



PRESS RELEASE
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RADAR PRESS RELEASE
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BETTER CARE NOT ASSISTED DYING, SAYS DISABILITY RIGHTS ORGANISATION

RADAR, the UK's leading pan-disability campaigning organisation, has welcomed recent calls for better care for dying people.

Parliamentarians from the Dying Well Group, a cross-parliamentary group interested in ensuring that people have a right to a peaceful and natural death, are calling for more investment in health services to enable people to receive a "gold standard" of care at the end stages of their life. They would also like to see provision of services to enable people to choose to die in their own homes.

The Dying Well group, led by Labour MP Frank Field, is also opposed to Lord Joffe's Assisted Dying Bill to be debated in the House of Lords in February 2006.

RADAR is also opposed to the Assisted Dying Bill, and has been actively working to highlight the inadequacies in the current provision of palliative care in the UK. RADAR believes that the lack of choice currently available to disabled and terminally ill people does not allow individuals to make a truly fair and equal choice about assisted dying.

RADAR's Chief Executive, Kate Nash, said, "Assisted dying legislation will not create autonomy until supported independent living is a real societal value and a reality for disabled people. And that value must be underpinned by provision that is equally available across the whole country." Kate Nash said.

Kate Nash has criticised Lord Joffe's Assisted Dying Bill on the grounds that, "Legislation of this sort runs the risk of reinforcing public opinion that disabled people are somehow tragic figures to be pitied. It serves to diminish the value that society places on the lives of disabled people."

"Before there is a right to die, there must be a right for disabled people to live as full and equal members of society."

Notes for editors:

¹ RADAR is a national non-governmental disability organisation working for the rights of disabled people, from the broadest range of cultural, racial and social backgrounds, irrespective of their impairment. Although RADAR works with organisations of all types (of and for disabled people) RADAR itself is an organisation of disabled people.

² RADAR's vision is about pushing out the boundaries of the expected; a vision of a world where human difference is routinely anticipated, expertly accommodated and positively celebrated.

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