

Keep doctors to save lives not to take them away

Dr Hussein Nagi

Consultant in Anaesthetic and Chronic Pain, Birmingham

Correspondence hnagi11@hotmail.com

As per J. Chisholm article in BMA on 27/7/24 (1), the BMA adopts a neutral position on physician- assisted dying. (1) There was more than one survey; the last was by BIMA a few weeks ago (in July 2024).

There have been a few viewpoints regarding the assisted dying legislation between enthusiasts and opponents and each team articulates their points as much as they can to justify their views. In the midst of this, doctors are torn between the two parties depending on their experience from their patients, even family members and friends as well as of course their beliefs whether they are brave enough to declare them or they keep them to themselves so not to be accused of any bias.

Dragging doctors into this goes against their fundamental role to save lives. If people want this, why do the regulators not create a new category of professionals; let us call them life terminators (LT)! They should be hired to basically terminate life and they don't need to be doctors. Train them under the army or police to be professional and swift in their role. They can have discussions and more than one consultation session with

the person who wants to hire them. They can even show their clients videos of how they do it before finally agreeing on a clear contract. Let all this process to be done by politicians, social services and keep the medical establishment away from it and don't drag them in something they never thought they will be part of when they chose medicine as their career. Keep doctors to save not to take lives away. It is tempting to quite religious references, regardless of our faiths, however when you are forced to do something against your will one of the basic strategies is to change the rules of the game by basically taking the job at hand to others who may be interested.

The traditional word for a doctor in old Arabic and Islamic history is (Hakeem) meaning wiseman. If wisdom is simply to apply knowledge in a timely and right manner, then the wisdom that almost all doctors committed their lives and training for is to save lives. In that sense, keeping doctors away from this discussion is what we should aim for if we cannot stop it from happening.

References:

- 1- <https://www.bma.org.uk/news-and-opinion/bma-adopts-neutral-position-on-physician-assisted-dying>