



VADANZ

Voluntary Assisted Dying Australia and New Zealand

Dear <<First Name>>

As we move further into 2026, it is encouraging to see continued progress in VAD across Australia. Last month, VADANZ made its submission to the first review of the NSW VAD Act, commending the NSW Government for establishing a safe and compassionate framework. We also outlined several areas requiring attention: the difficulty many clinicians face in determining prognostic eligibility, low awareness of VAD among health professionals, ongoing remuneration challenges, and restrictions on telehealth that disproportionately affect regional and rural patients. All submissions will inform a review report to be tabled in Parliament by November 2026.

We also welcome the ACT Health Minister's update on the first three months of VAD operation in the territory. There are now 36 trained VAD practitioners, including five nurse practitioners and 16 registered nurses - an encouraging sign of a growing multidisciplinary workforce.

Next month, I will be attending the [International Conference on Assisted Dying and Other End of Life Care \(ICEL5\)](#) in Brisbane. The program looks exciting and broad, encompassing topics such as bereavement in families impacted by VAD and nurse practitioner involvement in VAD, as well as discussions relating to mental health and dementia. Registration is still open if you can spare the time away from your busy lives. I will include some highlights from the conference in the next newsletter.

VADANZ is now inviting Expressions of Interest for our new Strategic Advisory Committee, particularly from New Zealand and Tasmania. Your expertise will help shape the future of VAD practice and policy across our region.

Finally, the [deadline for abstracts](#) for VADCON26 has been extended to 19 April. Don't forget to register your interest to attend the conference [here](#).





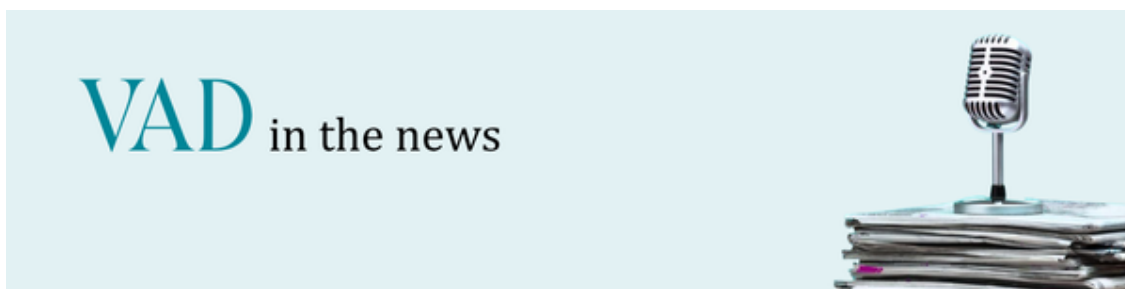
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Strategic Advisory Committee Members

VADANZ is inviting Expressions of Interest (EOIs) to join our **Strategic Advisory Committee**. This committee brings together experienced members to discuss and provide advice and recommendations on emerging issues, strategic priorities, and opportunities to strengthen VAD and policy.

Serving on the committee offers a chance to contribute your expertise and help shape the future of VAD practice. We welcome EOIs from individuals with diverse perspectives and experience in end-of-life care, ethics, research, policy, and health system leadership. We are particularly looking for representatives from Tasmania and New Zealand.

Please complete [this form](#) to express your interest. The group meets every second month. Those who have previously applied - thank you. We have noted your interest and will contact you when relevant topics are discussed.



VADANZ director **Dr Chloe Furst** has been named as the People's Choice winner in the 2026 Advertiser Sunday Mail SkyCity Woman of the Year Award. Dr Furst, a dual trained geriatrician and palliative care physician, is a VAD practitioner from South Australia. One of her patients, Annaliese Holland, was named Inspiration of the Year for her work raising awareness of palliative care and VAD. [Read more](#).

Australian Doctor has published a homage to pioneering Vic VAD practitioner **Dr Nick Carr** after his retirement, written by one of his mentees. Dr Carr was "never afraid to go to the darker places or ask the harder questions". [Read more](#).

