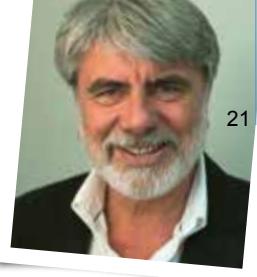
BY SARAH WOOTTON

In the early hours of Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> January, Professor Nick Moore, outgoing Chair of Compassion in Dying and for many years Chair of Dignity in Dying, died aged 65. Nick died following a short illness, and his unexpected passing is a huge loss to those that were fortunate enough to know him.

Nick was an academic and a consultant. His career encompassed the British Library, several universities, the Policy Studies Institute, the British Council and research and consultancy assignments for UNESCO, United Nations Development Programme and the European Commission among others.

Beyond his professional career, Nick served as the first Chair of Dignity in Dying, then of its sister charity Compassion in Dying, and was also Chair of the Board of Somerset Colleges. He was also an avid traveller undertaking an expedition to Antarctica in 2008. But this summary of Nick's professional and voluntary achievements doesn't come close to encapsulating him as a person.

Nick was an exceptionally kind man. He treated everyone equally, from the most distinguished politician to



the newest member of staff. He was neither short of flowers when he came into the officenor of an anecdote or joke to lighten the mood or to enliven a long meeting. And he was never short in his generosity of time and spirit.

In his last email to colleagues, he provided the following summary of his time with Compassion in Dying and Dignity in Dying, and in doing so displayed his typical modesty:

"The work on Compassion in Dying, providing a range of services for people at the end of their lives, has been very rewarding. Again the actual work is done by a team of young people who are cheerful, hard-working and who seem to be tireless."

"We are getting closer and closer to getting a law passed through Parliament... we can now begin to see the light at the end of a tunnel which started to be constructed about 85 years ago."

Nick was motivated to help both organisations by having witnessed the protracted and torturous death of his mother. There is some small comfort that he avoided a similar fate, however this is far outweighed by a life brought to an end too soon.

Nick is survived by his partner Elaine.

## PLANNING AHEAD MAKES A POSITIVE IMPACT.

BY RACHEL HUTCHINGS

**E**very month Compassion in Dying's Information Line receives over 200 calls and our website attracts over 3,000 visitors.

We have analysed feedback from our service users so that we can invest in and expand our services effectively. The results show that we are making a difference. After contacting Compassion in Dying 95% of people feel more confident that their wishes for treatment and care will be respected and 76% go on to tell somebody else about our work.

Research highlights that planning ahead has a direct and positive impact on the quality of a person's death.

A recent poll by YouGov asked members of the public to think about the last close family member or friend who had died and then asked a series of questions about the way in which they died and whether or not they had recorded their treatment wishes:

- **WHEN TREATMENT WISHES ARE RECORDED PEOPLE ARE**

**41%**

**MORE LIKELY TO DIE IN A GOOD WAY.**

- **WHEN TREATMENT WISHES ARE NOT RECORDED PEOPLE ARE**

**53%**

**MORE LIKELY TO RECEIVE TREATMENT AT THE END OF LIFE THAT THEY WOULD NOT HAVE WANTED.**

These results highlight the importance of planning ahead. If you would like more information on the ways in which you can plan ahead then please contact us:

**T 0800 999 2434**

**E info@compassionindying.org.uk**

**W www.compassionindying.org.uk**

## NEWS ROUNDUP.

BY MICKEY CHAROUNEAU

### ASSISTED SUICIDE GUIDELINES CHALLENGED IN HIGH COURT

Alison Saunders, the Director of Public Prosecutions, is to face a legal challenge regarding a footnote added last year to the prosecuting policy on assisted suicide. The footnote, which relates to healthcare professionals was intended as a clarification of the policy. However the Christian Legal Centre (the legal team taking the case) argue that it was in fact a change to the guidelines, and therefore unconstitutional.

### REPORT CALLS FOR BETTER CARE AT THE END OF LIFE

In May the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman published a report, 'Dying without Dignity' based on complaints investigated by the Ombudsman. The report concludes that thousands of dying patients are being let down by poor end-of-life care provision in England.

Sarah Wootton, Chief Executive of Compassion in Dying, said: "Compassion in Dying welcomes this report and recognises the need to improve the experience of care in the last year and months of life

### OREGON REPORT

At the end of February the Oregon Public Health Division released its latest report on the 2014 figures for the Death with Dignity Act. The number of people choosing to have an assisted death has risen but is still relatively low, last year 155 people obtained life-ending medication, while 105 had an assisted death. This means that around 0.3% of deaths in Oregon were assisted in 2014.

for many people. In addition to the key themes identified in the report, we also believe that the importance of engaging patients themselves in planning for their future treatment and care must not be overlooked.

"There is growing evidence that discussing and meeting an individual's preferences at the end of life leads to what they and their relatives consider a 'good death'. This evidence supports the report's call for better care planning, however we believe that further work needs to be done to make patients aware of their legal rights to make decisions about their treatment".

*Please use the tear out poster opposite to promote the assisted dying campaign give to interested friends and family or even pin up on community notice boards (with permission).*

**CAMPAIGN FOR  
DIGNITY  
IN DYING.**

**82%**  
**OF THE**  
**BRITISH  
PUBLIC  
SUPPORT  
AN ASSISTED  
DYING LAW**

**SUPPORT THE  
CAMPAIGN TODAY**

**T 020 7479 7730**

**E info@dignityindying.org.uk**

**W www.dignityindying.org.uk**



**79%**  
OF RELIGIOUS  
PEOPLE  
SUPPORT  
AN ASSISTED  
DYING LAW.



**“I THINK IT  
IS TIME WE  
LEARNED TO  
BE AS GOOD  
AT DYING AS  
WE ARE AT  
LIVING”**

Terry Pratchett

**44%**  
OF BRITONS  
WOULD BREAK  
THE CURRENT  
LAW AND HELP A  
LOVED ONE TO DIE



**86%**  
OF DISABLED  
PEOPLE  
SUPPORT  
ASSISTED DYING



**PLEDGE  
YOUR  
SUPPORT**  
[www.yesuntiltheend.co.uk](http://www.yesuntiltheend.co.uk)



# MAKE A WILL FOR FREE AND HELP THE ASSISTED DYING CAMPAIGN.

CAMPAIGN FOR  
DIGNITY  
IN DYING.



Dignity in Dying has teamed up with solicitors up and down the country to make it easy for supporters like you to leave a gift in your Will to support the campaign for assisted dying.

Dignity in Dying has made great progress over the last 12 months towards changing the law, with the majority of Peers in the House of Lords now in favour. But we still have a battle ahead of us to convince MPs in the Commons and the government that an assisted dying law is needed here in the UK.

As much as a quarter of Dignity in Dying's income comes from supporters leaving legacies in their Will. This is one of the most powerful ways to ensure greater choice at the end of life for generations to come.

For your  
Free Wills Pack,  
please get in touch:

**TEL:** 020 7479 7109

**EMAIL:** mike.hamilton@  
dignityindying.org.uk

**MAIL:** Mike Hamilton  
Dignity in Dying  
181 Oxford Street  
London  
W1D 2JT

By using this service you are not bound to leave a gift to the campaign, but we are incredibly grateful and amazed by the generosity of the supporters that are able to. The gift can be big or small and does not need to be a set amount of money, you can leave a percentage of your estate to your chosen organisation. The solicitors available with this service are understanding and thoughtful, as they realise how difficult and sensitive an issue writing a Will can be.