

VAD MEDIA WATCH November 16 – 22

A big week in New South Wales as the Carter bill is defeated at its second reading in the Legislative Council. For those who have not caught up on the details, the amendment bill described itself thus: “An Act to amend the *Voluntary Assisted Dying Act 2022* to provide that residential facilities may decline to facilitate the administration of voluntary assisted dying services in the same way, and subject to the same obligations to make alternative arrangements, as hospitals; and for related purposes.” There were 16 ayes and 23 nos. I have the list of who voted each way. Contact me if you want it.

In South Australia a young woman with a very serious auto-immune disease has said she will seek an assisted death. The West Australian VAD Review Board has released its report for 2024-25 and the Gold Coast man we reported on a few weeks ago, has had further charges laid for assisting people to die.

In Canada, as we say every week, the opponents are keeping up the relentless pressure against MAiD, endlessly reproducing the assertion that MAiD is being offered to people in lieu of social support. In the UK many are interpreting the painfully slow process of the UK bill in the House of Lords as deliberate obstruction and there is continuous push-back from parts of the disability sector and those representing people suffering from anorexia. The VAD bill in Scotland is also hitting roadblocks, but in what might be some rare good news, Slovenia is conducting a referendum on VAD, which, given that the last one passed, will probably be successful.

This week’s issue compiled by Liz Jacka. Thanks to Go Gentle Australia, Dying With Dignity Canada, Ben White, Mike Gaffney, Anne Bunning and Suzanne James.

AUSTRALIA

South Australia

November 17

News Limited. Young Adelaide woman, Annaliese Holland, has chosen to end her life via an assisted death. She has had a rare auto-immune disease, auto-immune autonomic ganglionopathy, since she was a small child. Her family is heart-broken but supportive. This story is very hard to read because of the awful nature of her disease and suffering. [25-year-old Australian woman Annaliese Holland plans death on her own terms](#) This story is also carried in the *Adelaide Advertiser* and in multiple overseas news services. The *Advertiser* carried the story on its front page with a striking headline and image of Annaliese saying, “My Time to Die” and two-page coverage inside the paper.

New South Wales

November 17

The Australian. Reports on an item we covered last week, namely the question of whether the Carter bill contravenes the Aged Care Act. You will remember that Arthur Moses SC and Professor Patrick Keyser gave their opinion that this was the case. This story quotes a “religious freedoms expert”, Mark Fowler, who argues that the UN declaration on religious discrimination protects the right to run institutions in accordance with the freedom of religion or beliefs. “Human rights have equal status and are indivisible. To that extent, Moses and Keyser offer a one-sided analysis of Australia’s human rights obligations and fail to provide a holistic consideration of the relevant rights in play”. [Top lawyer challenges religious euthanasia exemption bid](#) (Behind a paywall.) The same article appeared in [Catholic News](#).

November 17

Australian Aging Agenda. More on the Carter bill. Both sides of the arguments have issued statements with multiple signatories, and another rights expert says there is no constitutional reason to oppose the bill. [VAD debate heats up in NSW](#)

November 19

The Australian. The Christian lobby is getting very active in favour of the Carter bill. Religious leaders warn that Labor will be damaged by a loss of support in the western suburbs over its failure to give support to the Carter bill. It suggests, rather implausibly, that religious communities, such as the Maronite, Syrian Christian and Chaldeans will feel their religious freedom rights are being denied. The leaders of these churches have joined Catholic leaders in supporting the bill. [Religious leaders warn Labor seats at risk over euthanasia laws](#) (Behind a paywall – see Attachment 1.)

November 20

Green Left. Suzanne James covers the defeat of the Carter bill. [NSW Liberals’ anti-VAD bill defeated](#) It was actually a conscience vote but note, the majority of the yes votes were Liberal and only one Liberal voted no.

November 21

And this is how *Catholic News* covered the bill’s defeat. [NSW Parliament votes against changes to assisted dying laws](#)

Western Australia

November 21

The West Australian. The Western Australian Review Board has released its VAD report for 2024-25. [More West Aussies accessing voluntary assisted dying, leading to fears of shortage of trained staff](#) You can find the report [here](#). It notes an increase in VAD applications and VAD deaths and worries about a shortage of trained practitioners. (Behind a paywall – see Attachment 2.)

November 20

And *Right to Life UK* are right on to it, making the usual claim that the increase in VAD numbers in WA shows VAD is out of control. [64% surge in euthanasia and assisted suicide deaths in Western Australia in one year](#)

Tasmania

Debate on a motion brought by Mike Gaffney MLC will be debated on Tuesday December 2. The motion is to note and consider the Go Gentle Australia national survey on VAD in residential aged care. For those who may have missed the report, [here](#) is the link.

Queensland

November 21

Gold Coast News. A Gold Coast man previously charged with assisting people to die by supplying them with an illegal substance has had more charges brought against him. More “suspicious deaths” are being investigated as well as allegations that he committed fraud by charging fees for professional services he was unqualified to offer. [Man faces charges including alleged drug supply in Maroochydore](#)

Victoria

November 22

Regional papers like the *Sunbury Macedon Ranges Star Weekly* are beginning to cover the changes to the Victorian VAD scheme. [Voluntary Assisted Dying changes ‘fairer’ and ‘more compassionate’](#) There is a similar report in *Disability News* but behind a paywall. It is good that the changes are being communicated to key groups.

