Voluntarily stopping eating and drinking (VSED) is becoming an increasingly important topic in the medical ethical and medical legal debate.

I widely agree with the authors' position that, even if VSED is classified as a kind of suicide, physician involvement in VSED is not a form of assisted suicide. Nevertheless, I see some minor weaknesses in their argumentation.

First, the authors repeatedly refer to "the law", but do not state to which law. In line 7 for example, they say, that "assisting suicide is a crime". This is not true for all countries. In the Netherlands and in several states of the USA physician assisted suicide is legal under certain conditions. And in Switzerland and Germany assisted suicide is only illegal if committed with self-seeking motives or with the intention to do it again. In line 24 the authors say, that there is "no right to commit CS". In March 2017, the Federal Administrative Court of Germany decided, that the German constitution includes the right to commit voluntary suicide in the face of a severe and terminal illness. Therefore, I would recommend naming the legal background.

Secondly, the authors ignore, that there are some kinds of physician involvement in VSED which could be regarded as assisted suicide. If the physician's intention is to alleviate burdensome symptoms in a patient who has voluntarily stopped eating and drinking, this help can be regarded as palliative care. But if the physician's intention is to enable the patient to commit suicide by VSED (e.g. because he knows that without his help the patient would not be able to carry out his decision), the help could be regarded as assisted suicide. This is especially true if the physician
offers the help in advance ("Assisted suicide is not allowed. But I offer you a palliative sedation so that you can end your life by VSED in an easy and comfortable way."). Therefore, I would recommend specifying the kind of physician involvement or distinguishing different kinds of involvement depending on the physician's intention.

I would appreciate if the authors could consider these two points in their paper.

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