



VADANZ

Voluntary Assisted Dying Australia and New Zealand

Dear <<First Name>>

Good VAD practice rests on good legislation, which is why it's important that jurisdictions review their VAD laws and how they are working.

We welcome [the recent announcement by the Victorian government](#) to reform the state's laws to remove unnecessary barriers to access, including the so-called 'gag clause' that restricts doctors from discussing VAD with patients.

The proposed changes would also include: extending the prognosis requirement from six months to 12 months, eliminating the need for a third assessment for patients with neurodegenerative condition, and reducing wait times between the first and final VAD request.

These changes are sensible, and in line with [VADANZ's submission](#) to Victoria's [five year review](#). They will go to a conscience vote later this year. The much-needed plans to reform the 'gag clause' in Victoria should provide some impetus for South Australia and New Zealand to also review their gag clauses, as they are the last jurisdictions that prevent healthcare professionals initiating discussion about VAD.

Beyond state-based reforms there also needs to be change at the federal level. We endorse [Go Gentle Australia's three federal election asks](#): to amend the Commonwealth Criminal Code, update MBS explanatory notes so VAD practitioners are not expected to work for free, and include VAD in the federal definition of end-of-life care.

Finally it's worth a reminder that the Northern Territory remains as our only jurisdiction not to have assisted dying legislation despite having been the first to introduce it. It's only fair that Territorians have the same end-of-life rights that the rest of Australia and New Zealand now have.



Dr Sally Cockburn | VADANZ President



2025 VADANZ Webinar series **Attending a VAD death**

Time: 5pm AEST, 7pm NZST
Date: Wednesday 9 April 2025

2025 Webinar series

Have you registered for our next VADANZ webinar of 2025? On 9 April, three experienced VAD clinicians will explore how they navigate the more nuanced aspects of Attending a VAD Death.

Preparing to be present when a person accesses VAD entails a professional responsibility to serve the person and their family safely and appropriately at such a deeply intimate time.

The skills needed are multifaceted. In this webinar, our expert team will share their experiences and practice including: how to prepare the space, personal presence, and engaging with family and caregivers.

The panel will discuss potential practical, clinical and psycho-social challenges at self and practitioner administrations.

This free webinar is only for VADANZ members.

On the panel are:

Dr Keith McArthur, GP and Clinical Lead of Tasmanian Health's VAD Statewide Clinical Service.

Laurie Draper, a Clinical Nurse Consultant in the Vic Statewide VAD care navigator service, with 20 years experience in both metro and large regional health services in Victoria.

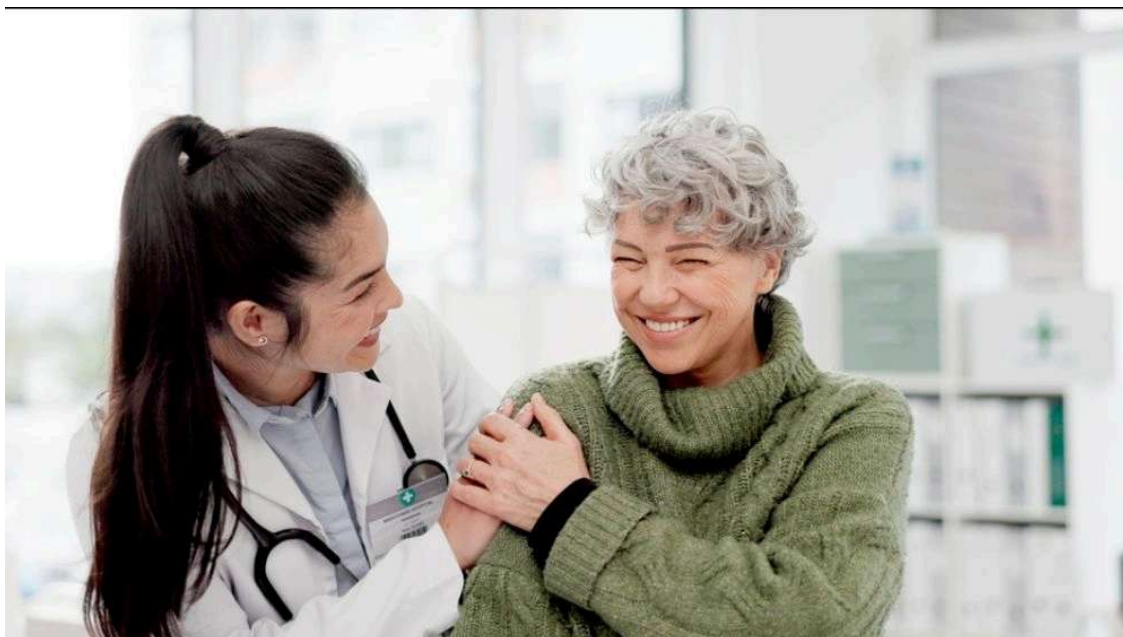
Dr Jonathan Ball, an Intensive Care Medicine Specialist who joined the New Zealand Assisted Dying Service as a practitioner at its inception in November 2021. He has also worked for the SESLHD VAD Service in Sydney.

