

Islanders urged to join assisted dying campaign

Tanya Tupper, whose mother Roberta plans to travel to Switzerland to end her life after being diagnosed with terminal stage-four lung cancer, is trying to galvanise support to ensure that any future States proposition to legalise assisted dying has a high chance of success.

"We'd like people who have got a story to tell in terms of the case for legalising assisted dying to come forward," said Tanya. "It may be that they have cared for someone who was seriously ill and they can see the need for a change in the law in Jersey."

Tanya, who earlier this summer launched a petition on the Assisted Dying in Jersey CI Facebook page to gauge public support for the issue, added: "We'd also really appreciate it if more people can sign the petition on our Facebook page. And if they would like to get more involved in supporting our campaign, including participating in future events aimed at raising awareness about assisted dying, they can email me."

Last month Tanya organised a roundtable debate involving about 30 people, including politicians, a church verger and assisted dying campaigners from Guernsey, to encourage public discussion on the matter with a view to changing opponents' minds.

"We intend to run further events to raise awareness of the need for a change in the law to legalise assisted dying in Jersey, including film showings on the subject and more public debates about the law in Jersey," said Tanya.

Assisted dying - the term used to describe helping someone to die who is terminally ill and wants to die is currently forbidden throughout the British Isles. It is different to both euthanasia - where the physician administers the lethal dose - and assisted suicide, which describes helping someone to die who is not terminally ill.

"I would also like to encourage people to speak to their politicians, doctors and clergy to put the case for assisted dying in Jersey to them, and encourage them to enter the debate," she added.

"This is important because there has been great opposition shown by these groups of people. However, from my research I have seen that with increased awareness [opinion] can change."

Anyone who would like to actively participate in Tanya's campaign can email her at assisteddyinginjerseyci@gmail.com