

Assisted suicide and the law

Law



Assisted suicide and the law Legal provisions protect people's right to life and impute liability on any individual who directly or indirectly terminates a person's life. The law also provides for individuals' freedom of choice and patients' autonomy to make decisions on what they want from healthcare providers. As a result, a patient's request for an assisted termination of personal life, known as 'physician-assisted' suicide presents both legal and ethical dilemma in care facilities amidst calls for legalization.

The Hemlock Society for example advocates for legalization of assisted suicide with the view that "people who wish to retain their dignity and choice at the end of their lives should have the option of a peaceful, gentle, certain, and swift death in the company of their loved ones" (Schmallegger, 2006, p. 1). The society's objective advocates for legalization of assisted suicide with an informed patient's decision and with the patient's family being informed.

I agree with the society's opinion that the decision should be legally left to patients. This is because the current legal and ethical healthcare provisions do not address the issue, creating confusion among physicians. The Supreme Court has also, in the past, found no legal liability in assisted suicide and left the decision to physician and patient's ethical consideration. Euthanasia would be the best option because it is painless (Westrick, Dempksi and Katherine, 2008).

I would add a provision that a mentally incapacitated person be entitled to a physician assisted suicide with the consent of an approved caretaker, preferably a close relative. This is because the category of persons may be in great need of the service but lacks the capacity to consent.

References

<https://assignbuster.com/assisted-suicide-and-the-law/>

Schmalleger, Frank. (2006). Assisted suicide. New Jersey, NJ: Prentice Hall

Westrick, S., Dempski, M. and Katherine, M. (2008). Essentials of Nursing Law and Ethics. Washington, DC: Jones & Bartlett Publishers