



Scottish Christian Forum on Assisted Dying

Convenor:
Professor Gareth Morgan
[Address etc removed for web version]
www.scfad.org.uk

22 April 2025

..... MSP
Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

[Handwritten: Dear ...]

Assisted Dying for Terminally Ill Adults (Scotland) Bill –

An opportunity to discuss the Christian ethical case for support for the Bill

Thank you for the time that you will be giving to this important Bill: we are writing to offer a chance to discuss Christian ethical arguments which underpin this important legislation.

The Scottish Christian Forum on Assisted Dying (SCFAD) brings together Christian ministers (lay and ordained) and others with theological, ethical and pastoral experience in a Scottish context. Our members span the main Christian denominations in Scotland: Church of Scotland, Episcopalian and Roman Catholic.

We submitted evidence to the Health Social Care and Sport Committee on the Assisted Dying Bill tabled by Liam McArthur MSP and we were then invited to give oral evidence to the Committee on 21 January 2025.

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. We believe that this Bill has the scope to offer a huge reduction in human suffering for those who would otherwise suffer very painful or very distressing symptoms at the end of life.

We appreciate that some church leaders are very opposed to the Bill and you may have received correspondence implying that Christians in general are opposed. But it is very hard from a perspective of Christian ethics to argue that someone should be forced to suffer if they would genuinely rather die. Several of the churches, in their own submissions, recognised that there are arguments on both sides.

Surveys show that a firm majority of Christians support legislation for assisted dying, and it is also supported by a majority of voters in every constituency and region of the Scottish Parliament. (See www.dignityindyingScotland.org.uk/assisted-dying/public-opinion-on-assisted-dying/.)

So, given that the Bill includes very firm safeguards to prevent abuse – including five stages before anyone could actually access an assisted death – we would implore you to support this Bill in the Stage 1 vote when it returns to the full Parliament next month.

If you would like the opportunity to discuss this further – in particular the Christian ethics involved – please get in touch as soon as possible. We are happy to offer a confidential discussion, on a 1-1 basis or in a small group, which could be with an ordained minister if that would be helpful.

Our prayers are with you – and with all MSPs – as you take this crucial step to reduce suffering and to make Scotland a more compassionate nation.

Yours sincerely

[Hand-signed]

Gareth Morgan
Convenor – Scottish Christian Forum on Assisted Dying convenor@scfad.org.uk