

NZNO AGM Panel

21st September 2017

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The question

- What do you think are the salient points about assisted dying and the debate on it that you think the nursing profession should consider?

But first: Context

- Ask yourself what is the context of professional nursing practice?
- Is there time to think, question?
- Kahneman, D. (2011). Thinking, fast and slow. Macmillan.

Dissonance/constrained practice



The question

- What do you think are the salient points about assisted dying and the debate on it that you think the nursing profession should consider?
- Assisted dying

The problem of language

Established language

- Euthanasia
- Suicide
- Assisted suicide
- Physician assisted suicide

Other established terms

- Killing
- Active euthanasia
- Passive euthanasia
- Voluntary euthanasia
- Involuntary euthanasia

Modified language

- Assisted dying
- Physician aided dying
- Physician-assisted death/dying
- physician aid in dying

Other contemporary terms

- Compassionate caring
- aid-in dying
- dying with dignity
- compassionate dying

Problems with the research!

- Alt.facts, post truth, spin
- Opinion polls (+ve support)
- Surveys
- The problem of bias, suggestion or presumed respectability

- But what do results really mean?
 - *67% of nurses were supportive (of legalising assisted dying in New Zealand)*
 - *the items in our study included the terms ‘painful’, ‘incurable disease’ and ‘request’, which may have influenced participants to express increased support for euthanasia (Oliver, Wilson & Malpas, 2017).*

Motive asymmetry

- Your ideology is motivated by love
- Your ideology is motivated by hate
- Listening to people who agree with you
- Confirmation bias
- Need people to disagree
- Blur the lines

What we need to consider

- Context
- Thinking time
 - What is meant
 - How has the conclusion been reached
 - Who shaped the thinking
 - How could someone else look at it
 - Why is this position better than any other
 - What are the implications and consequences
 - What evidence is there to support assumptions
 - How do we know the evidence is accurate
- Don't trust our own position too much

Thank you

- Acknowledgements Dr Martin Woods
- References:
 - Kahneman, D. (2011). Thinking, fast and slow. Macmillan.
 - Oliver, P., Wilson, M. & Malpas, P. (2017). New Zealand doctors' and nurses' views on legalising assisted dying in New Zealand. *The New Zealand Medical Journal*, 130 (1456), 10-26.