

New Zealanders' views on
END OF LIFE CHOICES

Horizon Research

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HORIZON RESEARCH - END OF LIFE CHOICES SURVEY

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A private member's bill may come before the New Zealand Parliament in 2012 which would aim to give all New Zealand citizens or permanent residents aged 18 years or over the ability to receive medical assistance to end their life in specified circumstances.

Horizon Research conducted this End of Life Choices Survey of 2,969 adult New Zealanders between July 5 and 20, 2012, based on provisions likely to be in the bill, to provide the most comprehensive guide to MPs and others on the public's views on the law changes actually being proposed.

The survey covered whether or not adults should be entitled to

- receive medical assistance to end their life in specified circumstances, and to
- sign and register an End of Life Directives to apply if they become terminally ill, or suffer an unbearable, irreversible, mental or physical condition in the future
- the controls proposed on these and the
- procedures to be followed when medical intervention is being made to end a life.

The survey finds 16.2% of adults, or about 519,740 people, currently know someone whose medical or mental condition is terminal, irreversible and making their life unbearable. Overall about 2.1 million adults know or have known someone like that.

Qualitative results indicate this experience of suffering drives support for end of life medical assistance, while opposition is driven mainly on religious grounds. For some in the medical profession, the current availability of alternative pain reduction treatments and ethical concerns drive opposition. Supporters of end of life choice, however, form a strong majority.

1.1 Strong support for end of life choice

- **62.9% support** entitling all mentally competent adults in New Zealand to receive medical assistance in ending their life if they are suffering from a terminal illness or an irreversible physical or mental medical condition that in their view renders their life unbearable.
- **12.3% oppose** this, while
- **15.8% are neutral** and
- **9% are not sure.**

The survey indicates *five times more adults will support than oppose* entitling people aged 18+ to apply for medical assistance to end their lives in certain circumstances.

1.2 Party supporters behind pro-bill MPs

MPs who vote for End of Life Choice law, as surveyed, will have majority support among those who voted for their parties at the 2011 general election.

There is majority support among voters for all main parties at the 2011 general election for entitling all mentally competent adults in New Zealand to receive medical assistance in ending their life under certain circumstances.

While 62.9% support entitling adults to medical assistance to end their life, this support is higher among voters for the main political parties:

- National 70%
- Labour 67.7%
- Green 73.3%
- Maori Party 66.7%
- New Zealand First 67.7%
- United Future 77.8%
- Mana Party 63.2%.

MPs supporting the bill will have the backing of about 1.5 million of the about 2.25 million who cast votes in 2011 for parties currently in the Parliament. (Please see Section 3 of this report).

1.3 Some 28,433 Conservative voters oppose

Only voters for the Conservative Party at the 2011 election oppose more than support the proposed measures. Even among this group a majority support (38%), are neutral (10.9%) or not sure (9%) while 48% oppose.

The Conservative Party attracted 59,237 of the 2,257,336 party votes cast at the 2011 general election, about 1.8% of the total population aged 18+, and did not win seats.

The survey indicates about 28,433 Conservative voters are opposed to the proposed law, as presented in the survey.

1.4 Support demographics

Men and women support and oppose entitlement to medical assistance to end life in almost equal numbers.

By age, the highest support (71.6%) comes from those aged 45-54 years and 55-64 years (65.3%). While there is majority support across the older age groups, numbers who are neutral or unsure rise with age, indicating measures are needed to provide assurance through the procedures which would apply to any end of life medical assistance, who is consulted, who provides the assistance and the methods by which death is assisted.

There is majority support across all main ethnic groups.

1.5 Need for strict controls

The need for strict controls, like those measured in the survey, is demonstrated by support for them exceeding support for end of life choice overall.

For example, while medically assisted death achieves 62.9% support overall

- 71.6% support two medical practitioners certifying that the person applying for this entitlement is mentally competent, and
- 76.1% support two medical practitioners certifying the person seeking medical assistance to die is terminally ill or suffering from an unbearable, irreversible mental or physical condition, and
- 79% want two medical practitioners to certify the person seeking a medically assisted death has not been unduly pressured.

1.6 End of Life Directives

Support for adults being able to at any time write, sign and register an End of Life Directive, to become effective if they become terminally ill or suffer an unbearable, irreversible mental or physical condition in the future, is 67%.

Opposition to directives is at 13.8% only.

Again, controls are strongly supported in order to have directives signed by adults who are certified to be mentally competent by a medical practitioner and for both a medical practitioner and solicitor certifying the applicant has been advised of the possible consequences of making a directive.

82.9% would support allowing the person making a directive to cancel it at any time. A majority (57%) support a proposal to have directives renewed every five years.

Verbatim comments made by respondents suggest views of those opposing the proposals, as surveyed, will be strongly held, though they will not reflect the views of the majority of the adult population.

Some in the medical profession say they are “torn” between their duty to preserve life and the suffering they see some enduring.

Support for End of Life Choices relies on strong safeguards.

A majority disappears when it comes to assisting a friend or family member, with entitlement to medical assistance, to end their life.

- 60.2% would prefer death is assisted with oral medication administered by a doctor (8.3% oppose)
- 51.9% support administration using a gastric tube where one is in place (9.3% oppose)
- 46.5% support allowing a medical practitioner to delegate end of life medical procedures to another person explicitly requested by the person with approval to end their life

Nearly 4 out of 10 adults would definitely or most likely help a close friend or relative end their life, while 32.4% would be unlikely to or would definitely not and 17.7% are unsure. In verbatim comments, many say that providing assistance would be personally difficult for them.

2. METHODOLOGY

The survey covered 2,969 respondents. Results have been weighted by age, gender, personal income, ethnicity, region and party vote 2011 to provide a representative sample of the New Zealand adult (18+) population. The maximum margin of error at a 95% confidence level is +/- 1.8%. Horizon Research Limited alone prepared the questionnaire, which is reproduced in full with results in the appendix to this report. Rights to use and publish results of this survey were subsequently acquired by the Voluntary Euthanasia Society of New Zealand.

