

# MY DEATH MY DECISION

[www.mydeath-mydecision.org.uk](http://www.mydeath-mydecision.org.uk)

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## PRESS RELEASE

After extensive discussion in recent months among its members, the Society for Old Age Rational Suicide has been renamed as My Death, My Decision (MDMD). MDMD has a new website, [www.mydeath-mydecision.org.uk](http://www.mydeath-mydecision.org.uk) which contains much new material. It will grow over time to be an information resource covering all aspects of the UK Right to Die campaign. The aim is to cover, in depth, the arguments for and against different approaches to how the UK law might be changed, taking into account the concerns of those currently opposed to any change, and evidence from other countries. In this way we hope to stimulate discussions which will move the UK right to die campaign forward.

MDMD would like to draw particular attention to the following:

(1) A major concern of those opposed to changing the law has been the protection of "vulnerable people". MDMD propose an extension to Advance Decisions (formerly called living wills) which could allay this concern. Under the proposal, an "Extended Advance Decision", written by a person when they are not considered "vulnerable", could document their wish for the **option** of an assisted death at some point in the future. If, at some future time when the person has mental capacity, they request an assisted death, then if there is any concern that they may have become "vulnerable", the Extended Advance Decision provides evidence of their long held wish for this option, putting beyond reasonable doubt any suspicion of persuasion. People considered "vulnerable" who request an assisted death without an appropriate Extended Advance Decision would be afforded the same protection as if the law hadn't changed. See [www.mydeath-mydecision.org.uk/info/issues/extended-ad](http://www.mydeath-mydecision.org.uk/info/issues/extended-ad) .

(2) MDMD strongly believe that the current focus on a change in UK law to legalise assisted dying only for the "terminally ill" – meaning with a life expectancy of 6 months or less - is problematic for many reasons. This is discussed in [www.mydeath-mydecision.org.uk/info/issues/6-month-safeguard](http://www.mydeath-mydecision.org.uk/info/issues/6-month-safeguard). The Extended Advance Decision suggestion is offered as an alternative, stronger, but more flexible safeguard.

With the full support of Michael Irwin, (the founder of SOARS), Phil Cheatle replaced him as the Coordinator of SOARS - now MDMD – in September 2015. Retired psychiatrist Dr Colin Brewer is the Associate Coordinator of MDMD.

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For media enquiries please contact Phil Cheatle, MDMD Coordinator [coordinator@mydeath-mydecision.org.uk](mailto:coordinator@mydeath-mydecision.org.uk)

**My Death, My Decision** campaigns for the option of a medically assisted death to be available to those who, due to incurable medical conditions, find that their quality of life is permanently below the level they are able to accept, provided this is their own well considered and persistent wish. MDMD, (formerly SOARS: the Society for Old Age Rational Suicide), was formed in 2009 after the Voluntary Euthanasia Society changed its name to Dignity in Dying and chose to limit its campaign to those who have six months or less to live.