MEDIA RELEASE

Jeff Kennett invited to Rational Suicide Workshop

Exit International Director Dr Philip Nitschke will run a workshop on Voluntary Euthanasia and Rational Suicide in Melbourne tomorrow and an estimated 150 elderly Victorians are expected to attend.

Intense interest in the topic of rational suicide has been prompted by media reports of the suicide of alleged serial killer Nigel Brayley in Perth, who suicided rather than face incarceration over the deaths of three previous partners.

Ex Victorian premier Jeff Kennett, acting in his capacity as chairman of Beyond Blue, commented on the Brayley case stating that there “was no such thing as ‘rational suicide’”, and putting forward the Beyond Blue position that ALL suicide is in the context of psychiatric illness, in particular depression.

At the workshop Dr Nitschke will present several case studies of rational suicide, other than that of Nigel Brayley. In particular the death in 2011 of Iris Flounders in Warragul, who ended her life at the same time as her partner Don, who was terminally ill with mesothelioma, and the death earlier this year of Claire Parsons who died with her friend Val Seeger who had early Alzheimers disease. Neither Iris or Claire were ill, or depressed, and both made a rational decision to end their lives. Both were members of Exit International and had attended Exit Workshops.

“Jeff Kennett has become part of the ‘depression industry’, which pushes the idea that suicide and depression are inevitably linked, and that medical involvement is essential whenever suicide is considered. I hope he accepts out invitation to attend to bring himself up to speed on the extensive peer-reviewed literature that exists in this area. All those attending will be seeking information on how to end their lives should they wish to at some point in the future. All will disagree with and even be insulted by the position taken by organisations such as Beyond Blue.”

Dr Nitschke said that the extensive body of scholarly work on the topic of rational suicide demonstrated just how out of touch and ill informed Jeff Kennett was on this issue.

Exit International is planning a national conference on Rational Suicide in Melbourne in 2015 with a range of international speakers

Exit’s Rational Suicide/ Voluntary Euthanasia workshop will be held at:

1 - 5pm on Thursday 17 July
Phoenix Park Community Centre
22 Rob Roy Rd
Malvern East

For Information:
Philip Nitschke. 0407 189 339

July 16th 2014