3. REPORT

Principal findings of the survey are:

3.1 Support in general

The research finds:

- **62.9% support** entitling all mentally competent adults in New Zealand to receive medical assistance in ending their life if they are suffering from a terminal illness or an irreversible physical or mental medical condition that in their view renders their life unbearable.
- **12.3% oppose** this, while
- **15.8% are neutral** and
- **9% are not sure.**

In general, do you do support or oppose entitling all mentally competent adults in New Zealand to receive medical assistance in ending their life if they are suffering from a terminal illness or an irreversible physical or mental medical condition that in their view renders their life unbearable?

A. Strongly support		30.2%
B. Support		32.7%
C. Neutral		15.8%
D. Oppose		6.2%
E. Strongly oppose		6.1%
F. Not sure		9%

3.1 Support by party vote

The private member's bill, if drawn from a ballot, will be subject to a conscience vote by individual Members of Parliament (MPs).

The survey indicates that MPs will have majority support among those who voted for their parties at the 2011 general election if they support the bill.

There is majority support among voters for all main parties at the 2011 general election for entitling all mentally competent adults in New Zealand to receive medical assistance in ending their life under certain circumstances.

In general, do you do support or oppose entitling all mentally competent adults in New Zealand to receive medical assistance in ending their life if they are suffering from a terminal illness or an irreversible physical or mental medical condition that in their view renders their life unbearable?						
	Strongly support	Support	Neutral	Oppose	Strongly Oppose	Not sure
ALL	30.2%	32.7%	15.8%	6.2%	6.1%	9%
ACT New Zealand	21.5%	36.2%	22.7%	15.6%	3.9%	
Chose not to vote	27%	32%	19.8%	6.3%	4.7%	10.2%
Conservative	20.5%	17.5%	10.9%	6.7%	38.5%	5.9%
Don't know or can't remember	16.5%	22.8%	15.7%	10.5%	3.1%	31.3%
Green Party	36.5%	36.6%	14.3%	4.8%	3.9%	3.9%
Labour Party	31.8%	36%	15.8%	5.2%	4.5%	6.7%
Mana	100%					
Mana Party	56.7%	6.5%	14.2%	2.8%	19.8%	
Maori Party	22.4%	44.3%	21.5%		7.9%	3.9%
National Party	33.7%	36.4%	14.1%	5.5%	6.2%	4.2%
New Zealand First Party	35.5%	32%	9.7%	5.9%	14.3%	2.7%
Other party	67.6%	25.8%	3.6%	1.4%	1.6%	
United Future	50.3%	22.1%	13.8%	8.1%	4.1%	1.7%
Was not eligible to vote	14.7%	16.8%	26.6%	7.6%		34.3%

While 62.9% support entitling adults to medical assistance to end their life, this support is higher among voters for the main political parties:

- National 70%
- Labour 67.7%
- Green 73.3%
- Maori Party 66.7%
- New Zealand First 67.7%
- United Future 77.8%
- Mana Party 63.2%.

ACT voters' support is 57.7%.

Only voters for the Conservative Party at the 2011 general election are more opposed than in support: 45.2% oppose, 38% support while 10.9% are neutral and 5.9% are not sure.

The survey indicates the bill would have the support of 1.499 million of the 2.161 million who voted for parties which *won seats* at the 2011 general election:

Party	Votes in 2011	% 2011 Support bill	Number of 2011 voters support bill
National Party	1,058,636	70	741,045
Labour Party	614,937	67.7	416,312
Green Party	247,372	73.3	181,324
New Zealand First Party	147,544	67.6	99,740
Māori Party	31,982	66.7	21,332
Mana	24,168	63.2	15,274
ACT New Zealand	23,889	57.7	13,784
United Future	13,443	77.8	10,459
Total voters	2,161,971		1,499,270

The Conservative Party attracted 59,237 of the 2,257,336 party votes cast at the 2011 general election, about 1.8% of the total population aged 18+, and did not win seats.

3.2 Support and opposition demographics

Gender:

There is little difference between men and women on the issue of choosing medical assistance to end life under certain circumstances.

	Support	Neutral	Oppose	Not sure
Women	63.0%	14.0%	12.2%	12.4%
Men	62.6%	17.6%	14.2%	5.5%

Age:

Highest support (71.6%) comes from those aged 45-54 years and 55-64 years (65.3%).

There is lowest, but still majority, support among those aged 65-74 years (53.6%). Among this group 15% oppose, but those neutral rise to 28.2% while 3.2% only are not sure.

Among the oldest group, aged 75+, 57.1% support, 11.6% oppose, while 13% are neutral and 18.4% are not sure.

In general, do you do support or oppose entitling all mentally competent adults in New Zealand to receive medical assistance in ending their life if they are suffering from a terminal illness or an irreversible physical or mental medical condition that in their view renders their life unbearable?

	Strongly support	Support	Neutral	Oppose	Strongly oppose	Not sure
ALL	30.2%	32.7%	15.8%	6.2%	6.1%	9%
18-24 years	35%	23.7%	10.8%	10.1%	1.5%	18.8%
25-34 years	30.5%	30.7%	16.5%	5.4%	7.5%	9.5%
35-44 years	29.3%	34.5%	18.5%	5.6%	3.7%	8.3%
45-54 years	33%	38.6%	10.3%	5.8%	5.1%	7.1%
55-64 years	33.3%	32%	15.2%	5.5%	9.9%	4.2%
65-74 years	22.7%	30.9%	28.2%	6.8%	8.2%	3.2%
75 years or over	25.1%	32%	13%	3.1%	8.5%	18.4%

Older respondents indicate in responses to other questions they are generally seeking reassurance and controls, relating to qualified medical practitioners undertaking assessments to certify a person is mentally sound and suffering in ways which would qualify a person for medically-assisted death.

