**Euthanasia**

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**Definition of Euthanasia**

**Introduction**

The topic of Euthanasia has provoked a lot of debate and controversies. It is defined as

An act or practice of intentionally killing, ending, or terminating a patient’s life to limit their suffering from a painful disease. This intentional act of causing the death of a terminally ill patient is only executed by a health practitioner (Malik, 2019). The word comes from the Greek *euthanatos*, which means “easy death”. The idea is that instead of condemning someone to a slow, painful, or undignified death, euthanasia allows the patient to experience a relatively “good death. This research paper focuses on examining euthanasia and the laws regarding the act in the state of Florida.

There are different practices of euthanasia. Some of the practices include passive euthanasia, which refers to the withholding or withdrawal of medical treatment with the intention of allowing a patient to die naturally (Brassington, 2020). Unlike active euthanasia, where a specific action is taken to end a patient's life, passive euthanasia involves the omission or cessation of treatment. Withholding treatment is an example of passive euthanasia which occurs when a health professional decides not to start a particular treatment or medical intervention that could possibly extend a patient’s life. Another example of passive euthanasia is withdrawal of treatment where a previously initiated medical treatment is discontinued. This might involve turning off a life-support machine, stopping medication, or ceasing other forms of medical intervention.

Other than passive euthanasia, there is voluntary euthanasia which refers to the act of intentionally ending a person's life at their explicit request and with their informed consent. A lethal drug is administered to end their life (Kresin et al., 2021). In this context, the individual who wishes to end their life is typically experiencing a terminal illness, unbearable suffering, or a condition that significantly compromises their quality of life. Voluntary euthanasia is often discussed within the broader framework of assisted dying or physician-assisted. There are several examples of voluntary euthanasia. One example is informed consent where the patient is fully informed about their medical condition, the potential consequences of euthanasia, and any available alternative treatment. The decision to undergo euthanasia must be made voluntarily and without coercion. (Ekkelet al., 2022). In addition, voluntary euthanasia is also considered in cases of terminal illnesses or unbearable suffering.

Although voluntary euthanasia varies widely around the world, the ethical and moral considerations surrounding voluntary euthanasia are complex and often involve discussion about individual autonomy and the role of the healthcare profession in end-of-life decisions. Whether voluntary or otherwise it is significantly based on cultural, religious, and philosophical perspectives while others maintain strict prohibitions some countries and states have legalized it under specific conditions while in Florida it is still an open discussion on whether to permit the act of euthanasia because of the large number of elderly people in the state. **Apart from voluntary euthanasia, euthanasia can also be Involuntary. Involuntary euthanasia** refers to the act of terminating a patient’s life without the consent of the patient (Robertson, 2019). For instance, if the patient is unconscious and their wishes are unknown. In some cases, the patient might be too young to die but has been in a coma or unconscious for a very long time and cannot give informed consent. There have been other forms of involuntary euthanasia like nonconsensual medical experiments. Where individuals often vulnerable populations such as prisoners or marginalized groups, are subjected to nonconsensual medical experiments that result in their death. While not always explicitly labeled as euthanasia, these actions involve causing harm without the person's consent

The end-of-life decision has resulted in a lot of questions especially when disputes arise among family members or healthcare professionals about the best course of action in case of severe illnesses or injuries the patient may have. When it comes to this kind of decision opting for Euthanasia raises serious moral, ethical, and legal concerns because of the act of ending a person's life without their explicit and informed consent. Hence the reason why it is regarded as unethical and illegal in many jurisdictions. Contemporary medical ethics emphasizes sharing decision-making and respecting patients' or individual choices and dignity when it comes to the context of life care. (Abbasi & Pouyan n.p). Historical examples such as eugenic programs and non-consensual medical experiments highlight the potential of grave abuse because these instances underscore the need to safeguard a person's life.

