



End of Life Choice Act Positioning Statement

From 7 November 2021 people who experience unbearable suffering from a terminal illness will be able to legally ask for medical assistance to end their lives.

Te Omanga Hospice wants people to continue to be well supported at the end of life to ensure real choice. Our positioning statement reflects this.

When representing Te Omanga Hospice, this is the position you need to take, regardless of your personal view. It's important we are consistent with our messages to avoid confusion and use neutral language to avoid bias.

OUR POSITION

Te Omanga Hospice supports people living with any terminal or life limiting illness, regardless of their choices.

Death is a natural part of life, and we support people to die naturally.

We will not administer or be present for assisted dying, nor will it take place at our hospice.

If a patient requests assisted dying, we will inform them to contact their GP or the SCENZ Group. Our palliative care support for patient, family and whānau will continue.

SCENZ Group: The Support and Consultation for End of Life in New Zealand Group

Definition of phrases:

Assisted dying

- a person's medical practitioner (doctor) or nurse practitioner giving them medication to relieve their suffering by bringing on death; or
- the taking of medication by the person to relieve their suffering by bringing on death.

To die naturally

- A natural death is one that occurs from natural causes such as age or disease. It includes the normal progression of an illness leading to death.



Phrases to use and phrases to avoid:

YES ✓	NO ✕
End of Life Choice Act	End of Life Act End of Life Bill Euthanasia law
Assisted dying	Assisted suicide/killing Physician-assisted dying/suicide Medically assisted dying/suicide Euthanasia
Natural death	Neither hasten nor postpone death

We recognise that patients and families may use other language to describe assisted dying. We will explore what they mean by their language as is the current process, but ensure we use the correct phrases to remain neutral and avoid bias.

Eligible person for assisted dying

A person must meet all of the following criteria:

- be aged 18 years or over
- be a citizen or permanent resident of New Zealand
- suffer from a terminal illness that is likely to end their life within 6 months
- be in an advanced state of irreversible decline in physical capability
- experience unbearable suffering that cannot be relieved in a manner that the person considers tolerable
- be competent to make an informed decision about assisted dying.

Conscientious objection

This is when a health practitioner or organisation chooses not to be involved in providing an assisted dying service. Te Omanga Hospice will not administer or be present for assisted dying, nor will it take place at our hospice.

Palliative Care (World Health Organisation definition)

An approach that improves the quality of life of patients and their families facing the problems associated with life-threatening illness, through the prevention and relief of suffering by means of early identification and impeccable assessment and treatment of pain and other problems, physical, psychosocial and spiritual. The palliative care goal is to improve quality of life for both the patient and the family.

Palliative Care provides:

- relief from pain and other distressing symptoms,
- affirms life and regards dying as a normal process,
- intends neither to hasten or postpone death,
- integrates the psychological and spiritual aspects of patient care,
- offers a support system to help patients live as actively as possible until death,
- offers a support system to help the family cope during the patient's illness and in their own bereavement,
- uses a team approach to address the needs of patients and their families, including bereavement counselling, if indicated, and
- enhances quality of life and may also positively influence the course of illness.