



VADANZ

Voluntary Assisted Dying Australia and New Zealand

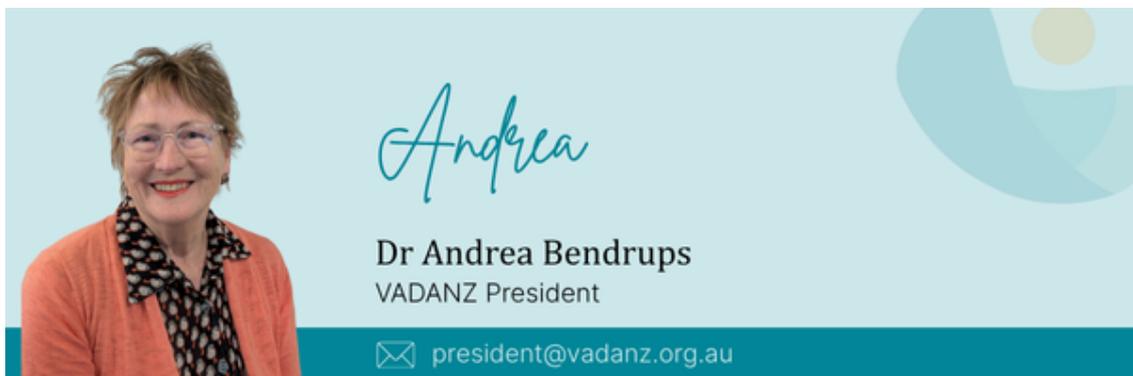
Dear <<First Name>>

The past month has been a busy time in the VAD landscape. Following extensive consultation, a series of **amendments to Victoria's VAD law** passed both Houses with a comfortable majority. Meanwhile, the **NSW Parliament rejected a private member's bill** that would have allowed aged care facilities to deny residents their legal right to pursue VAD. This outcome reminds us of the need to remain vigilant in protecting the hard-won rights of dying patients.

Looking ahead, **NSW will soon review its legislation**. VADANZ is eager to hear from members about how the service is working and what improvements are needed. We are circulating a [short survey to NSW members](#) and strongly encourage responses. Please also share it with colleagues who may not yet be VADANZ members, so we can make a comprehensive submission reflecting your views.

As noted in my last newsletter, 2026 will see our third [VADCON](#) (19–20 October). With research activity growing across Australia and New Zealand, we are keen to showcase a broad range of topics. We invite members to [submit abstracts](#) and anticipate even greater interest than last time. We also welcome volunteers to assist with abstract review; a standardised template will be provided.

Finally, I wish you all a joyous, safe, and restful holiday season. May you return in 2026 refreshed and reinvigorated.



VAD
CON
2026

Call for abstracts

Abstracts are open for the [2026 Trans-Tasman Voluntary Assisted Dying Conference](#) on 19-20 October in Melbourne.

The theme for this year's conference is ***From margins to mainstream: voluntary assisted dying in end-of-life care***. The offered format is 10-20 minute oral presentations and posters. Areas of interest include:

- Access, equity and inclusion
- Workforce capability, education, wellbeing and support
- Research, data and evaluation
- Models of care and system integration
- Professional standards and clinical governance

Please submit your abstracts [here](#) by **13 March 2026**. And register your interest to attend the conference [here](#).

Submit your abstract



NSW | The [NSW Voluntary Assisted Dying Board's second Annual Report](#) shows a strong increase in demand for VAD. The report shows 2295 people made a first request to access VAD, while 1028 people died using the VAD substance. Board chair Prof Jenni Millbank highlighted there had been a 26 percent increase in monthly assessments compared with monthly averages in the previous reporting period. Other key stats:

- 87.6% of people were currently accessing palliative care at the time of their first VAD assessment.
- 4 out of 5 chose practitioner administration.
- Patients were more likely to be male, with a cancer diagnosis, with an average age of 75

