

# Euthanasia Bill C-14 is like a “Trojan Horse.” It claims to be strict, but uses meaningless language.

By Alex Schadenberg, Executive Director - Euthanasia Prevention Coalition

Bill C-14, An Act to amend the Criminal Code and to make related amendments to other Acts (medical assistance in dying) was tabled on April 14 in the House of Commons.

Bill C-14 appears more restrictive than the radical recommendations from the government assisted dying committee. The bill does not extend euthanasia to mature minors, to people with dementia, or to people who seek euthanasia for psychological reasons alone. The bill appears to require the person to have a terminal condition and it appears to require a 15 day waiting period.

In reality Bill C-14 fails to provide effective oversight of the law or conscience rights for healthcare professionals and provides legal immunity to anyone, who kills another. **There are significant problems with Bill C-14.**

**1. Bill C-14 does not provide effective oversight of the law.** The bill requires approval for euthanasia or assisted suicide by two independent physicians or nurse practitioners, without requiring before the death oversight from a third-party (judge or committee). The bill permits the doctor or nurse practitioners that approve the act to also do the act and then also report the act. There is no effective oversight of the law since the same person approves the death, does the injection and then reports the death.

**2. Bill C-14 provides legal immunity to “any person” who directly participates in the act.** Section 241(3) provides legal immunity to: *any person who does anything for the purpose of aiding a medical practitioner or nurse practitioner to provide a person with medical assistance in dying.* Section 241(5) provides legal immunity to: *anyone who does anything, at another person’s explicit request, for the purpose of aiding that other person to self-administer a substance that has been prescribed for that other person as part of the provision of medical assistance in dying.* This bill is very dangerous by providing legal immunity to any person who is directly involved with killing another person.

It is unthinkable that legal immunity is given to anyone. **Bill C-14 provides the perfect cover for acts of murder.**

**3. The bill does not limit euthanasia and assisted suicide to people who are terminally ill.** The bill defines terminal as: *their natural death has become reasonably foreseeable, taking into account all of their medical circumstances,*

*without a prognosis necessarily having been made as to the specific length of time that they have remaining.*

What does it mean that natural death has become reasonably foreseeable? How will it be determined that a death is reasonably foreseeable when a prognosis is not necessary?

**4. The “safeguards” are an illusion.** Bill C-14 requires a medical or nurse practitioner to only: *be of the opinion that the person meets all of the criteria.* To “be of the opinion” is a very low standard. It will be impossible to prove that the medical or nurse practitioner was not of the opinion that the person met all of the criteria.

The bill requires a medical or nurse practitioner to only: *be satisfied that the request was signed and dated by the person or by another person under subsection (4).* To “be satisfied” is a very low standard.

When the person is unable to sign the request the bill allows anyone to sign the request. Section 4 states: *anyone can sign the request so long as they are: at least 18 years of age and who understands the nature of the request.*

Bill C-14 is like a Trojan horse because it claims to provide strict guidelines when they are in fact loosely defined.

**5. The bill does not provide conscience protection for medical or nurse practitioners.** Bill C-14 does not provide conscience protection for medical professionals who oppose killing their patients. Section 241.31 involves medical and nurse practitioners in the act by requiring them to: *send requests for euthanasia or assisted suicide to a “designated recipient” or the Minister of Health.*

**Conclusion:** Bill C-14 does not provide effective oversight of the law, it is not a harm reduction model, it does not provide safe spaces for people who are opposed to being killed by lethal injection and it does not provide conscience protection for medical professionals who oppose killing patients. Bill C-14 provides a cover for acts of murder by enabling “anyone” to directly participate in the act. Bill C-14 is dangerous for Canadians in their time of need.

EPC is a national organization of groups and individuals who support caring measures while opposing euthanasia and assisted suicide. EPC has more than 25,000 supporters.