

## Seniors Want End of Life Choices

Long-term Territorians may recall that in 1995 the NT Parliament passed the Rights of the Terminally Ill Act 1995 (NT), which legalised euthanasia in the Northern Territory of Australia. Opposition to the Act led by Kevin Andrews, a member of the Federal Liberal government, resulted in the law being nullified in March 1997 by the federal parliament. It passed the Euthanasia Laws Act 1997, which rendered the Act of no legal effect.

COTA NT has surveyed Territory seniors twice on this important topic. Both times, the response has been that seniors want assisted dying legislation, especially for the terminally ill, to be introduced in the Northern Territory. This was also part of COTA NT's 2020 election submission, which was sent to the current Territory government, who advised that they would "review it." Neither the Territory Alliance nor the CLP has answered COTA NT or intimated their stance on this important issue for all Territorians.

"It is not a comfortable subject for a lot of people, and can become very emotive," says COTA NT CEO, Sue Shearer. "However, it is about choice and dignity for any person who chooses to end their life. We realise that palliative care plays an important role in the end of life, but the choice to say goodbye and make decisions for yourself is an important one. If that choice is a decision to end life, why should this choice be taken away from the individual?"

"It should come down to personal choice for Territorians. We urge the current and future governments to think hard on this issue and give the choice back to Territorians."

####

### Media contact:

Sue Shearer, CEO, COTA NT  
08 8941 1004

### Further Information:

- **Survey 2018 Snapshot of Results**  
<https://www.cotant.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/COTANT2018SeniorsSurveySnapshot.pdf> - 78% of those surveyed were in support of Assisted Dying
- **COTA NT Election 2020 Submission**  
<https://www.cotant.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/COTA-NT-Bidding-for-Senior-Territorians-2020.pdf>

**COTA Northern Territory is the peak advocacy and representation organisation for senior Territorians advocating for and working towards an age-friendly, just, inclusive and equitable society since 1969**

COTA NT Inc  
GPO Box 852  
Darwin NT 0801

65 Smith Street  
Darwin NT 0800  
ABN 86 316 991 800

P: (08) 8941 1004  
E: [admin@cotant.org.au](mailto:admin@cotant.org.au)  
[www.cotant.org.au](http://www.cotant.org.au)



Seniors Card  
Freecall: 1800 441 489  
E: [seniorscard@cotant.org.au](mailto:seniorscard@cotant.org.au)  
[www.ntsensorscard.org.au](http://www.ntsensorscard.org.au)