Ethnic groups:

Support is highest among Europeans and Maori at 65%. Maori oppose less (10.2%) than the sample overall (12.3%).

Pacific Islanders are 61.5% in support. 13.9% oppose, while 11.7% are neutral and the number not sure rises to 17.7% compared with the number who are not sure overall (9%).

Asians support 55.3%, while 13.8% oppose.

Indians support 65%, 10.2% opposes.

In general, do you do support or oppose entitling all mentally competent adults in New Zealand to receive medical assistance in ending their life if they are suffering from a terminal illness or an irreversible physical or mental medical condition that in their view renders their life unbearable?

	A	B	C	D	E	F
ALL	30.2%	32.7%	15.8%	6.2%	6.1%	9%
Asian	18.3%	38%	26.9%	7%	6.8%	2.9%
Indian	5.4%	37.6%	13.9%	18.6%	5%	19.5%
Maori	42.4%	22.9%	14.9%	4.6%	5.6%	9.5%
Pacific Islander	20.1%	41.4%	11.7%	0.3%	8.8%	17.7%

4. END OF LIFE DIRECTIVES

There is strong majority support (66.9%) and relatively weak opposition (11.8%) to a proposal that an adult in New Zealand should be able to write, sign and register an End of Life Directive to apply if they become terminally ill or suffer an unbearable, irreversible, mental or physical condition.

There is strong support for safeguards proposed around preparing and registering end of life directives, including for ensuring consequences have been explained and professionals (medical and legal) are involved, and being able to cancel a directive at any time (82% support):

An adult in New Zealand should be able to write, sign and register an End of Life Directive to apply if they become terminally ill or suffer an unbearable, irreversible, mental or physical condition

A. Strongly support		32.3%
B. Support		34.6%
C. Neutral		13.3%
D. Oppose		4.4%
E. Strongly oppose		7.4%
F. Not sure		7.9%

An End of Life Directive should be signed by an adult who is certified to be mentally competent by a medical practitioner

A. Strongly support		33.4%
B. Support		34.3%
C. Neutral		12.6%
D. Oppose		3.8%
E. Strongly oppose		6.5%
F. Not sure		9.4%

It should be an offence to subvert, ignore or alter the express wishes of a terminally ill person, or an incapable person who has a lawful End of Life Directive in place

A. Strongly support		31.2%
B. Support		29.1%
C. Neutral		18.5%
D. Oppose		4.8%
E. Strongly oppose		5.5%
F. Not sure		10.9%

A medical practitioner or solicitor must certify the person making the End of Life Directive is mentally competent

A. Strongly support		39.6%
B. Support		31.4%
C. Neutral		14%
D. Oppose		3.1%
E. Strongly oppose		3.9%
F. Not sure		8%

A medical practitioner or solicitor must certify the person making the End of Life Directive has been advised of the possible consequences of making an End of Life Directive

A. Strongly support		44.9%
B. Support		31.1%
C. Neutral		10.4%
D. Oppose		2.1%
E. Strongly oppose		3.7%
F. Not sure		7.8%

The person applying for an End of Life Directive must be encouraged by a medical practitioner to consult with his/her family or a friend about the End of Life Directive

A. Strongly support		38.4%
B. Support		30.6%
C. Neutral		16.1%
D. Oppose		3.4%
E. Strongly oppose		4.7%
F. Not sure		6.9%

An End of Life Directive can be cancelled by the person who made it at any time

A. Strongly support		62.6%
B. Support		20.1%
C. Neutral		7%
D. Oppose		1.5%
E. Strongly oppose		2.6%
F. Not sure		6.3%

An End of Life Directive must be renewed every 5 years

A. Strongly support		32.6%
B. Support		25.2%
C. Neutral		20.1%
D. Oppose		4.6%
E. Strongly oppose		5%
F. Not sure		12.4%

No End of Life Directives should be allowed in New Zealand

A. Strongly support		11.5%
B. Support		5.8%
C. Neutral		17.6%
D. Oppose		22.4%
E. Strongly oppose		31.5%
F. Not sure		11.1%

5. END OF LIFE EXPERIENCES

65 in every 100 adult New Zealanders know someone or have known someone aged 18 or older suffering from a terminal illness or an irreversible physical or mental medical condition that renders their life unbearable.

These life experiences may be driving support for end of life choice law.

16.2% of adults, or about 519,740 people, currently know someone whose medical or mental condition is terminal, irreversible and making their life unbearable. Overall about 2.1 million adults know or have known someone like that.

Thinking about people aged 18 or older in New Zealand suffering from a terminal illness or an irreversible physical or mental medical condition that renders their life unbearable, what is or has been your experience?

A. I currently know someone like that		16.2%
B. I have known someone like that		48.8%
C. I have never known someone like that		39.2%

Respondents left 23,000 words when invited to comment on this experience.

Among typical verbatim comments were:

Supporting a choice to end life:

A horrible situation that should be able to have a choice offered to end suffering without recrimination

A privilege to help people I have known and loved to die in their own time with managed health care and support and dignity in their own home

A really undignified way to end up for someone who I cared deeply for.

As bad as they got they never stopped hoping that a cure would be found

As horrible as it may sound, I believe that people should have a choice of life or death over their own lives

As long as it is not misused by someone with power of attorney to make the decision.

As long as it was an option and only in specific circumstances after counselling

As long as the circumstances are clear, then i don't have an issue with this.

As long as there are clear checks and economic pressures are removed for those dying it is a good idea. Older people should not be subject to pressure, from family or from themselves, to end their life because it will be costly to keep them alive.

As time comes to near the end even stopping the med that is keeping them alive would help to make the end more bearable as things like pneumonia generally take them in better grace

Hard to watch someone in so much pain just fading

Have been caregiver to wife with terminal disabling illness for 10 years. Would have assisted if she had wished to end her life.

