

Assisted dying and end-of-life care

Sir, I am not persuaded by Daniel Finkelstein's view ("We don't have to live with this way of dying", Comment, Jun 24), although I have great sympathy for Ian Douglas and his family. I am approaching my 60th birthday, and I too am severely affected by multiple sclerosis. The autonomy I still possess is dependent on voice recognition software, an electric wheelchair and the support of my family. I learnt long ago to be comfortable with not being in control.

Assisted dying is an argument advanced by people whose lives have been shaped by their own endeavours. It is the opposite of the life experiences of the most vulnerable.

It is a bitter irony that as protest movements galvanise public opinion to combat discrimination and protect the sanctity of life in one domain, the mute voices of the most exposed are at risk of being overwhelmed.

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Sir, Daniel Finkelstein is right in my view that the time for a frank discussion about assisted dying without legal penalties is long overdue. In celebrating the continued extension of life, society should also address its quality.

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