Professor James Hurley from the University of Melbourne's Rural Health department has written about the importance of the recently passed Victorian VAD reforms. Prof Hurley, a clinical physician at Grampians Health, highlights that rural areas still need better VAD access via telehealth and gives a case study of a man who had to travel hundreds of kilometres to Melbourne for his three VAD assessments. [Ending things on your own terms will soon be a little easier](#).

VAD across the trans-Tasman



NZ | Last month the [2026 Assisted Dying Research Network Conference](#) took place at Victoria University of Wellington, and VADANZ was proud to be a sponsor. See more details further down.

ACT | The ACT Health Minister has updated parliament on the first three months of VAD operation in the territory. There were **61 VAD applicants and 14 VAD deaths**, with an average age of 74.5. Cancer was the most common underlying condition. The average time taken from first request to death was 18 days. There are **36 trained VAD practitioners in the ACT**, including five nurse practitioners and 16 registered nurses. [Read more](#).

TAS | Tasmania's VAD legislation will be reviewed by a panel of experts to assess its effectiveness over the first three years of its operation and to identify any areas for improvement. The review is a statutory requirement following the third anniversary of the commencement of the Act in October 2025. An expert panel, consisting of Professor Emerita the Honourable Kate Warner AC, Professor Ben White, and Professor Michael Ashby, has been appointed following a public expression of interest (EOI) process. The review will be completed by 23 October 2026.

NSW | VADANZ submitted to the first **review of the NSW VAD legislation** at the end of February. This review was intended to look at the operation and effectiveness of the Act. The following issues were raised:

- Challenges determining prognostic eligibility
- Low awareness of VAD among health professionals
- Remuneration challenges
- Restrictions on telehealth

All submissions will inform a legislative review report, which is scheduled to be tabled in Parliament by November 2026.



Inaugural NZ Assisted Dying conference draws strong engagement

The event brought together legal academics, policy makers, clinicians, assisted dying providers, palliative care specialists, Māori health researchers, disability advocates, end-of-life doulas, counsellors, organ donation coordinators, NGOs, and whānau with lived experience.

VADANZ member Jessica Young, from the conference organising team, said a major highlight was seeing research contribute directly to sector connection and capacity-building. "Many AD providers noted that the conference gave them a much-needed sense of community in what can be isolated work, helping to reduce stigma and strengthen peer support," she said.

VADANZ director Susan Jury, who attended the conference, had several conversations about the opportunity to strengthen the NZ presence within VADANZ.

"With greater Kiwi involvement, VADANZ can provide a platform to support the assisted dying community in New Zealand - whether through clinical guidance, education, advocacy, research, or professional connection," she said.

"We would love to hear from New Zealand members interested in getting involved. This could include helping form a New Zealand peer group within VADANZ, contributing to initiatives, or stepping into leadership roles (including a New Zealand Board position)."

Please use [this form](#) to express your interest in getting involved.



The 5th International Conference on Assisted Dying and Other End of Life Care (ICEL5) Program has been released.

Key sessions of the four-day program explore:

- Health professionals' involvement in and perspectives on VAD
- The Australian VAD workforce
- Integrating organ donation into VAD pathways
- Loss of capacity and VAD
- VAD and palliative care

The [ICEL5](#) program features important opportunities to connect and collaborate with others, including Go Gentle's Networking Event on Thursday 9th April at Brisbane Powerhouse. Find out more.

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VADCON26

The **deadline for abstracts has been extended** 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:

- Clinical practice and care coordination
- Ethics, law and policy
- 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 **19 April 2026**. And register your interest to attend the conference [here](#).

Submit your abstract



The team at QUT's Australian Centre for Health Research has published an article in *Bioethics* journal [The Role of Medical Ethics in Voluntary Assisted Dying: A Regulatory Space Analysis](#). This article reflects on the role of medical ethics in VAD practice from the perspective of the field of regulation, using Regulatory Space Theory.

The *Journal of Medicine and Philosophy* has published a paper by University of Hong Kong academics about how assisted dying is contrary to Islamic doctrine. [The Case Against Legalizing Medically Assisted Suicide or Voluntary Active Euthanasia in Islamic Regions](#).



The Netherlands | An article in the *Psychiatric Times* criticises the rise in assisted dying for mental illness, especially among young people. [Read more.](#)

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