



Mr Alan Guidon, Clerk
Committee on Justice
Leinster House, Kildare Street
Dublin, D02 XR20
By email only.
26th January 2021

Re: Dying with Dignity Bill 2020

Dear Mr Guidon,

Please find herewith a submission on the above from the College of Psychiatrists of Ireland following invitation from the Committee to interested groups to provide same.

The College makes this submission as it does not support this draft legislation. The key reasons for the submission as outlined in the full document for consideration, and as per the summary, are as follows:

- It does not address the issues of dying with dignity.
- It will render vulnerable patients at risk
- It seeks to introduce physician assisted suicide and euthanasia into Irish legislation, and the College does not consider this to be of benefit to patients in this country.
- It makes little sense to be working hard as a nation to reduce our suicide rates while legalising assisted suicide and euthanasia.
- A move to put more resources into our Health Service by the Government is needed, particularly in regard to supporting palliative care and mental health services. These must be resourced first, to ensure that any individual who is even considering assisted suicide has had access to timely, appropriate and high-quality care to address their individual healthcare needs.
- Addressing issues of pain management and disability, and having sufficient consultants appointed to offer truly high-quality care to individuals with such significant illnesses must be the mainstay of treatment and the priority approach by all physicians.

The College calls for improvements to our healthcare service to improve access, service delivery, symptom management and well-being in individuals with terminal and non-terminal illness.

A College representative(s) would be willing to appear in public session at a Committee meeting.

Should you require further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

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