

## ***TIPS for Talking about VE***

Whether you are speaking or writing to the media, to your MP or to others about voluntary euthanasia, there are a few words or phrases which you may like to remember and some you should really avoid. Keeping in mind that our mission is to persuade our politicians to legislate for VE, we should be careful to use wording that will impress and motivate rather than confuse or aggravate. Of course, we also need to make sure we have our facts right. Some pointers:

### ***Explain WHO we are and WHAT we stand for***

- ***What do we want***

Memorise WAVES' mission statement. It explains our motives clearly.

*“To bring about such changes to Western Australian Statute Law and to medical ethics as will allow a person to receive medically assisted euthanasia under circumstances specified by him or her when legally competent to make such a choice.”*

- ***Our core concern – the patient's right to choose***

The patient is identified as *“the chronically or terminally ill person”* or *“the person suffering more than he/she can bear”*.

Matters in personal end-of-life decisions are solely the patient's concern. He/she should have a choice of options, including palliative care and voluntary euthanasia. He/she has the right to choose the timing and manner of death.

### ***Be positive***

- ***Do show respect***

- Do not attack religious beliefs of others. They have a right to hold those beliefs. But we should stress our opposition to them imposing their beliefs on everyone else.
- Don't ridicule or play down serious concerns about VE. Many sensible and tolerant people have genuine reservations about some of the consequences of legalisation. It is important to distinguish them from the fanatics, whose only concern is the imposition of a minority morality.

- ***Consider the consequences***

- Do recognise that carefully established checks and safeguards have to accompany any change in the law. The prospect of legalised VE being abused, as often argued by 'pro-life lobbyists', is unacceptable, and should be dealt with up front.
- VE and assisted suicide are not solutions to economic or social problems, such as an ageing population, costs of aged care, housing availability, etc. Such suggestions are likely to upset or appal many people.
- Do not link the case for VE to that of other debates, such as abortion. Some arguments may be common, but there are substantial differences. Don't go there.