Have recently watched two good friends both pass away from incurable cancers and was just horrible watching them suffer....

He had to refuse water and food to end his suffering while in hospital

I have seen 2 siblings, mother and father suffer

I have seen many people suffer and believe life should be an individual's choice, however many people in that situation are not able to make that decision for themselves. The difficulty is when family's or powers of attorney are left to make that decision. I have also seen people in terrible pain and have wanted their lives to be over, but after treatment they feel better and are glad they were still alive. Ultimately it is and should be an individual's choice.

I lost my husband with terminal cancer 10 months ago and the doctors kept talking about quality of life, but he had none of that over the 2 months and he asked me twice to give him something to end his misery but I was not able to do anything to help him. Very difficult to watch and for such a proud man very sad situation to be in, he should have been allowed to choice to die with more dignity!

From those with medical experience:

Having had the person speak about their condition, I agreed not to have her treated for pneumonia.

Having been a nurse, I think it is better that people have the "right" to choose, as it is their life no one else's. The choice is balanced and reasonable.

As a trained medic, I am torn both ways. I would never suggest ending a life, but wish that it was ethically sound to do so.

I have patients like that

As I work in the health field and because of my religious views I would have to think very hard about this.

As a gp and a and e specialist I feel there are other options to euthanasia

As a nurse i have worked in hospitals overseas where patients with a terminal illness were "assisted" by use of analgesia

As a nurse I know that palliative care is able to ease their pain and enable them to cope with support and comfort to bring them to a dignified end in natural time. Medication is able to stabilise a person with a mental condition and with monitoring and support help them through.

I have been a nurse for almost 60 years, and am absolutely against euthanasia in any form. No life is unbearable if adequate and proper medication is used, and adequate and proper nursing care is provided. NOT the type of nursing care that is commonly taught today. Euthanasia is for the relatives, so that they may not have to endure the illness of a loved one. I have rarely heard a patient wanting to be put to death. Life and death are all one big journey, and in my opinion we can make it all easier, but we should not interfere with the final outcome. That should be left for destiny to decide.

Among comments opposing medically assisted end of life:

Almost anything is bearable, with adequate medication and pain relief.

Adequate Pain relief should be used as the person is not going to become an addict. I prefer to let God decide, but am sympathetic to alleviating extreme suffering

In most cases medical care can alleviate pain and allow people to die with dignity in God's time. My religious faith does not allow taking of life.

Death is up to god not man

Even though it was one of the hardest things in the world to watch; I can see in the timing of the passing other family members came to the acceptance of the passing and other family members were able to reconnect and say goodbye so I believe natural process should happen. We are not God and shouldn't play God.

God gave man choice, so no one has the right to take that from them.

I prefer to let God decide, but am sympathetic to alleviating extreme suffering

One respondent also raises an issue regarding insurance cover for those ending their lives:

- You should be able to make your own mind up. What happens regarding insurances?

6. ENTITLEMENTS AND SAFEGUARDS

6.1 Entitlements:

In considering what would entitle a mentally competent adult a choice to end their life there is majority support for end of life choice when there is

- terminal disease or medical condition which would probably end their life within 12 months (51.5% support) or
- they are suffering from an irreversible physical or mental condition which, in their view, renders their life unbearable (60.9%)

In your opinion, which of the following, if any, should entitle a mentally competent adult in New Zealand to medical assistance to end their life?

Select only those with which you agree

A. A terminal disease or other medical condition which will probably end their life within 12 months		51.1%
B. An irreversible physical or mental medical condition that in their view renders their life unbearable		60.9%
C. None of these		19.7%
D. Something else (please tell us what that is)		6.4%

6.2 Safeguards:

New Zealanders want safeguards in place when people are applying for approval to end their lives.

Generally safeguards involving medical and legal professionals are strongly favoured, along with encouragement to consult first with family and friends. There is

- 79% support for medical practitioners being satisfied a person seeking an assisted death has not been pressured by others to seek the assistance
- 76.3% support for two medical practitioners certifying the person seeking assistance to die is terminally ill or suffering suffer an unbearable, irreversible, mental or physical condition
- 71.6% support for two medical practitioners certifying the person is mentally competent
- 68.9% for consulting with family and friends before seeking assistance
- 67% support for applying in writing and sign the application
- 60.8% are for a seven day waiting period before assistance is given to die.

Which of the following safeguards would you support or oppose, if any, if a law were to be made which entitled a mentally competent adult in New Zealand to medical assistance in ending their life?

A person seeking medical assistance to end their life must apply in writing and sign the application

A. Strongly support		30.1%
B. Support		27.9%
C. Neutral		17.7%
D. Oppose		7%
E. Strongly oppose		6.8%
F. Not sure		10.5%

Two medical practitioners (doctors) must certify the person seeking assistance to die is mentally competent

A. Strongly support		40.6%
B. Support		31%
C. Neutral		11.5%
D. Oppose		3.3%
E. Strongly oppose		5.4%
F. Not sure		8.3%

Two medical practitioners (doctors) must certify the person seeking assistance to die is terminally ill or suffering suffer an unbearable, irreversible, mental or physical condition

A. Strongly support		44.7%
B. Support		31.4%
C. Neutral		8.4%
D. Oppose		3.2%
E. Strongly oppose		5.2%
F. Not sure		7.1%

There must be a seven day wait after a request for a medically assisted death is approved before the assistance can be provided

A. Strongly support		32%
B. Support		28.8%
C. Neutral		18.8%
D. Oppose		6.4%
E. Strongly oppose		5.5%
F. Not sure		8.4%

People seeking a medically assisted death should be encouraged to consult first with family or friends

A. Strongly support		40.1%
B. Support		28.8%
C. Neutral		14.9%
D. Oppose		5%
E. Strongly oppose		4.3%
F. Not sure		6.9%

Medical practitioners must be satisfied a person seeking an assisted death has not been pressured by others to seek the assistance

A. Strongly support		57.3%
B. Support		21.7%
C. Neutral		8.1%
D. Oppose		2.5%
E. Strongly oppose		3.8%
F. Not sure		6.7%

7. PROCEDURES FOR ENDING LIFE

If a law is passed allowing adults suffering from a terminal illness or an irreversible physical or mental medical condition that renders their life unbearable

- 60.2% would prefer death is assisted with oral medication administered by a doctor (8.3% oppose)
- 51.9% support administration using a gastric tube where one is in place (9.3% oppose)
- 46.5% support allowing a medical practitioner to delegate end of life medical procedures to another person explicitly requested by the person with approval to end their life, 20.1% are neutral, 18.2% oppose while 15.2% are not sure.

