



Truth about dying

Sir, A fundamental problem with Nick Boles's demand for "assisted dying" is that it assumes an ideal world where all dying people know for certain whether they do or do not want to hasten their deaths, where all doctors are willing and able to assess such requests impartially, and where all families are "loved ones" ("My father had a good death. He was lucky", Times2, June 5).

The real world of dying is rather different. A terminal prognosis is a shattering experience for most people, as they struggle to come to terms with their mortality. In the real world the doctors who treat us often know little about us beyond what they may pick up in the consulting room or hospital ward. Most families are indeed loving and care about their sick relatives — but some are not. Most "elder abuse" takes place within families. We have criminal laws not because most of us behave decently but because some of us don't. It is these hard realities that parliament has to consider — and it has already done that. In 2015 MPs debated, at length, Rob Marris's private member's bill on assisted dying, and a decisive majority rejected it.

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