

Deciding on the focus for the inquiry and develop research questions

The social issue that I have decided to inquire is the law of euthanasia in New Zealand.

Euthanasia is the painless ending of a life of a patient who is suffering from severe terminal illness by lethal injection. Currently in New Zealand, euthanasia is illegal in all forms.

Labour MP Maryan Street, introduced her "End of life choice bill" to the member's ballot in 2013,

although in the later months of 2013 she removed her bill from the member's ballot box out of concern that a debate about euthanasia could come up during elections and become a "political football". Labour was also concerned that the bill could distract from its main policies and deter the more conservative voters. She was asked if she would revisit the issue after the general elections, to which she replied; "I'll put it back in the ballot like a shot. That will be one of my first actions."

The bill proposes euthanasia to be open to people with a terminal illness that is likely to cause death within 12 months, or to people with an irreversible physical or mental condition that renders their life unbearable - by their own assessment.

I want to look at:

What is euthanasia and what are people's perspectives on the issue of euthanasia?

What is the controversy surrounding euthanasia.

What was Maryan's policy proposal all about and could it be reintroduced?

Reporting the findings and their relationship to the focus of the social inquiry

Describing people's points of view, values and perspectives that underpin their participation and/or action in society and how these relate to the focus of the inquiry

What is euthanasia and what are people's perspectives on the issue of euthanasia?

According to <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Euthanasia> euthanasia refers to the practice of intentionally ending a life in order to relieve pain and suffering. (paragraph continues)

There are many different perspectives about euthanasia.

Casey, a former student is a firm believer in euthanasia. She has a human rights ideology.

She believes that it should be up to the individual themselves to decide whether or not they wish to die and that it is unfair to be criminalising people for doing the same thing for a family member for which they would do for their pet.

She values individual's rights, freedom and an individual's decision on whether they should die or not.

Hospice New Zealand does not support the issue of euthanasia. They are firm believers of palliative care and making the patient as comfortable as they can in their last moments. They believe that assisted dying should be illegal, that there are other ways to care for someone in their last moments.

They value the Hippocratic Oath which 'Intends neither to hasten nor postpone death' and keeping people content, and comfortable in their last days.

Jack Havill, president of the Voluntary Euthanasia Society of New Zealand believes that euthanasia is a good thing for a variety of reasons.

- to prevent suffering at the end of life, including pain that cannot be relieved by drugs.

- to maintain dignity in death. (6)(paragraph continues) (Ref: <http://www.ves.org.nz/>)

He values an individual's rights to make their own decisions, freedom of choice and that it wrong to be letting people and families suffer when there is a solution. His values are shaped by his human rights ideology.

What is the controversy surrounding euthanasia?

Controversy follows whenever euthanasia is talked about. People are often diametrically opposed to each other's opinions – either very for it or very against it. The case for it has been outlined above in Jack Havill's perspective. The case against incorporates a number of issues.

Firstly it is believed that, Legal safeguards cannot protect the vulnerable from euthanasia abuses and it is believed that euthanasia and assisted suicide are the ultimate tools for elder abuse. Legislation can never protect vulnerable people, the frail, the elderly and the disabled

from pressure to terminate their 'burdensome' lives, or worse, from being killed without consent. A 2010 study revealed 32% of euthanasia killings in Flanders, Belgium had no specific request. (4) (Ref: <http://euthanasiadebate.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Eight-Reasons-Flyer-1.5.13b.pdf>)

(Paragraph continues)

What is Maryan's policy proposal all about and could it be reintroduced?

(Paragraph continues)

Critically evaluating the processes of social inquiry including making suggestions for improvement

	Positives and negatives 10	Improvements 11
Primary information	<p>Surveys were not biased. I just wanted to see what people thought so the questions were open.</p> <p>The interviews weren't biased either as I just wanted to see what people thought.</p> <p>When conducting the surveys I asked people if I could use their name and I had a blurb at the top so people knew what it was about.</p> <p>I conducted the interviews via telephone and asked if I could record them and use the people's names.</p>	<p>I think I needed to do more surveys from a wider range of people. The surveys were fairly limited and even though I put it on line and did some in school I needed to have a wider range of opinions from the community. I would have made my findings more accurate.</p> <p>The year 9's didn't fill in the survey accurately and I think I needed to talk with them more about euthanasia rather than just dumping the surveys on them.</p>
Secondary information	<p>I referenced my sources of information for the most part and checked the accuracy of the statistics against other sites. Some of the sites were pro euthanasia so I had to check the information so that I knew it was Ok to use and was unbiased.</p> <p>(Paragraph continues)</p>	<p>I missed some referencing so there was definitely some plagiarism. I need to make sure I am accurate with my referencing and acknowledgements.</p> <p>(Paragraph continues)</p>

Reflecting on and evaluating the findings 9

Accuracy	The findings were accurate I think. I got a lot of what people think and therefore it is accurate as they said it. Some of the statistics were similar on different sites so they must have been accurate. The information from the internet was dated recently so it implies it is up to date and accurate
Relevance	The information collected was relevant and related to my focus well. I actually used only a few secondary sites and got a lot of information from the voluntary euthanasia society of NZ I joined. I did some surveys and they helped make my information more relevant as I got first-hand information.
Sufficiency	I collected a few surveys. They weren't really enough though. The secondary information was sufficient. There was plenty of information from NZ and abroad.
Inclusiveness	I used a range of people to get the collected information so I feel I was inclusive.
Significance	The information I collected was important to my findings as it was able to answer the questions clearly.