The survey indicates New Zealanders want more information regarding delegating end of life medical procedures to a person's approved family and friends who have been explicitly asked for assistance by the person choosing to end their life.

If a law is passed allowing adults suffering from a terminal illness or an irreversible physical or mental medical condition that renders their life unbearable, which of the following, if any, do you think should be allowed?

Oral medication administered by a doctor

A. Strongly support		26.4%
B. Support		33.8%
C. Neutral		16.7%
D. Oppose		2.9%
E. Strongly oppose		5.4%
F. Not sure		14.7%

Medication administered by gastric tube where one is in place

A. Strongly support		22.3%
B. Support		32.4%
C. Neutral		19.5%
D. Oppose		3.1%
E. Strongly oppose		6.2%
F. Not sure		16.6%

Allow a medical practitioner to delegate end of life medical procedures to another person explicitly requested by the person with approval to end their life

A. Strongly support		19.9%
B. Support		26.6%
C. Neutral		20.1%
D. Oppose		8.9%
E. Strongly oppose		9.3%
F. Not sure		15.2%

8. HELPING END A LIFE

8.1 Ending another's life:

Large numbers (27.7%) say they are really unsure if they would help a close friend or relative end their life if they were legally allowed.

At the same time 39.9% would definitely or most likely help, while 32.4% would be unlikely to or would definitely not.

Would you help a close friend or relative to end their life if in the future if you were legally allowed to do this in New Zealand?

A. Definitely		16.2%
B. Most likely		23.7%
C. Not likely		14.2%
D. Definitely not		18.2%
E. I'm really not sure		27.7%

Verbatim comments reflected the difficulty in deciding whether or not to help personally:

- *A bit different actually doing the deed I feel.*
- *A bit too personal.*
- *A difficult and tragic situation, but kia kaha sometimes these things must be done to end suffering for all concerned*
- *A difficult situation to be in. Not sure I could personally go through with it myself.*
- *As someone who's retired from the military, I can say that you are trained for and may be prepared to point a weapon at someone and fire it, but you don't really know how you're going to react until the moment is upon you. The same applies to administering a fatal dose of drugs to a loved one.*

Comments from those who would or might assist included:

- *My wife and I are both over 70yo and each wants the other to assist, when the conditions have been met.*
- *After plenty of discussion with all people involved, i.e. family. Given that the situation was such that there is no possibility of improvement of their current condition, and their life is unbearable, I would support a friend or relative to end their life with dignity, should all legal requirements be met.*
- *After proper one on one discussion with the person concerned.*
- *After watching mom nurse dad to the end at our home was enough to make up my mind that at some point ending it faster is a kindness.*
- *Again it entirely depends on the circumstances of individual case*
- *(It) would depend on the particular person and timing*
- *All depends on how much is expected from me for that help.*
- *All life must end at some point so if the life is without any quality termination is merely bringing forward that event.*
- *As a nurse I have no problem with this, however I would need to be prepared*
- *As a veterinarian, I firmly believe that euthanasia is the humane treatment for animals where their quality of life has deteriorated to the point of active suffering (physical or mental). Although it would be harder to do this for a human, I hope that I would have the strength to act on my convictions if requested to do so by the human in question.*
- *As I am a nurse I would have to ensure this did not compromise my Registration but otherwise I may consider it*

Among those refusing to offer assistance:

- *In the course of receiving adequate pain relief a terminally ill person's breathing gets depressed and this causes them to slip away. This has been happening for decades. It is OK with me, morally. To me there is a difference between this (=OK) and euthanasia (not OK). The Nazis practised Euthanasia.*
- *Death is never the answer because often doctors get it wrong*

- *Deliberate ending of life is suicide. This is against GOD's wish. That means it is a huge sin.*
- *Doctors already are able to prescribe medication to relieve pain & suffering - there is no need for assisted suicide!*
- *Doing so would make me a murderer*
- *Due to my religion I am unable to support this cause of action as it would strongly go against my beliefs*
- *For me as a Catholic euthanasia constitutes a murder gravely contrary to the dignity of the human person. Physical pain can be treated but it is the spiritual and psychological suffering that is more difficult as I know from my own experience and from witnessing others in similar states. Care is dependent on trust between doctors, patient and family/friends... What is needed here in NZ is a greater level of care of a palliative nature for those suffering/dying and also for their families who are often at a loss to understand the process. This needs to be available to all. Also how can trust be maintained when the doctor, (lawyer!) is being asked to both care and kill.*

8.2 Ending own life:

Nearly 65 in every hundred adult New Zealanders would like the right to have their own lives ended with medical assistance.

This reflects the 63% support in general for medically assisted death, and the experience of 65% in knowing or having known someone aged 18 or older in New Zealand suffering from a terminal illness or an irreversible physical or mental medical condition that renders their life unbearable

If you were suffering from a terminal illness or an irreversible physical or mental medical condition that made your life unbearable, would you like the right to a medically assisted death at a time of your choosing?

Results for 2855 total responses (format: Multichoice)

A. Yes		64.8%
B. No		13.4%
C. Not sure		21.8%

APPENDIX 1

Methodology

Respondents: The 2,969 interviews were of people aged 18+ who are members of Horizon Research's *HorizonPoll* panel, which represents the New Zealand adult population at the 2006 census. Questions were part of an omnibus survey also covering other issues.

