

Parliamentary Bureau – Referral of Bill at Stage 1

Assisted Dying for Terminally Ill Adults (Scotland) Bill

Introduction

1. The Assisted Dying for Terminally Ill Adults (Scotland) Bill was introduced in the Parliament on Wednesday 26 March 2024 by Liam McArthur MSP.
2. The Bill makes provision for terminally ill adults in Scotland, who are eligible, to lawfully request, and be provided with, assistance by health professionals to end their own life. To be eligible to be provided with assistance to end their life, a person must:
 - be terminally ill (have an advanced and progressive disease, illness or condition which they cannot recover from, and which is expected to cause their premature death),
 - be aged 16 or over,
 - have been resident in Scotland for at least 12 months,
 - be registered with a GP practice in Scotland,
 - have sufficient capacity to make and understand the decision.
3. The Bill sets out the procedure that must be followed once a request is made.
4. The final provisions of the Bill require the Scottish Ministers to prepare and publish guidance and an annual report setting out a detailed breakdown of requests for assisted dying. To aid the Scottish Ministers in their duties for reporting, Public Health Scotland are required to collect and provide such information to the Scottish Ministers.

Discussion

5. The Bill relates to matters about a person's health and end of life choice as well as setting out a new procedure supervised by a health professional. The new procedure includes a health professional providing a terminally ill adult with approved substances to end their own life.
6. The remit of the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee includes considering and reporting on matters falling within the responsibility of the Cabinet Secretary for NHS Recovery, Health and Social Care and matters relating to drugs and alcohol policy. The responsibilities of the Cabinet Secretary include patient services, patient safety and person-centred care.
7. Business Managers will also be aware of the letter from Alexander Burnett (see Annexe) which proposes the establishment of a new Committee to consider the Bill.

Recommendation

8. **The Bureau is invited to consider whether to agree to refer the Assisted Dying for Terminally Ill Adults (Scotland) Bill to the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee under Rule 9.6.1 for consideration at Stage 1 or to consider options for the establishment of a new Committee in more detail at a future meeting.**

Parliamentary Business Team

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Annexe not published