

## Media release

19 November 2012

### **New survey shows majority support for voluntary euthanasia**

The overwhelming majority of Australians support voluntary euthanasia, according to new research to be released at today's Dying with Dignity NSW 2012 Parliamentary Forum in Sydney.

The nationally representative survey of 1,422 people found that 71 per cent of Australians support the legalisation of voluntary euthanasia for people experiencing unrelievable and incurable physical and/or mental suffering.

Opposition to voluntary euthanasia was 12 per cent, while 17 per cent were 'not sure'.

The survey also revealed that of those Australians who support the legalisation of voluntary euthanasia, 85 per cent also believe that terminally ill patients should have the option of choosing when they die.

The Australia Institute's Executive Director Dr Richard Denniss said the findings show that the Australian public is way ahead of Australian parliaments when it comes to respecting the wishes of people suffering at the end of their life.

"Conservative politicians are usually quick to argue that governments shouldn't control our lives but unfortunately many of those same politicians are more than happy to control our deaths," said Dr Denniss.

Of those respondents who supported the legalisation of voluntary euthanasia, 77 per cent believe that those with severe dementia who had previously signed an Advanced Care Directive expressing their desire to end their life should have their wishes respected. Seven cent expressed their opposition to this question, while 16 per cent said they were 'not sure'.

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