

The impact of assisted dying on children and young people

v1



Assisted dying is having an impact on children.....



.....and on young people

WHERE



Netherlands

Children 12-16 are eligible with parents' consent
But most paediatricians support its use regardless of age or capacity¹

Belgium

No age limit since 2014, but children must have 'capacity of discernment' and parental consent.
But life-ending drugs given in 10% of neonates²

Canada

Not currently legal below 18 years.
But campaigners support lowering the age³

Key issues for young people 16-25 years

- Definition of adult can be 16 years (as in Scotland)⁴
- 'Terminal illness' can include refusal of life-sustaining treatment, eg. insulin in type 1 diabetic
- Six month prognosis would include food refusal⁵
- An adult has the right to refuse to inform their parents and family.

Conclusions

There are implications now for young people under current UK proposals for assisted dying.

Assisted dying in children is uncommon but safeguards often expand (see Safeguards infographic on www.kadoh.uk)

References

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4. Scottish Parliament section 29. <https://www.parliament.scot/-/media/files/legislation/bills/s6-bills/assisted-dying-for-terminally-ill-adults-scotland-bill/introduction/bill-as-introduced.pdf>
5. Gaudiani J *et al.* J Eating Disorders 2022
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