



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

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8 November 2024

Dear Mr Sutherland,

I am writing further to your letter of 17 October 2024 in which you raise certain concerns about the Committee's planned programme of evidence as part of its Stage 1 scrutiny of the Assisted Dying for Terminally Ill Adults (Scotland) Bill – specifically, that the programme does not include an opportunity for adults living with a terminal illness to provide evidence to the Committee as part of this scrutiny. The Committee acknowledges your concerns, which it takes very seriously.

The Committee received in excess of 20,000 responses to its call for written views on the Bill and a number of these included direct testimony from individuals with lived and living experience of terminal illness. These responses are a critical component of the evidence base that will inform the Committee's scrutiny of the Bill at Stage 1.

Further engagement in this area requires a careful and considered approach that ensures the autonomy of the individuals concerned is respected, that they are suitably supported, and that addresses any associated practical barriers.

The Committee is engaging with a number of organisations involved in the provision of frontline care and support to adults living with a terminal illness to explore options for those that may wish to, to contribute additional testimony to the Committee's scrutiny of the Bill. Our intention is that those individuals will be offered a choice of formats in which to submit their testimony, and whether they wish that testimony to be made public or to remain private.

This additional evidence will be considered alongside all other contributions to the Committee's scrutiny of the Bill and will help to further inform the Committee's Stage 1 report.

I apologise for the delay in responding to you. However, I hope you will recognise the particular sensitivities I have outlined in this letter, which the Committee felt were important to explore fully before determining a way forward.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "CHaughey". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the left of a vertical line.

Clare Haughey MSP  
Convener, Health, Social Care and Sport Committee