

## Freedom of Information request 104-19

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### Request

I would like to submit the following Freedom of Information request.

The Scottish Parliament is likely to have draft legislation presented to it next month calling for a change in the law to allow, assisted suicide and or euthanasia – sometimes referred to as “assisted dying”. In Oregon and Washington, two of the US states that have legalised assisted suicide, there have been documented cases of those with terminal illnesses being refused life-saving, or life-extending medication, while offered the drugs to kill themselves. In these cases, the high cost of treatment was given as a reason for the denial of medication.

Please can you provide me with a copy of, or details of the assessment that your organisation has carried out on the impact of changing the law to allow assisted suicide or euthanasia, in particular, I am keen to see how this will impact the following:

- a) A possible reduction, or redeployment of clinical staff away from palliative care?
- b) Any possible financial savings?
- c) Figures on the numbers of people who might opt to end their lives this way?
- d) Any assessment of how this will impact on your organisation's suicide reduction plan?
- e) Any assessment of how this will impact on the mental health of your staff?
- f) Any assessment of additional costs associated with possible litigation against both medical staff and your organisation?

### Response

NHS Borders has not carried out and has no intention to carry out an assessment of the impact that a change in the law to permit assisted dying would have on resources, on staff deployment, on financial savings, on which and how many patients might choose this path, on the impact on our suicide reduction plan, on the impact on the mental health of staff or any assessment of the consequences, financial or otherwise, of hypothetical litigation risk.

If you are not satisfied with the way your request has been handled or the decision given, you may ask NHS Borders to review its actions and the decision. If you would like to request a review please apply in writing to, Freedom of Information Review, NHS Borders, Room 2EC3, Education Centre, Borders General Hospital, Melrose, TD6 9BS or [foi.enquiries@borders.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:foi.enquiries@borders.scot.nhs.uk).

The request for a review should include your name and address for correspondence, the request for information to which the request relates and the issue which you wish to be reviewed. Please state the reference number **104-19** on this request. Your request should be made within 40 working days from receipt of this letter.

If following this review, you remain dissatisfied with the outcome, you may appeal to the Scottish Information Commissioner and request an investigation of your complaint. Your request to the Scottish Information Commissioner should be in writing (or other permanent form), stating your name and an address for correspondence. You should provide the details of the request and your reasons for dissatisfaction with both the original response by NHS Borders and your reasons for dissatisfaction with the outcome of the internal review. Your application for an investigation by the Scottish Information Commissioner must be made within six months of your receipt of the response with which you are dissatisfied. The address for the Office of the

Scottish Information Commissioner is, Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner, Kinburn Castle,  
Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, Fife.