

President's Report - January 2019

Hello members and supporters,



We are still waiting for the email address from the Parliamentary Committee so that we can send our submissions to the upcoming Inquiry into “Aged Care, End-of-Life and Palliative Care”. We had hoped that we would know the address before Christmas, but governments move slowly! We believe that the address will be publicised by mid-February at the latest.

As soon as the address is made public we will let you know. We are counting on you to send in your letters/submissions with your personal reasons of why you support VAD. Most of you will be writing from a personal experience of losing a loved-one to a “bad death”, but others will write from the perspective of what they want for themselves. The Victorian and WA Inquiries received thousands of these submissions.

We will give you all the information that you need to write a good individual submission. If you need help, you will be able to contact one of our DWDQ Committee or Electorate Coordinators who will personally assist you.

You will note that the Inquiry is looking at three separate issues

- Aged Care
- End of Life (which includes VAD)
- Palliative Care

We are disappointed that Aged Care has continued to be included in this Inquiry when there is a Royal Commission into aged care at the same time. We suggest that you address only the End-of-Life (which includes VAD) and/or Palliative Care components in your submission to this Inquiry. If you would like to comment on Aged Care, we ask you to make a separate submission to the Royal Commission. Submissions to the Royal Commission will be open until the end of July.

The Inquiry Committee is due to have their final report ready to present to Parliament by 30 November 2019. Among other things, this report will recommend whether a Bill on VAD should be written and presented to Parliament.

Submissions will be able to be sent for a limited time only, and once the time for sending them in has closed, the Inquiry Committee will invite people to talk to them personally. In Victoria people who wanted to talk to the Inquiry committee had to go to Melbourne, and in Western Australia, they had to travel to Perth. We have been told that in Queensland, the Committee will travel to regional centres to speak to people.

For 30 years, this is what we have wanted to happen!

Be part of making history happen—as it did in Victoria last year.

Cheers—Jos (DWDQ President)





A message from the Clem Jones Group

18 January 2019

With the lull of the Christmas and New Year break behind us, I want to take this opportunity to thank members and supporters of Dying With Dignity Queensland for their continuing efforts to see voluntary assisted dying (VAD) law reform in our state.

Last year the Clem Jones Group began working with DWDQ and others to have an inquiry into VAD conducted by the cross-party Health Portfolio Committee of the Queensland Parliament.

That goal has been achieved and the inquiry by the committee was established by the Queensland Parliament late last year. As happened in both Victoria and Western Australia, this inquiry should lead to recommendations for voluntary assisted dying laws in Queensland.

The committee, which will also examine aged care and palliative care, is expected to outline its work plan and time table in coming weeks, including a call and deadline for public submissions.

It is to be hoped that the state inquiry will not waste time and effort on replicating the Royal Commission into Aged Care already established by the federal government, or retracing ground covered by the 2012 Health Committee inquiry into palliative care in Queensland that made more than 60 recommendations to the former state government.

Its focus should be squarely on voluntary assisted dying law reform.

Both the Clem Jones Group and DWDQ and others have been continuing to liaise with government decision-makers, as well as meeting as many as possible of our 93 state MPs who will eventually vote on the committee's recommendations.

We have organised two "drop-in" sessions at Parliament House late last year at which we arranged a series of private meetings at which we were able to discuss VAD with Members on all sides of the House.

As we begin 2019 we must all commit to an ongoing effort to advocate for VAD law reform as the Health Committee's Inquiry proceeds.

Of particular concern is the State Government's suggestion that any new VAD laws may not be considered until after the next election due in October 2020. We should all take every opportunity to impress on the government the urgent need for new laws and for the current Parliament to vote on any recommended laws proposed by the Health Committee after its public consultations.

Personal submissions by DWDQ members and supporters to the Health Committee will be key to our campaign.

I know many such submissions have already been drafted and sent to DWDQ for comment. I encourage everyone with an interest in VAD to do likewise.

Personal submissions telling the story of individual Queenslanders will be powerful weapons in the fight for VAD law reform.

The sooner such submissions are drafted and finalised the sooner we can use them as part of our public and media campaigning.

The Clem Jones Group looks forward to continuing to work with all involved in DWDQ and to seeing voluntary assisted dying laws become a reality in Queensland as soon as possible.

David Muir

Chair

The Clem Jones Group

Recent and planned actions

Since the last Newsletter in November 2018, we have met with the QLD Coroner, and the Police Commissioner, plus representatives from Palliative Care, and the QLD Law Society, all of whom we hope will lodge a submission to the Inquiry.

We ensured that these groups were aware of the Inquiry, and we addressed concerns they may have had and informed them of the safeguards in the Victorian legislation that we will model our legislation on.

We have professionally produced information packs that we give to these groups when we see them. These information packs were generously provided by the Clem Jones Group.

We will start meeting with MPs during February when Parliament is sitting and the regional MPs are in Brisbane.

MP Sandy Bolton's Survey

When we meet with MPs, we ask them to consider surveying their own electorate regarding support for VAD. One MP who has done that is Sandy Bolton, the Independent member for Noosa Electorate. Sandy has opened this survey up to all Queenslanders, and we urge you to do the survey which you will find at the following link—



<https://www.sandybolton.com/yoursay/?fbclid=IwAR1Pv622UTdQgj70UdHJOn5R4IBVG5pdGCc6X5C3U1ggB-VEvUw01mfiT7o>

The first two questions are specific to Noosa area, but the remaining questions cover state-wide issues including support for VAD.

Our new website—a pre-view



This will be going live hopefully within the next two weeks. It will be bright and colourful with a Queensland beach theme and should be very easy to navigate.

This is where important news will be posted, so we hope you will check it regularly.

It will also have newsletters and details of all public information sessions.

DWDQ Public Information Sessions for early 2019

Townsville Public Information Sessions

Sunday 10 March, 2pm to 3pm
Carlyle Gardens Conference Room
Beck Drive, Condon

The DWDQ President will attend. There is no cost to attend.
For more information, please ring Marj on **4773 9295**
or email her at marj.lawrence@gmail.com



Hervey Bay Public Information Sessions

Early April—date and time to be confirmed

For more information including the venue,
email Phil at palmboy4444@gmail.com



Bundaberg Public Information Sessions

Friday 15 February from 10.30 am to 11.30am
Bundaberg Neighbourhood Centre—DIFFERENT LOCATION
11 Targo St Bundaberg

Cost to attend—a gold coin, the smaller the better
David Batt MP will attend. Space available for 50 people only
Email widebaycoordinator@gmail.com to book



Sunshine Coast Public Information Sessions

Wednesday 6 March, 1.30pm for a 2pm start
CWA Hall, 104 Memorial Ave, Maroochydore

\$5.00 is requested to cover cost of hiring the venue
and afternoon tea.

For more information, please email Denise at
dbsauer@icloud.com or ring her on **5477 5569**



Brisbane Central Public Information Sessions

Wednesday 27 February – 11am to 1pm
Brisbane Square Library Meeting Room,
266 George Street, Brisbane.

There is no cost to attend these information sessions.
Refreshment are provided.

For further details, please email Jeanette at
jeanette.graceville@gmail.com or ring her on **1300 733 818**



Gold Coast Public Information Sessions

Friday 1 March, 9.30am to 12.30pm
Preece House

52 Nerang St, Nerang St, Nerang

For more information, email Paul on pbpub01@gmail.com
or ring him on **0414 937 937**

