



Media

Glaring Euthanasia Drug Omission in the Victorian Drug Law Reform Report Fails the Elderly

The 640 page report into Drug Law Reform carried out by the Law Reform, Road and Community Safety Committee and tabled in the Victorian Parliament, has failed to even consider a growing euthanasia drug crisis amongst elderly Australians.

While many of the categories of drug use, both legal and illegal were considered in this wide ranging report, the prominent and growing issue of the acquisition of illegal euthanasia barbiturates like Nembutal by elderly Australians seeking a reliable end of life drug was not addressed.

This is despite the significant government resources devoted to surveillance, interception and the control of testing of these drugs, and the growing evidence that such prohibition is counter-productive.

Speaking from Amsterdam, Exit International Director Dr Philip Nitschke said that Australia stands out as a country prepared to spend an immense amount of money to prevent the elderly from importing or possessing these drugs, even though there is clear evidence that access to these drugs provides a better quality and often a longer life.

“To be able to safely obtain and store a small amount of good quality barbiturates is immensely important to many of our elderly members. While both Federal and State governments refuses to address this, and maintain their predatory campaign against those who seek to use the internet or to travel, to obtain these drugs, a large number of law abiding elderly are effectively being criminalised.

Restriction has driven many to source the readily available but less effective lethal salts like the recently developed Australian pig poison, sodium nitrite, and this trend is not consistent with harm minimisation.

Dr Nitschke said that as the population ages, there was no sign that the growth in demand for these drugs around the world would abate.

“What is needed is an understanding of the issue, and a modification of laws that are effectively criminalising a growing number of law-abiding elderly Australian.

The fact that this important Parliament review into drug law reform failed to even acknowledge the problem is profoundly disappointing and wasted opportunity.

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