WA | The [Voluntary Assisted Dying Board WA Annual Report](#) also shows an increase in demand, with 480 VAD deaths, up 64 per cent on the previous reporting period. The Review Board notes concern about a shortage of trained VAD practitioners to meet the need. Key stats:

- VAD deaths are now 2.6% of all deaths in WA, up from 1.6%. In the Midwest, VAD deaths represent 5.7% of all deaths.
- Consistent with other jurisdictions, cancer remains the most common illness and men continue to outnumber women.
- Palliative care access remains high, at 83.9%



Victoria | The [Voluntary Assisted Dying Amendment Bill 2025](#) has passed both houses of parliament. The reforms include removing the 'gag clause', changing prognosis timelines from six months to 12 months, and expanding the administering practitioner cohort to include nurse practitioners and registered nurses. The changes will take effect within 18 months. [Read more on the VADANZ website.](#)

NSW | Liberal MLC Susan Carter's [bill to amend NSW VAD laws](#) to give faith-based aged care providers the right to prevent residents from accessing VAD has been



A [new research article](#) examines **institutional objection to assisted dying in Aotearoa New Zealand**, which is not addressed in legislation. The qualitative study draws on the perspectives of 81 stakeholders across 77 semi structured interviews. Key findings:

- Hospice was the setting where institutional objection was raised most frequently, but it also occurred in aged care and hospitals.
- Objections were usually on religious grounds, particularly from Christian faiths and Catholicism, although some aged care providers also reported it was 'easier not to participate'.
- There was a specific focus of institutional objection being on the taking of the AD medication, with greater toleration of other parts of the AD process.
- Health practitioners providing AD reported emotional harms from engaging with objecting institutions, particularly stigma: "I feel like a total leper in that building". [Read the paper.](#)



The board of VADANZ is asking NSW members to give their input into the upcoming **review of the NSW VAD Legislation**.

Other members who have particular knowledge of the NSW legislation are also invited to share their experience.

Before submitting your responses please see the [NSW Voluntary Assisted Dying Act 2022 – Legislative review background paper](#).

Responses must be submitted no later than **9 January, 2026** and will help inform our submission.

[Submit feedback for the NSW Review](#)



[Telehealth use in Voluntary Assisted Dying: a systematic review](#) (*Australian Health Review*) examined telehealth use in assisted dying in Australia, Canada, the USA and Europe. The review found global evidence that telehealth can enhance patient and

patients and providers. Authored by Imogen Summers, Elizabeth Reynolds and Helen Haydon. [Read the study.](#)

The journal *Bioethics* is calling for papers for a Special Issue in 2027: Under what circumstances should Voluntary Assisted Dying be permitted. Closing date for submissions is 20 July, 2026. [More information.](#)



Calling NSW VAD practitioners - do you know of patients who would like to feature in a photographic exhibition and help raise public awareness of end-of-life choice? Photographer Julian Kingma's **The Power of Choice** exhibition, based on his [Walkley Award-winning book](#), is coming to NSW in 2026. If you are a VAD practitioner in NSW and know of patients who might like to participate in this valuable project by being photographed, please [email VADANZ](#).



Early bird registration has been extended for [ICEL5 - the International Conference on Assisted Dying and Other End of Life Care](#) at QUT, Brisbane in April 2026. The new early bird closing date is this Sunday, 14 December. [Register here.](#)



Slovenia | A referendum on an assisted dying law has failed, meaning the existing law is now suspended.

Parliament had passed an assisted dying law in July, but opponents forced a vote after collecting 40,000 signatures. [Read more.](#)

UK | The number of amendments to the UK's assisted dying bill proposed in the House of Lords has now risen to more than 1000. The House of Lords is holding its second committee sittings, which involve line-by-line examinations of the bill, on 12 Dec.

Canada | The latest gov report on MAiD deaths shows the number of deaths appears to be plateauing, making up 5% of all deaths in Canada. The vast majority (95.6%) had a Track 1 death, with an average age of 78, mostly with cancer. [Read more.](#)

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