

# U.K. MPs approve Assisted Dying bill

The bill would allow terminally ill adults over age 18 in England and Wales, who are deemed to have less than six months to live, to apply for an assisted death.

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Dignity in Dying campaigners celebrate after the Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill was passed in the House of Commons, in London, Friday, June 20, 2025. | Photo Credit: AP

The U.K. House of Commons narrowly (314 to 291) passed a bill to allow terminally-ill people in England and Wales to end their lives. The legislation, which is likely to become law, will now head to the House of Lords for consideration.

The Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill, colloquially known as the Assisted Dying bill, will only apply to people in England and Wales who have less than six months to live. A patient choosing to die would need to be of competent mind and two doctors, a psychiatrist, senior lawyer and social worker would need to sign off on their decision. Several other jurisdictions such as some States in the U.S., Switzerland, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and Belgium already have laws permitting assisted dying.

The benches in the House of Commons were unusually full on Friday afternoon as the contentious bill passed. MPs were permitted a 'free vote', i.e., they were not bound by party lines.

Kim Leadbeater, the MP who sponsored the bill, told the House that it was not about a choice about living and dying but "it is a choice for terminally ill people about how they die".

U.K Prime Minister Keir Starmer supported the bill while Kemi Badenoch, the Conservative Party leader who heads the Opposition, voted against it.

An emotional Dave Sowry, whose terminally ill wife had ended her life with the help of Dignitas, a Swiss assisted-dying non-profit organisation, heaved a sigh of relief as he heard the bill had passed during a televised interview with the *BBC*. Thirty seven Britons had travelled to Dignitas to end their lives in 2024 as per data from the organisation.

"I feel like I've been holding my breath for six months... since the second reading [ of the bill ]," Mr Sowry said.

Several MPs reacted to the vote on social media.





Pro and anti-assisted dying campaigners protest ahead of a parliamentary decision later today, on June 20, 2025 in London, England. MPs vote on the third and final hearing of the Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill which, if passed, will legalise assisted dying. | Photo Credit: Getty Images

One Labour MP, Vicky Foxcroft, said she was not opposed to the principle of assisted dying but would not support the bill until “the vast majority of disabled people” backed it.

“Let’s fix our NHS [National Health Service], social care and wider society first, and then consider this topic again when the time is right,” she said.

Those opposed to the bill had highlighted the risk that people with disabilities who felt like a burden would feel pressure to end their lives. Critics also pointed to the costs the bill would generate for an already-overburdened NHS.

India-born Labour MP from Wales, Kanishka Narayan, voted against the bill, concerned that the current legislation would result in too many would make a misinformed or coerced choice to die.

MP and former Conservative Minister Tom Tugendhat said the vote was “wrapped in euphemisms and coddled in warm words that mask a dark truth”.

“This is assisted suicide,” he said, using the phrase used by critics of the legislation.

Religious leaders also weighed in on the subject. The Bishop of London, Sarah Mullaly, who is part of the Church of England and a former nurse, saying the bill posed “a risk to the most vulnerable”.

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