The case for neutrality on assisted dying — a personal view

Dr Gerada’s article provoked an almost unprecedented mailbag at the BJGP, and many other responses have been posted on our discussion forum.

Roger Jones, Editor

I thought that the article Clare Gerada wrote for the BJGP was beautifully written and perfectly expressed.1 My mother (Ann McPherson) was a GP who felt strongly through her career that she could not do enough for patients who had a terrible time while they were dying. Unfortunately her death from pancreatic cancer, despite optimal palliative care, was prolonged and unpleasant. It is a difficult issue and one that provokes strong emotions but overall this should now be a question about individual choice. I was so pleased to read such a balanced view about the need for neutrality.

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Quoting bad cases as done in this article, is not conducive to producing good law.

Dr Gerada retires with well-earned credit from a time of challenge and difficult leadership. I deeply regret that she should as a final act, use her position to sway opinion in our College in a particular direction.

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