Register for the webinar on Attending a VAD Death



New! Student Membership

If you know anyone who has an active enrolment in a tertiary education facility and demonstrates an interest in VAD, or is progressing towards a VAD-relevant credential there is a new **VADANZ Associates - Student membership** available for \$20 a year. [See here for details.](#)



WA introduces fee for VAD services

Under this arrangement VAD practitioners working in a private capacity can claim a fixed fee for VAD services.

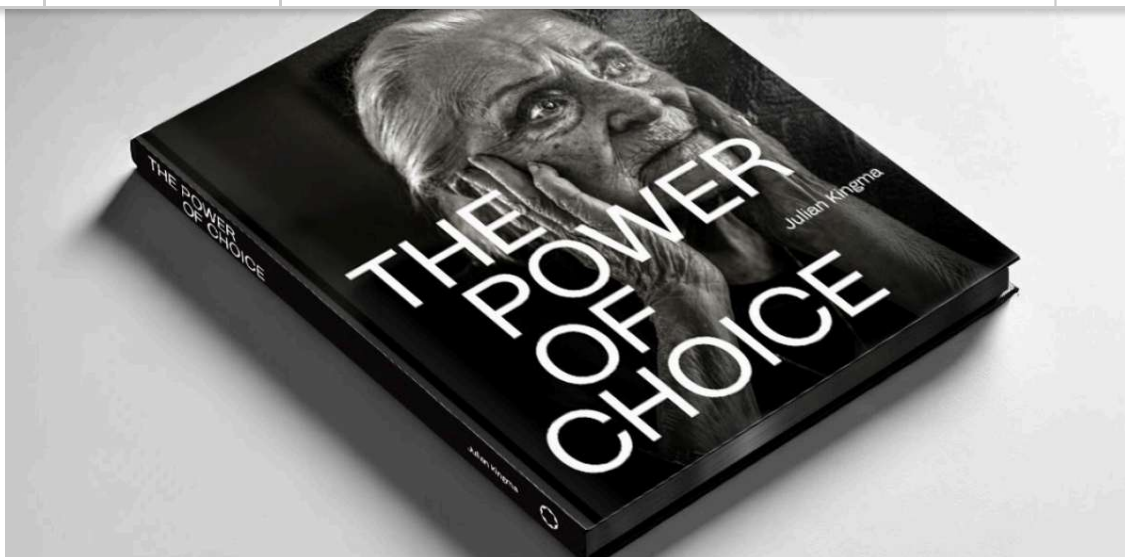
More information can be found in the [Western Australian Voluntary Assisted Dying – Practitioner fee for service payment guidelines](#) or by contacting the End of Life Care Program [via email](#).



Brisbane forum

QVAD will hold a Community of Practice forum for VAD authorised practitioners in Brisbane on 28th March at Rydges, Fortitude Valley.

QVAD SPS hosts a face-to-face Community of Practice forum for Medical VAD Authorised Practitioners once a year to ensure colleagues have the opportunity of in person networking and continuous improvement of their practice. For more info, contact QVAD Support on 1800 431 371 or [email](#).



The Power of Choice

Do you have a colleague or family member that would like to know more about Voluntary Assisted Dying? Gift them the [The Power of Choice](#) (NewSouth), by award-winning photographer Julian Kingma.

The Power of Choice captures the real-life faces of VAD in Australia, through a series of intimate portraits and stories. Pre-order the book [here](#).

There will also be events at the [Sydney Writers' Festival](#) and the [Wheeler Centre](#) in May, where Andrew Denton will be in conversation with Julian Kingma.



World Watch

It had adopted a position of opposition in 2005 and held that stance since then. The new position was adopted after a vote by the RCGP UK governing Council - elected representatives of the wider College membership. Read more [here](#).

The Netherlands | Steven Pleiter, former managing director of the Dutch Center of Expertise for Euthanasia, has spoken to [Medscape](#) about "a surprising and persisting lack of robust scientific data" when it comes to drugs for assisted dying. This article looks at drug protocols in The Netherlands, as well as Switzerland and Italy. Read the article [here](#).

UK | An article in [Cureus Journal of Medical Science](#) argues that the UK VAD bill could be improved by adopting some of the safeguards present in "best practice" jurisdictions including Victoria and Western Australia. The recommended safeguards include the requirement for three separate requests. Read the article here: [Strengthening Safeguards in the Assisted Dying Bill: A Comparative Review of Ethical, Legal, and Medical Considerations in End-of-Life Legislation](#).

Canada | Canadian MAiD practitioner Dr Stefanie Green has written a book about her experience in a book to be published this month *This Is Assisted Dying: A Doctor's Story of Empowering Patients at the End of Life* (Simon & Schuster). Read more about the book [here](#).

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