

The case for dignity, summary of findings

- This paper covers the impacts of assisted dying legislation on the palliative care sector and what risks there are that the system could be abused. To do this, it uses case studies of existing systems from around the world.
- The paper looks at the examples of California, Oregon, Washington, Victoria, and Western Australia. These case studies are used to understand the impact on palliative care and the safety of the system within countries that allow mentally competent and terminally ill adults to access assisted dying.
- The first section concludes that there have not been any reported instances of the system being abused or being coerced into having an assisted death. It looks at the cases of California, Oregon, Washington, Victoria, and Western Australia.
- There is also no real evidence of the law being expanded in Oregon and California despite concerns around a 'slippery slope.'
- It finds that individuals have a high degree of autonomy within the assisted dying process. Individuals have a choice and decide not to use the option of assisted dying despite having direct access to it.
- The second section looks at the impacts on the palliative care sector, which has often seen underinvestment. This section looks at New South Wales, Victoria, Western Australia, and Oregon.
- It shows that there is concern among those in the sector, but over time some groups have voiced support for a change in the law.
- It concludes that changing the law would likely not negatively impact palliative care. This section shows governments generally increased funding for palliative care following the introduction of assisted death legislation.