

New laws will guarantee your medical treatment preferences

New legislation has come before the Parliament that will give Victorians greater powers to set directives about their future medical treatment, including end-of-life care and wishes.

The new legislation seeks to repeal or amend a number of current Acts and restructure them into simpler legislation. Most notably, the new legislation will allow all Victorians to control their treatment wishes for future illnesses, whereas the current laws only allow people to create directives for current conditions.

Minister for Health, Jill Hennessy, introduced the legislation, saying “We’re putting people’s preferences and values first when it comes to medical treatment decision making.”

Dying With Dignity Victoria is very pleased with the new legislation and the certainty that it brings for peoples medical treatment wishes.

DWDV Vice-President, Dr Rodney Syme, is happy to finally see legislation before parliament:

“This new Bill from the government to give statutory recognition to advance directives is the culmination of nearly 20 years of advocacy on this matter.”

Dr Syme believes that the legislation will close a serious gap on the previous Medical Treatment Act, which in theory only allowed for refusal of treatment for a ‘current condition’.

“Victorians will be fully protected in regard to refusal of future treatment as a result of this Bill, which will certainly pass into law.” He said.

The Medical Treatment Planning and Decisions Bill was developed by the government in response to a number of public consultation and information initiatives. Earlier in 2016 DWDV made a submission to the government during their period for feedback on the proposed legislation.

Parliament is expected to debate the legislation during the next sitting period on October 11th.

Dying With Dignity Victoria run workshops on Advance Care Directives and medical treatment rights. We cover what you need to know when filling out the form, the questions you should be asking your doctor, and the conversations you need to be having with your family and loved ones.

Our next workshop is on October 10. [Click here for details.](#)