

Court of the dying

Sir, It is for good reason that all polls of doctors are opposed to physician-assisted suicide: we know that such a power is not safe in our hands (letters, June 4). Protagonists want the entitlement to die when they wish; antagonists cite evidence that others begin to feel a duty to die.

Should society wish to tread this dangerous path, surely the least worst option is to keep the decisions and delivery, while based on the medical facts, with the courts alone. To administer a lethal intervention is simple and does not require a doctor;

the danger is that once we are involved it has become a treatment subject to the pressures of healthcare and economics and our own frailty. There is no way of knowing where that will lead, and the experiences of the Netherlands and Belgium are not reassuring.

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