

# Assisted dying *Times* debate in Guernsey

Sir, Rabbi Jonathan Romain notes the debate taking place in Guernsey ("Guernsey's plan to allow assisted dying should apply to all", *Thunderer*, Apr 4) and correctly points out that we envisage any law change would only permit assisted dying for our own residents. Our debate was not intended to prompt discussions in the UK, but is simply the latest in a number of pioneering steps that Guernsey has taken before the rest of the British isles.

Just as our previous decisions to permit voting at 16 and ban smoking in our prison, these are decisions that are right in principle but, crucially, are also for the benefit of our community. Our debate will be looking to examine the robust evidence from overseas that assisted dying works well in other jurisdictions, but also listening to our own residents, whose experiences of loved ones' deaths demonstrate why we need to permit greater choice at the end of life.

Rabbi Romain is correct to recognise this choice as a right, which

the Supreme Court of Canada recognised in 2015. It is inevitable that other jurisdictions will in their own time reach a similar conclusion by either a judicial or legislative route.

GAVIN ST PIER

Chief minister, Guernsey