Survey timing: Interviews were conducted between July 5 and 20, 2012.

Weighting: Results have been weighted by age, gender, personal income, ethnicity, region and party vote 2011 to ensure a representative sample of the New Zealand adult (18+) population.

Margin of error: The maximum margin of error at a 95% confidence level is +/- 1.8%.

All qualitative and verbatim results are available through Horizon's online results analysis and reporting system.

APPENDIX 2

Survey questionnaire and results

End of life choice

Now to another important issue Parliament may vote on soon...

We would like to get your views on a possible private members bill.

If it is drawn from a ballot, a private members' bill may come before the New Zealand Parliament this year which would aim to give all New Zealand citizens or permanent residents aged 18 years or over the ability to receive medical assistance to end their life in specified circumstances.

19. Thinking about people aged 18 or older in New Zealand suffering from a terminal illness or an irreversible physical or mental medical condition that renders their life unbearable, what is or has been your experience?

A. I currently know someone like that		16.2%
B. I have known someone like that		48.8%
C. I have never known someone like that		39.2%

20. Do you have any comments on that? (Text responses not included in this report)

21. In general, do you do support or oppose entitling all mentally competent adults in New Zealand to receive medical assistance in ending their life if they are suffering from a terminal illness or an irreversible physical or mental medical condition that in their view renders their life unbearable?

A. Strongly support		30.2%
B. Support		32.7%
C. Neutral		15.8%
D. Oppose		6.2%
E. Strongly oppose		6.1%
F. Not sure		9%

22. In your opinion, which of the following, if any, should entitle a mentally competent adult in New Zealand to medical assistance to end their life?

Select only those with which you agree

A. A terminal disease or other medical condition which will probably end their life within 12 months		51.1%
B. An irreversible physical or mental medical condition that in their view renders their life unbearable		60.9%
C. None of these		19.7%
D. Something else (please tell us what that is)		6.4%

Which of the following safeguards would you support or oppose, if any, if a law were to be made which entitled a mentally competent adult in New Zealand to medical assistance in ending their life?

23.1. A person seeking medical assistance to end their life must apply in writing and sign the application

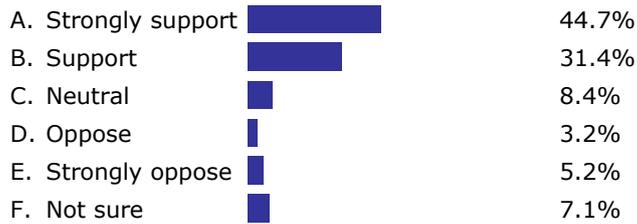
Please provide an answer for each option

A. Strongly support		30.1%
B. Support		27.9%
C. Neutral		17.7%
D. Oppose		7%
E. Strongly oppose		6.8%
F. Not sure		10.5%

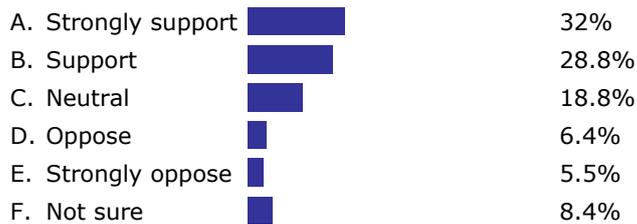
23.2. Two medical practitioners (doctors) must certify the person seeking assistance to die is mentally competent

A. Strongly support		40.6%
B. Support		31%
C. Neutral		11.5%
D. Oppose		3.3%
E. Strongly oppose		5.4%
F. Not sure		8.3%

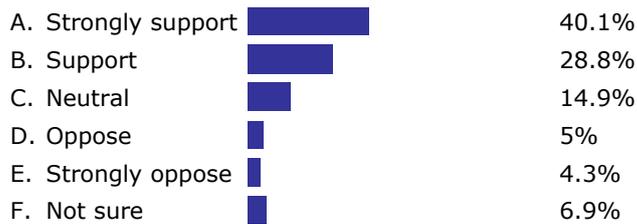
23.3. Two medical practitioners (doctors) must certify the person seeking assistance to die is terminally ill or suffering suffer an unbearable, irreversible, mental or physical condition



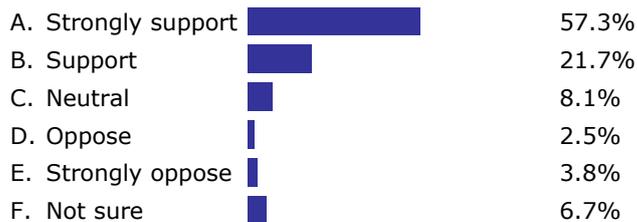
There must be a seven day wait after a request for a medically assisted death is approved before the assistance can be provided



People seeking a medically assisted death should be encouraged to consult first with family or friends



23.6. Medical practitioners must be satisfied a person seeking an assisted death has not been pressured by others to seek the assistance



End of Life Directives

Firstly, some background information to help you answer the next few questions...

Some are suggesting that a person aged 18 or older in New Zealand should be allowed to sign and register a written End of Life Directive which contains a request that the person be given medical assistance to terminate their life in the event they become mentally incompetent in the future.

It is suggested the directive can take effect if the person suffers from one or all of

- a disease or other conditions that would probably end their life within 12 months or
- in the opinion of a medical practitioner suffers from an irreversible physical or mental medical condition which makes the applicant's life unbearable, and
- while in that condition suffers from a disease or other medical condition which will probably end the person's life within 12 months; or
- the person's mental competence has deteriorated to the extent that they no longer appear to be able recognise close relatives or friends, and are dependent on others for basic physical needs, and
- neither the person's mental competence nor physical dependence is likely to improve.

What are your thoughts on the following...

