

PRESS RELEASE
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LIFE: Crown Prosecution Service are playing with fire in amendments to assisted suicide guidelines

The national pro-life charity LIFE has strongly criticised Alison Saunders, the Director of Public Prosecutions for her unilateral and unnecessary decision to make a significant change to the CPS guidelines on the prosecution of assisted suicide.

Previously, the guidelines stated that if someone accused of assisting a suicide were a medical professional, this would count as a point in favour of prosecuting them, regardless of whether or not they were involved in the care of the victim. The new guidelines state that the fact that the accused person is a medical professional will only count as a point in favour of prosecution if that person has a duty of care to the victim . i.e. has a prior existing relationship with them.

This is a deceptively large change in the attitude of the CPS to assisted suicide prosecutions, and seriously weakens the law against assisting a suicide. It is no wonder that pro-euthanasia fanatics like Michael Irwin and Philip Nitschke have welcomed it. Dr Irwin, indeed, called it a wonderful softening that would make life easier for people like him. It can easily be perceived as giving carte blanche to doctors to help people to end their own lives as long as they do not have a professional relationship with the victim.

The timing of this decision, when an assisted suicide Bill is actually under discussion in Parliament, is deeply inappropriate. There are serious questions to be asked about Ms Saunders judgment and impartiality in this matter. Vulnerable people in our society deserve a law against assisted suicide that offers them strong and unambiguous protection.

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For further media comment please call the LIFE Media Hotline on 07867 744502

LIFE is a pro-life charity that supports anyone facing a crisis pregnancy, pregnancy loss or after an abortion, and strives to engage, inspire and inform the next generation.