

## UPDATE Briefing on the Assisted Dying for Terminally Ill Adults (Scotland) Bill - Stage 2 Amendments

27th November 2025

### Summary Update

The Health Committee has now completed their consideration of amendments to the Assisted Dying for Terminally Ill Adults (Scotland) Bill. The final meeting took place on Tuesday 25th November.

The formal records for the latest meeting have not been published yet but in total around 70 amendments (from around 300) were agreed by the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee. We are pleased to have successfully amended the bill, in the two priority areas we had for the Stage 2 process.

The updated version of the bill, incorporating all agreed changes, is now available on the parliament website: [Bill as amended](#). The Bill has now moved to Stage 3, where it will be possible for further amendments to the Bill to be considered by all MSPs. Once all amendments have been considered at Stage 3, the Parliament will then have a final vote on the Bill as amended to decide whether it becomes law.

In addition to passing the Stage 3 vote, all issues relating to reserved matters must be agreed by the Scottish and UK Governments. If the Bill has not achieved Royal Assent by the elections in May, it would need to start the process again.

### Hospice UK Amendments

As previously advised, our priorities in relation to this Bill have been to ensure that:

1. the impact of assisted dying legislation on the hospice sector is assessed and managed.
2. anyone considering an assisted death is making a fully informed choice and is aware the impact palliative care could have in managing complex symptoms.

### Supporting hospices and palliative and end of life care

**Amendments 54, 55 and 64** were agreed. These amendments require an assessment of the impact on palliative and end of life care services of assisted dying being legalised, and the creation of a Code of Practice on how assisted dying would interact with hospices and other providers of palliative and end of life care. The Code of Practice includes the following points:

- any measures to mitigate any adverse impacts on the operation of existing palliative and end of life care services, including those provided by non-statutory providers,
- how existing and future statutory funding streams intended to support the delivery of palliative and end of life care services can be differentiated to ensure assistance provided in accordance with this Act is not funded at the expense of existing palliative and end of life care services

**Amendment 44** was agreed - this places a duty on the Scottish Government to deliver an information service available to individuals considering an assisted death, health and social care staff and the general public (rather than this potentially sitting with voluntary groups such as Friends at the End).

We had submitted two additional amendments which were *not* agreed by the Committee.

**Amendment 57** would have required the five year review set out in the original Bill to consider the impact of the Act on hospices and other providers of palliative and end of life care services.

**Amendment 61** would have required the assessment report (agreed to as part of amendment 54) to be published prior to assisted dying being legally available.

### **Palliative care supporting informed choice**

**Amendment 29** was agreed - this requires the assessing registered medical practitioner, as far as they considered appropriate, to explain and discuss *"hospice or other care available, including symptom management and psychological support"* rather than just *"any palliative or other care available"*.

**Amendment 93** was agreed - this means that anyone requesting an assisted death must be offered a referral for a palliative care assessment.

We welcome both of these amendments being agreed. Our aim was to ensure that, if assisted dying is legalised, people can fully and meaningfully explore all end of life choices open to them and make an informed decision.

### **Other Amendments of Note**

#### **Relating to individual staff who could be involved in the assisted dying process**

Amendments from Liam McArthur MSP, Paul Sweeney MSP and Daniel Johnson MSP were all accepted. These collectively shift the current bill away from individual staff being able to conscientiously object to participation, to a position where an individual has no duty to participate and must suffer no detriment as a result of participating or not participating in the assisted dying process.

There were a number of other amendments that amended areas such as training, no duty to raise assisted dying (and must not be raised with under-18s) and more detail on the role of staff at the point of an assisted death taking place.

#### **Relating to organisations who could be impacted by the legalisation of assisted dying**

In addition to altering the position for staff, Amendment 11 from Daniel Johnson also includes language relating to organisational conscientious objection:

*"An individual or organisation must not be subject to any detriment for not participating in anything authorised by this Act to which that individual or organisation has a conscientious objection."*

Amendment 62 sets out that Scottish Ministers must make provision by regulations about assisted dying services delivered outwith the NHS.

We are exploring the potential to seek legal advice on the best way to ensure hospices will have the flexibility to determine their own involvement in the assisted dying process. However, in the Scottish Bill the combination of our amendment 55 with amendments 11 and 62 do create quite a different position compared to the Westminster Bill (in its current form).

A number of other amendments that would have explicitly created an opt out for hospices and care homes were all rejected by the committee.

## **Relating to individual considering an assisted death**

There were a number of changes to the bill, including:

- Eligibility amended to set the minimum age as 18, and additional wording to make clear a person is not terminally ill only because they have a disability or a mental disorder (or both)
- Creation of an advocacy service for anyone considering an assisted death who would need support in this way

## **Further background information**

Information on assisted dying legislation across the British Isles and links to all previous briefings and webinars are available on our members' hub: [Assisted dying: information for members | Hospice UK](#)

Our most recent briefing on the Scottish bill, with the full wording of the amendments submitted by Jackie Baillie MSP is available here: [Assisted Dying for Terminally Ill Adults \(Scotland\) Bill - Stage 2 - October 2025.pdf](#) and a recording of our most recent webinar is also available: [Assisted Dying Legislation Scottish Parliament Big Conversation - YouTube](#)

Detailed information relating to the Bill and parliamentary process is available on the [Parliament website](#).

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