



Is there a Christian case for assisted dying?

The **SCOTTISH CHRISTIAN FORUM ON ASSISTED DYING** (SCFAD) brings together Christian ministers, theologians and lay Christians who operate in the Scottish context.

We believe that a compassionate Christian approach to human suffering means that a legal framework for assisted dying (subject to appropriate safeguards) is fully compatible with Christian ethics and with a sensitive approach to pastoral ministry.

See below for answers to some key questions.

- **What is the Forum saying about the *Assisted Dying for Terminally Ill Adults (Scotland) Bill* currently under consideration in the Scottish Parliament?**

SCFAD made a detailed submission to the Scottish Parliament's Health Committee and we were subsequently invited to give evidence in person. We argued that this Bill has a real potential to reduce human suffering, by ensuring that those facing painful and distressing symptoms at the end of life should not be forced to go on living if they genuinely wish to die.

Of course, many Christians may rule out an assisted death no matter how much they are suffering. But we do not believe Christians can ever justify *forcing* people to suffer. So, in our submissions, we said that the choice of a medically assisted death should be available those who genuinely want this – but only with very strict safeguards and with proper inclusion of spiritual and pastoral support for people of faith who make this choice. (See our website for SCFAD's full submission on the Bill.)

If you agree with this, please contact your MSPs and encourage them to *support* the Bill (subject to the points raised by SCFAD) – making clear that you are writing as an active Christian.

- **How is SCFAD funded?**

So far the Forum is supported entirely by the core members. But everyone is involved on a voluntary basis, so the expenses are very small and there is currently no charge to be a member.

- **Who are the members of SCFAD – Can I get involved?**

The Scottish Christian Forum on Assisted Dying is a network of individuals with particular interest in the implications of assisted dying from a perspective of Christian ethics and Christian pastoral support (ministry, chaplaincy etc).

All members of the Forum have firm affiliations with at least one of the major Christian denominations including the Church of Scotland, Scottish Episcopal Church and the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland. Most of us are regular worshippers in our respective churches. Roughly half of our members are ordained ministers in one of these churches – others are involved in various lay ministries. See our website for further details.

Anyone who supports our aims is welcome to join: it is vital that MSPs appreciate that there are Christians *on both sides* of the case for assisted dying. If you are an active Christian based in Scotland who believes that there is a case for a legal framework for assisted dying (subject to proper safeguards) it would be great to include you. Please see www.scfad.org.uk or email convenor@scfad.org.uk with a note of your interests.

For more information

Please visit our website www.scfad.org.uk or contact the SCFAD Convenor (Prof Gareth Morgan) at the email above.