



MEDIA RELEASE

Monday 7 June 2021

NEW CAMPAIGN TELLS QUEENSLANDERS THEY DON'T HAVE TO CHOOSE BETWEEN PAIN AND DEATH

Catholic Health Australia, the peak body representing Catholic not-for-profit hospitals and aged care facilities, will today launch a campaign fighting for access to quality palliative care for all Queenslanders before voluntary assisted dying is made legal in the state.

The campaign, [Another Option](#), will give Queenslanders the opportunity to tell their elected representatives everyone should get access to decent, modern palliative care before they are given access to assisted suicide.

Catholic Health Australia's Mission & Strategy Director, Rebecca Burdick Davies, said it was vital for Queenslanders to know that the choice did not have to be between pain and death.

"Palliative care has come on in leaps and bounds over the past decade," Ms Burdick Davies said.

"Instead of forcing vulnerable people to choose between pain and death, our politicians could provide funding for modern palliative care. Most Queenslanders can't access proper palliative care, but it should be available to everyone before we offer the option of suicide.

"We're campaigning for better funding for palliative care and asking all Queenslanders to tell the state government there's a better option than voluntary assisted dying.

"Right now proper palliative care is not available to the majority of Queenslanders. That means most Queenslanders with a terminal illness are suffering unnecessarily - both physically and emotionally. In rural and regional Queensland palliative care services are virtually non-existent.

"The Australian Medical Association estimates to make proper palliative care service available to all Queenslanders would cost \$400 million a year. The Queensland Government currently spends around a quarter of that.

"Before we legislate for assisted suicide, we should back the compassionate alternative.

"People who are very sick should have relief from their pain so their loved ones can share precious time with them. Queenslanders should be offered the option to live with relative comfort before they are offered the option of suicide.



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Ms Burdick Davies said the challenge of COVID-19 has shown how compassionate Queenslanders are, and how the care about protecting the most vulnerable people in our communities, whether they're sick, elderly, or terminally ill.

The new campaign can be found at anotheroption.com.au.