

Assisted deaths and safeguards

v4



Small risks need modest safety measures

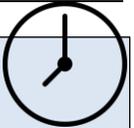


Big risks demand robust safeguards



Any law on assisted dying is at the top of any risk register since getting it wrong is irreversible

Problem 1: Prognosis

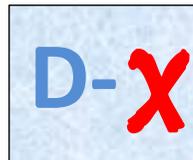
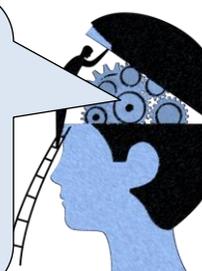


- Doctors become more inaccurate the longer the survival¹
- Accuracy is worse for non-cancer patients²
- Doctors and families struggle to estimate prognosis in dementia³
- 88% of head & neck cancer prognoses are wrong⁴
- Half of predictions in heart failure are wrong⁵
- 5% of terminal diagnoses are wrong⁶



Problem 2: Intent
A wish to die is often transient⁷

Problem 4: UK record
We continue to fail vulnerable individuals and groups^{9, 10}

Problem 3: Capacity
After 15 years the Mental Capacity Act is still not fully implemented⁸

Problem 5: Assessment
Doctors miss existential issues such as hopelessness¹¹

References

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