24.1. An adult in New Zealand should be able to write, sign and register an End of Life Directive to apply if they become terminally ill, suffer an unbearable, irreversible, mental or physical condition

Please provide an answer for each option

A. Strongly support		32.3%
B. Support		34.6%
C. Neutral		13.3%
D. Oppose		4.4%
E. Strongly oppose		7.4%
F. Not sure		7.9%

24.2. An End of Life Directive should be signed by an adult who is certified to be mentally competent by a medical practitioner

A. Strongly support		33.4%
B. Support		34.3%
C. Neutral		12.6%
D. Oppose		3.8%
E. Strongly oppose		6.5%
F. Not sure		9.4%

24.3. It should be an offence to subvert, ignore or alter the express wishes of a terminally ill person, or an incapable person who has a lawful End of Life Directive in place

A. Strongly support		31.2%
B. Support		29.1%
C. Neutral		18.5%
D. Oppose		4.8%
E. Strongly oppose		5.5%
F. Not sure		10.9%

24.4. A medical practitioner or solicitor must certify the person making the End of Life Directive is mentally competent

A. Strongly support		39.6%
B. Support		31.4%
C. Neutral		14%
D. Oppose		3.1%
E. Strongly oppose		3.9%
F. Not sure		8%

24.5. A medical practitioner or solicitor must certify the person making the End of Life Directive has been advised of the possible consequences of making an End of Life Directive

A. Strongly support		44.9%
B. Support		31.1%
C. Neutral		10.4%
D. Oppose		2.1%
E. Strongly oppose		3.7%
F. Not sure		7.8%

24.6. The person applying for an End of Life Directive must be encouraged by a medical practitioner to consult with his/her family or a friend about the End of Life Directive

A. Strongly support		38.4%
B. Support		30.6%
C. Neutral		16.1%
D. Oppose		3.4%
E. Strongly oppose		4.7%
F. Not sure		6.9%

24.7. An End of Life Directive can be cancelled by the person who made it at any time

A. Strongly support		62.6%
B. Support		20.1%
C. Neutral		7%
D. Oppose		1.5%
E. Strongly oppose		2.6%
F. Not sure		6.3%

24.8. An End of Life Directive must be renewed every 5 years

A. Strongly support		32.6%
B. Support		25.2%
C. Neutral		20.1%
D. Oppose		4.6%
E. Strongly oppose		5%
F. Not sure		12.4%

24.9. No End of Life Directives should be allowed in New Zealand

A. Strongly support		11.5%
B. Support		5.8%
C. Neutral		17.6%
D. Oppose		22.4%
E. Strongly oppose		31.5%
F. Not sure		11.1%

Procedures for ending life

If a law is passed allowing adults suffering from a terminal illness or an irreversible physical or mental medical condition that renders their life unbearable, which of the following, if any, do you think should be allowed?

25.1. Oral medication administered by a doctor

A. Strongly support		26.4%
B. Support		33.8%
C. Neutral		16.7%
D. Oppose		2.9%
E. Strongly oppose		5.4%
F. Not sure		14.7%

25.2. Medication administered by gastric tube where one is in place

A. Strongly support		22.3%
B. Support		32.4%
C. Neutral		19.5%
D. Oppose		3.1%
E. Strongly oppose		6.2%
F. Not sure		16.6%

25.3. Allow a medical practitioner to delegate end of life medical procedures to another person explicitly requested by the person with approval to end their life

A. Strongly support		19.9%
B. Support		26.6%
C. Neutral		20.1%
D. Oppose		8.9%
E. Strongly oppose		9.3%
F. Not sure		15.2%

26. Would you help a close friend or relative to end their life if in the future if you were legally allowed to do this in New Zealand?

A. Definitely		16.2%
B. Most likely		23.7%
C. Not likely		14.2%
D. Definitely not		18.2%
E. I'm really not sure		27.7%

28. If you were suffering from a terminal illness or an irreversible physical or mental medical condition that made your life unbearable, would you like the right to a medically assisted death at a time of your choosing?

A. Yes		64.8%
B. No		13.4%
C. Not sure		21.8%

APPENDIX 3

Results tables

Entitlement to medically assisted death - support and opposition by party voted for at the 2011 general election.

Q21. In general, do you do support or oppose entitling all mentally competent adults in New Zealand to receive medical assistance in ending their life if they are suffering from a terminal illness or an irreversible physical or mental medical condition that in their view renders their life unbearable?

Multichoice - Single Answer Only

- A. Strongly support
- B. Support
- C. Neutral
- D. Oppose
- E. Strongly oppose
- F. Not sure

	A	B	C	D	E	F
ALL	30.2%	32.7%	15.8%	6.2%	6.1%	9%
ACT New Zealand	21.5%	36.2%	22.7%	15.6%	3.9%	
Chose not to vote	27%	32%	19.8%	6.3%	4.7%	10.2%
Conservative	20.5%	17.5%	10.9%	6.7%	38.5%	5.9%
Don't know or can't remember	16.5%	22.8%	15.8%	10.5%	3.1%	31.3%
Green Party	36.3%	36.7%	14.3%	4.8%	4%	3.9%
Labour Party	31.7%	35.9%	15.9%	5.3%	4.5%	6.7%
Mana	100%					
Mana Party	56.7%	6.5%	14.2%	2.8%	19.8%	
Maori Party	22.4%	44.3%	21.5%		7.9%	3.9%
National Party	33.8%	36.2%	14.1%	5.5%	6.2%	4.2%
New Zealand First Party	35.6%	32.1%	9.7%	5.9%	14.1%	2.7%
Other party	67.6%	25.8%	3.6%	1.4%	1.6%	
United Future	54%	23.8%	14.8%	1.1%	4.4%	1.8%
Was not eligible to vote	14.7%	16.8%	26.6%	7.6%		34.3%

End of Life Directives support and opposition by party vote at the 2011 general election.

