

## FACTSHEET 09: The Case for Voluntary Euthanasia

The moral case for legalising voluntary euthanasia is based on three major principles:

- 1. Respect for personal autonomy, our right to make decisions that are primarily our own concern;
- 2. Compassion for those who are suffering with no prospect of relief:
- 3. Concern for the dignity of the person and his or her quality of life.

These same principles are also embodied in modern health care, particularly in hospice and other forms of palliative treatment, except that at present personal autonomy falls short of permitting the choice of death by direct means no matter how desperate the condition of the patient.

Many objections are raised to legalising voluntary euthanasia but this has not stemmed the growing tide of public, medical and nursing opinion that the law should be changed.

- See Fact Sheet 2 Public Opinion
- See Fact Sheet 3 Medical Opinion
- See Fact Sheet 14 Nursing Opinion

The case for voluntary euthanasia, answers to objections to legalisation, and commentary on other aspects of the debate are given in the SAVES 48 page handbook, "The Right to Choose" available from the Hon. Secretary at the address below on receipt of order enclosing cheque or money order to the value \$5.00 (bank draft or international postage coupons for overseas orders).

Brief answers to five common objections are given in Fact Sheet 10 and to another two in:

- See Fact Sheet 11 The Fear of Abuse Objection
- See Fact Sheet 12 The Slippery Slope Objection