INTERNATIONAL

Canada

November 17

Yahoo News. The province of Manitoba, in contrast with the rest of the country, has seen MAiD deaths decrease. One commentator says it may be due to the isolation of some parts of this rural province. Others say it is part of a levelling off evident in other parts of Canada. [With dip in number of MAiD deaths, Manitoba an 'outlier' among provinces](#)

November 20

Life Site News. Some sections of the disability community are petitioning the Federal government to repeal Track 2 MAiD (death not reasonably foreseeable). [Disabled Canadians petition Parliament to reverse MAiD for non-terminal conditions](#)

November 22

Todayville. This is really nutty, but not unlike lots of other such articles. A veteran of the Mounted Police is appalled that a talk on MAiD has been arranged for RCMP veterans at an Anglican Church, calling it grooming. [A Provincial RCMP Veterans' Association IS TARGETING VETERANS with Euthanasia](#)

Germany

November 18

Zoombangla. The death of the Kessler twins together via VAD has ignited discussion in Germany and in Europe generally. Alice and Ellen Kessler were renowned popular entertainers in Germany in the fifties. This article gives some detail about how assisted dying work in Germany. [What Is Assisted Dying? Key Facts Explained After Kessler Twins' Case](#) This story has received wide-world coverage.

United Kingdom

A post by advocacy group, *My Death my Decision*, reports on challenges to the idea that disabled people are disadvantaged by VAD from part of the disability sector itself. They say that disabled people should have the same right to an assisted death as abled people. [Our patron Jean Eveleigh challenges misrepresentation of disabled people in Assisted Dying Bill Committee](#)

November 18

CareHome. This article considers the implications of VAD for care homes in the UK. It raises a few questions, and, interestingly, uses the Tasmanian experience with VAD in residential aged care, which is described in very positive terms. [Assisted Dying Bill 2025: What it means for UK care homes](#)

November 18

The Independent. Game of Thrones star, Sophie Turner (Sansa Stark for the tragics), has said she believes the proposed bill poses a danger to people with eating disorders. [Sophie Turner says assisted dying bill poses 'serious risk' to eating disorder patients](#) As you might expect, her comments have been reposted in many outlets.

November 20

Disability News Service. This article makes out there is something sinister about the UK government making contingency plans for the introduction of VAD should the bill be passed. Sigh. [Government refuses to say if it is secretly working on how to implement assisted suicide bill](#)

November 21

The Telegraph. This is behind a paywall, but the headline says it all. [Prisoners 'could kill themselves with assisted dying to escape justice'](#)

November 22

BBC. The number of amendments in the Lords has risen above 1000. Kim Leadbeater and others are interpreting this as deliberate obstruction. [Peers trying to block assisted dying, claims MP behind bill](#)

An eating disorders support group called *BEAT* explains why it believes VAD poses a danger to people with anorexia. [BEAT'S POSITION ON THE ASSISTED DYING BILL](#)

United States of America

November 20

Jewish News. Some welcome common sense from a doctor who describes himself as an orthodox Jew, saying his Jewish colleagues are mistaken when they argue that the proposed MAiD scheme for New York is dangerous and against Jewish law. [Further Reflection on New York State's Proposed Medical Aid in Dying Act](#)

Malta

November 17

Malta Today. The Minister overseeing the assisted dying process is disappointed that the opposition did not put in a single submission to the extensive consultation process. [5,000 submissions filed in euthanasia consultation, but none from PN, junior minister says](#)

Taiwan

November 17

Focus Taiwan. The Kuomintang party, which is in a majority in the legislature, asks the President (who is from the Democratic Progressive Party) to pardon an elderly woman convicted for the 'mercy killing' of her severely disabled son. [KMT lawmakers urge president to pardon mother in 'mercy killing' case](#)

Scotland

November 18

Care Not Killing. Reports that a group of politicians opposed to VAD have instructed the Health Minister to seek advice from the United Nations about whether its proposed bill is compatible with the UN Charter, especially in relation to the rights of the disabled. [MSPs to seek UN view on McArthur Bill compatibility with disability convention](#)

November 21

The Bishops Council of Scotland. Reports briefly on how Scottish MSPs have watered down what the bishops see as necessary safeguards. [MSPs have approved an amendment allowing doctors to raise the option of assisted suicide with patients](#)

Jersey

November 20

Balliwick Express. A quick update on Jersey. [Family experience showed merits of assisted dying legislation, says Minister](#)

Slovenia

November 21

STA. Watch this space. The Slovenian referendum on legalising VAD is to be held today Sunday the 23rd of November. [Tight finish expected as campaign on assisted dying referendum concludes](#) This story is, for some reason, also carried in *The Canberra Times* and *The Australian*.

ALSO OF INTEREST

November 18.

Dying With Dignity Victoria. The 2025 recipient of the Rodney Syme Medal is oncologist and VAD practitioner, Dr Cam McLaren. [Rodney Syme Medal 2025 recipient: Dr Cameron McLaren](#)

November 20

A very important and topical new paper from Professor Ben White and colleagues reporting on a study of conscientious objection in New Zealand. It is restricted access, but Ben has kindly supplied me with a copy, so contact me if you want the full paper. The New Zealand law does not address conscientious objection and the researchers found that many facilities were blocking patients from accessing the various stages of the VAD process, but that there was considerable disagreement about these policies among the staff in these facilities. It is suggested that the next review of the New Zealand legislation will have to address the issue. [Institutional objection to assisted dying: A qualitative study of stakeholders in Aotearoa New Zealand](#)

An older item about *Scandinavia* from September 2025. A formidable array of medical bodies utterly condemns any form of assisted dying. I find this surprising given how socially progressive the Scandinavian countries are. [Position statement of the Nordic Ethics Meeting on Euthanasia and Assisted Dying](#)

November 20

Tyla News. A useful article summarising what the various Swiss VAD clinics offer. [Step by step of what happens to your body during legal assisted suicide](#)