END OF LIFE DIRECTIVES

Firstly, some background information to help you answer the next few questions... Some are suggesting that a person aged 18 or older in New Zealand should be allowed to sign and register a written End of Life Directive which contains a request that the person be given medical assistance to terminate their life in the event they become mentally incompetent in the future. It is suggested the directive can take effect if the person suffers from one or all of a disease or other conditions that would probably end their life within 12 months or in the opinion of a medical practitioner suffers from an irreversible physical or mental medical condition which makes the applicant's life unbearable, and while in that condition suffers from a disease or other medical condition which will probably end the person's life within 12 months; or the person's mental competence has deteriorated to the extent that they no longer appear to be able recognise close relatives or friends, and are dependent on others for basic physical needs, and neither the person's mental competence nor physical dependence is likely to improve. What are your thoughts on the following...

Q24.1. An adult in New Zealand should be able to write, sign and register an End of Life Directive to apply if they become terminally ill, suffer an unbearable, irreversible, mental or physical condition

Please provide an answer for each option

Multichoice Grid - Single Answer Only

- A. Strongly support
- B. Support
- C. Neutral
- D. Oppose
- E. Strongly oppose
- F. Not sure

	A	B	C	D	E	F
ALL	32.3%	34.6%	13.3%	4.4%	7.4%	7.9%
ACT New Zealand	35%	14.8%	13.9%		18.4%	17.8%
Chose not to vote	33.6%	39.3%	13.7%	2.1%	2.2%	9.2%
Conservative	19.9%	19.1%	12.3%	9.1%	37.4%	2.2%
Don't know or can't remember	19.6%	23.1%	22.6%	3.8%	9.3%	21.6%
Green Party	36.8%	34.1%	11.3%	5.9%	6%	5.9%
Labour Party	33.7%	36.2%	12%	4.7%	7.7%	5.7%
Mana Party	45.9%	15.4%	16%	2%	19.8%	0.9%
Maori Party	37.3%	34.9%	15%	3.3%	4.6%	4.8%
National Party	34.5%	38.2%	11.7%	4.6%	7.5%	3.5%
New Zealand First Party	38.6%	34%	6.1%	4.1%	12.5%	4.8%
Other party	31.7%	18.8%	27.3%	8.4%	11.5%	2.4%
United Future	28%	50.9%	12.1%	3.8%	5.3%	
Was not eligible to vote	21.6%	15.5%	14.9%	10.4%		37.6%

Assisting a friend or relative to end life – support and opposition by party vote at the 2011 general election.

Q26. Would you help a close friend or relative to end their life if in the future if you were legally allowed to do this in New Zealand?

Multichoice - Single Answer Only

A. Definitely
B. Most likely
C. Not likely
D. Definitely not
E. I'm really not sure

	A	B	C	D	E
ALL	16.2%	23.7%	14.2%	18.2%	27.7%
ACT New Zealand	2.2%	37.6%		27.1%	33.2%
Chose not to vote	22.1%	15.1%	21%	14.2%	27.6%
Conservative	8%	17.9%	9.1%	41.7%	23.2%
Don't know or can't remember	8.8%	16.2%	10.8%	29.6%	34.7%
Green Party	17.2%	31.5%	15.7%	12.2%	23.4%
Labour Party	14.2%	25.4%	16%	14.8%	29.6%
Mana Party	13.3%	37%	12.9%	20.7%	16.1%
Maori Party	2.9%	39.9%	24.3%	12.6%	20.4%
National Party	16.8%	29.1%	11.5%	15.9%	26.6%
New Zealand First Party	15.2%	23.8%	10.7%	24.1%	26.2%
Other party	67.8%	18.7%	3.8%	1.6%	8.1%
United Future	41.1%	13.6%	14.7%	14.3%	16.2%
Was not eligible to vote	13.5%	8.8%	7.6%	41.3%	28.8%

Medically assisted death – support and opposition by age group

Q21. In general, do you do support or oppose entitling all mentally competent adults in New Zealand to receive medical assistance in ending their life if they are suffering from a terminal illness or an irreversible physical or mental medical condition that in their view renders their life unbearable?

Multichoice - Single Answer Only

A. Strongly support
B. Support
C. Neutral
D. Oppose
E. Strongly oppose
F. Not sure

	Total	A	B	C	D	E	F	
ALL	2948	30.2%	32.7%	15.8%	6.2%	6.2%	9%	100%
AGE GROUP								
18-24 years	9%	35%	23.7%	10.8%	10.1%	1.5%	18.8%	100%
25-34 years	18%	30.4%	30.8%	16.5%	5.4%	7.5%	9.5%	100%
35-44 years	18%	29.2%	34.6%	18.5%	5.7%	3.7%	8.3%	100%
45-54 years	22%	33%	38.7%	10.3%	5.8%	5.1%	7.1%	100%
55-64 years	16%	33.5%	31.7%	15.2%	5.3%	10%	4.2%	100%
65-74 years	12%	22.7%	30.7%	28.3%	6.8%	8.2%	3.2%	100%
75 years or over	3%	24.4%	32.2%	13.1%	3.1%	8.6%	18.5%	100%
Under 18 years	2%	14.7%	27.8%		10.9%	0.5%	46.2%	100%

Medically assisted death entitlement – support and opposition by gender

Q21. In general, do you do support or oppose entitling all mentally competent adults in New Zealand to receive medical assistance in ending their life if they are suffering from a terminal illness or an irreversible physical or mental medical condition that in their view renders their life unbearable?

Multichoice - Single Answer Only

- A. Strongly support
- B. Support
- C. Neutral
- D. Oppose
- E. Strongly oppose
- F. Not sure

	Total	A	B	C	D	E	F	
ALL	2956	30.2%	32.7%	15.8%	6.2%	6.1%	9%	100%
Female	51%	29%	34.1%	14%	5.3%	5.2%	12.4%	100%
Male	49%	31.4%	31.2%	17.6%	7.1%	7.1%	5.5%	100%

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