



POSITION STATEMENT ON ASSISTED DYING

The Association for Palliative Medicine of Great Britain and Ireland (APM) is one of the world's largest representative bodies of medical/health care professionals practicing or interested in Palliative Medicine with a membership of over 1,400.

In this Position Statement we use the term “assisted dying” (AD) to refer to the assistance of a person to deliberately end their own life. In the UK, AD is the term referred to in most applications for legal change. We acknowledge that AD is also used to refer to both assisted suicide (a person self-administers lethal medications to end their own life) and euthanasia (a person administers lethal medications to end another person's life).

The APM opposes any change in the law that could lead to the supply or administration of lethal medications to deliberately end a person's life.

The APM's position is supported by the consistent findings of multiple surveys:

- 2015 – APM members survey - 82% were opposed to changing the law on Assisted Suicide. (2)
- 2019 – Royal College of Physicians – stratified for palliative medicine - 84.3% oppose a change in the law, and 84.4% were not prepared to actively participate in physician assisted suicide. (3)
- 2020 – British Medical Associations – stratified for palliative medicine – 70% were opposed to a change in the law and 84% would not be willing to actively participate in the process of prescribing life-ending drugs. (4)
- 2022 – APM Scotland survey - 75% of Scottish APM members responding would not be willing to participate in any part of the assisted dying process and 98% stated that assisted dying should not be part of mainstream healthcare. (5)

The APM acknowledges that, while a substantial majority of APM members oppose AD, some of our members have a different view.

The APM opposes the legislation of AD because of concerns about:

1. protection of vulnerable, frail, elderly, disabled and terminally ill people
2. the lack of adequately funded and equally available specialist palliative care services in all areas in the UK
3. concerns about trust and the impact on doctor-patient relationships

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