Reviewer’s report

Title: Too much safety? Safeguards and equal access in the context of voluntary assisted dying legislation

Version: 0 Date: 14 Feb 2020

Reviewer: Alexandra Mullock

Reviewer's report:

This article considers the legalisation of VAD in the Australian state of Victoria and whether the provisions seeking to 'safeguard' patients asking for VAD creates too many obstacles for those deemed eligible under the law. The authors examine the ethical relationship between the 'safeguards' and equal access to VAD. They utilise Ruger's model on equal access to health care services in order to assess the effects of the safeguards.

This is an excellent, very well written article that I really enjoyed reviewing. I am not familiar with the VAD legislation in Victoria, but the authors set out the relevant sections clearly and concisely before analysing the tension between protecting citizens and permitting VAD. They examine the ethics and dangers of over-safeguarding people within a permissive yet conservation framework for lawful VAD, arguing persuasively that the relevant provisions coupled with practical aspects of health care provision (i.e. attitudes of health care professionals and organisations) are creating unethical obstacles for those eligible seeking VAD.

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

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Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
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Yes

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Not relevant to this manuscript
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Acceptable

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