**Euthanasia law in Florida**

Florida is one of the states whose larger population comprises the elderly. Therefore, the topic of euthanasia in the state is a relevant topic. In 2020 Florida lawmakers proposed to pass a death with dignity law for the first time (Stringfield, 2021). The lawmakers presented the motion again in 2023, referring to it as the Florida Dying with Dignity Bill Act. If the law is passed, terminally ill patients who meet the defined requirements will be granted their request to end their lives (Verhofstadt et al., 2019). If the law is passed, some of the requirements the terminally ill patients should have included, being at least 18 years of age, being a resident of Florida, and being mentally stable to make and communicate their health care decisions among others. If the patient meets the requirements, Euthanasia will only be prescribed after the patient makes two verbal requests to their healthcare professionals at least 15 days apart. Moreover, there should be a written request that is signed before witnesses and the patient's diagnosis and prognosis should be confirmed by the prescribing doctor and at least another doctor. The patient will also be given an opportunity to notify their kin and they will also be given an opportunity to withdraw their euthanasia request in case they change their mind. (Myers, 2022). Although there are a number of individuals and organizations that provide the alternative option of the choice to end-of-life their terminally ill patients. It is considered illegal according to the law of Florida. In order to access these services the patient must be able to ingest the lethal medication on their own since the other person that might administer the drug may face criminal charges.

Once an individual or an organization has been found with charges of helping in an assisted murder it is considered a serious offense and it is vital to seek a skilled attorney. Since one might be charged with homicide. (Buijsen, 2022). Other than that any person that the bill lays out penalties to any person with a fake or forged document requesting lethal medication would face up to 30 years of jail term. The bill also proposed how the law would impact contract agreements. Knowingly ingested life-ending medication on a terminally ill or accident patient would not be covered by the insurance since it is a will of agreement. The measure would ban any changes to a person's annuity policy life

**Personal thoughts on euthanasia**

Although the topic of euthanasia has stirred a lot of mixed reactions among people in the modern world, I believe people should be granted an opportunity to decide and make choices for themselves regarding their lives and most importantly when it comes to health matters. There is no point in allowing an individual to experience pain for a very long time and they don't want to live anymore or want to end their suffering. As long as someone can communicate their wish it should be granted to them if they meet the requirement. However, I feel that the rule needs to be regulated so that people do not take advantage and use the opportunity to abuse the euthanasia law or use it to commit assisted suicide. In cases where the patient cannot consent to act because they are unable to communicate or have a mental illness like dementia yet they are a threat to themselves the decision should be made by the health care provider or medical practitioner. But when it comes to a question of ethics and morals in the society or one belief. The act of active euthanasia is considered unacceptable by the majority of physicians. While others view it as acceptable depending on the case so it is a question of sociology, religion, philosophy, law, and medicine aspects. Different points or considerations regarding this topic my stand is the same way a person has a right to live, they also have a right to die. In some situations relieving a person from pain and suffering by performing euthanasia will do more good than harm. It will be considered as an act of companioned mercy instead of letting a person suffer unbearably.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, a person's life is very valuable and important yet there are situations that bring consideration of ending one life in cases of immense pain for a fatal accident or Incident. Assisted death will often be viewed as a compassionate and loving way to end someone's life but in cases of illness, a compassionate or loving thing to do is to take care of the patient and show them their life has tremendous value regardless of age or abilities. Some of the patients opt for euthanasia because they feel that they are a burden to others. After all, treating the illness is too costly which may lead to fear of financial, emotional, or care burden to others. Fear and anxiety might lead to such a decision because not everyone who is terminally ill wishes to end their life, there is no life that is degraded, debased, or deteriorated every life deserves respect and is not worth defending with zeal and conviction.

In a state where the decision to end one life was not consented to by the patient especially when it comes to illness should be considered illegal despite the condition as long as the person can speak and understand the condition or state they are in. It is an obligation of a doctor or a service provider to withhold any information and options available like pain control treatment and psychological help one can get. The decision to end life can only be consented to by the patient if the law permit and have undergone all the necessary procedure to evaluate the condition of the patient. But in cases where the patient is unable to consent because of unconsciousness and terminal sedation, withholding or withdrawal of treatment is administered with the intention of hastening death can be considered legal. The handful of argument that has been provided against euthanasia only provide a glimpse that has been outlined into the ethics of the topic of euthanasia

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