

Death assistance in society essay

[Law](#), [Criminal Justice](#)



Thesis

Much debate has been made on the ethics of physician assisted death. This is a debate not just with Americans but with societies all over the world. The decision to allow death assistance in a legal means should not be one taken lightly as there are many pros and cons that must first be considered. By taking a look at these ethical issues and analyzing the consequence I feel that we can gain a better understanding of why death assistance is morally ambiguous.

Thoughts on Euthanasia

Personally I believe that death assistance should not be legalized. Medication and treatment should be the first priority. By making the decision to end life, we are opening the gates to a multitude of moral questions. Deciding who has the right to end life and when is very difficult to determine.

Lifesaving technology offers new possibilities to relieve and minimize suffering when at all possible (BBC). It seems hypocritical to say that one person's suffering is less than another's, who are we to judge? Physicians often don't agree on prognoses and a patient's mental capacity to choose for themselves may be compromised (Siren). Ethical duty for physicians is to relieve pain and suffering. Physicians who have for years viewed patients slowly lingering and suffering cause agony for loved ones may have the best view on the issues at hand. Many support a person's right to choose should it be legally applicable.

World View of Euthanasia

Many societies around the world allow for death assistance. They argue that no one would want to live in agony and suffering, becoming a burden to their loved ones. Society has a much different view of assisted suicide in other countries. Too many upholding a person's dignity and honor is the most important thing. The European Declaration of Human Rights states that everyone has the right not to suffer. Other systems of belief feel that it is morally wrong to take a life under any circumstances. This conflict of interests is cause for concern in the argument for euthanasia.

Factors to Consider

There are many legitimate reasons presented as to why assisted death should remain illegal. Most questions raised are ethical ones. Some argue the death is never better than life and to decide whether we live or die is not our decision. Another problem arises into how to regulate assisted death. No one case is ever the same, it is very difficult to determine who should be allowed this choice and who should not. There is certainly a fine line doctors and patients must walk when making this ultimate decision (BBC). Whether a terminally ill person is competent to decide is also open to speculation.

Argument is also made that it is not a doctor's job to end life but to heal. To take a person's life is the ultimate power; many problems can arise from misuse of power. Both sides of the idea raise very important issues that need to be addressed before assisted death is legalized.

Three factors should be considered in the argument for assisted death of consenting patient. 1. We allow death to relieve pain because death is the lesser evil 2. We intend lesser evils to the patient and 3. Therefore death

being the lesser evil is the end of pain (BBC). By allowing legalization of assisted death, it would be very difficult regulate the process, and would create a great deal of legal nightmares (Siren).

So is there a legal right to die? Several times the euthanasia issue has been proposed in courts. Right now there is a huge divide between those who believe it to be a constitution right and those who do not? It would have to be a larger majority in order for assisted death to become legalized (Beale). There have been actions put into place to insure the patient's rights to refuse treatment and lifesaving technology should they choose. This can be a reassurance for those in favor of assisted death.

Before a law could be put in place allowing for assisted death there are many stipulations to put in place. Laws would be needed to be out in place to protect against immoral doctors (Siren). Laws would also have to be in place to decide who has the right to decide if the person qualifies for assisted death. It should be determined whether it should be allow for only the competent or with orders from a doctor or loved one (Beale). Specific guidelines would be required to ensure all those who receive assisted death meet the criteria. This is naturally very hard to do since all cases are different. These concerns may seem insurmountable is ever passing a law allowing for assisted death. I am not sure we will ever receive enough support in order to logically sort out these guidelines without prejudice.

Conclusion

Overall, no one truly knows the answer to these moral questions, but as a person who has seen loved ones that suffered with both severe and physical debilitation of which there was no cure this firsthand experience has

changed my view of assisted death from skeptic to believer. To see a loved one suffer in mental and physical pain is a heart wrenching experience no matter what options are available. To force someone to suffer without hope for healing is in my opinion unethical. Hopefully whether death ends naturally or with assistance suffering ends either way.

Works Cited:

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