

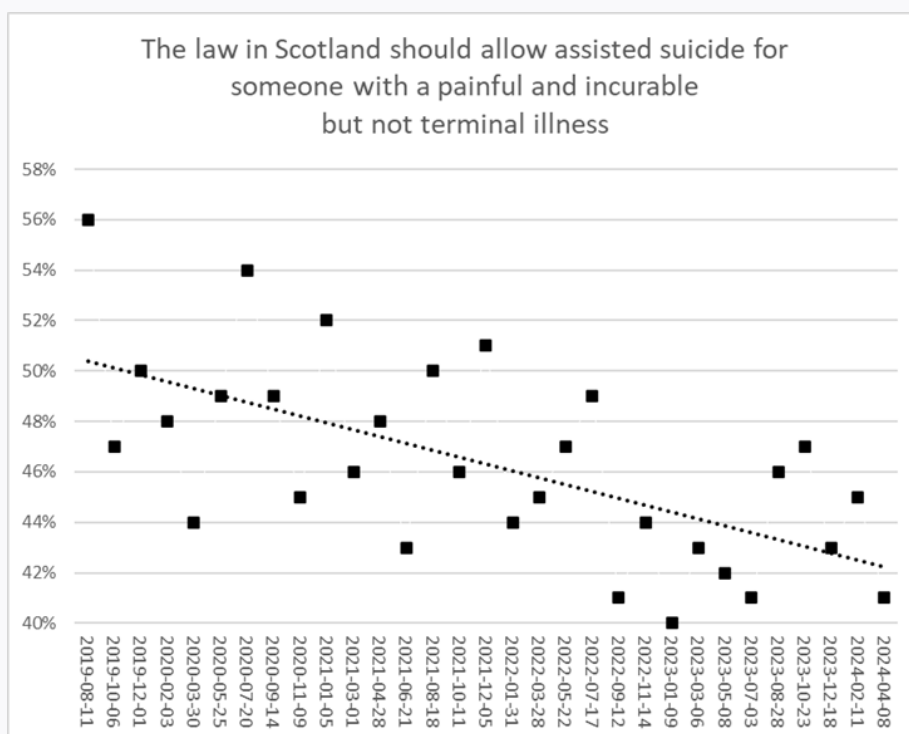


Support for Assisted Suicide Ebbs Away in Scotland

The *Journal of Medical Ethics Forum* has [posted an article](#) by Prof. David Albert Jones, Director of the Anscombe Bioethics Centre, showing that support for assisted suicide in Scotland has declined significantly.

Three polls conducted by the pro-assisted suicide group Dignity in Dying Scotland found that the number of Scots who “strongly supported” legalising assisted dying fell from 55% in 2019, to 45% in 2023, and to 40% in 2024.

A similar pattern was seen in a YouGov bimonthly trackers which asked the same question 31 times over five years: [“Do you think the law should or should not be changed to allow someone to assist in the suicide of someone suffering from a painful, incurable but NOT terminal illness?”](#) By April 2024 agreement had decreased to 41%.



People might imagine that Liam McArthur’s Assisted Dying for Terminally Ill Adults (Scotland) Bill would apply only to people with a terminal illness, but in fact the Bill makes [no reference to being close to death](#). It would cover anyone with an advanced progressive condition that would be expected to shorten life if not treated. This would include long term chronic diseases like diabetes. Many people would not think of these as terminal illnesses.

[Another opinion poll in March 2024](#) found that only 47% of Scots wanted their MP to vote to change the law. That figure dropped to 26% among Asian and 16% among Black cohorts. Other surveys demonstrate that [when the Scottish public were asked about their top concerns](#), assisted suicide or assisted dying did not register. It is simply not a priority for voters.

While many say that, on the whole, they tend to support “assisted dying”, much fewer strongly support a change in the law. Analysis of polling data shows that support for Bills like that presented by Liam McArthur is slipping away.

END

Notes to Editors:

- Any part of the above can be quoted as coming from our Director, Professor David Albert Jones.
- If the issues discussed here affect you or someone close to you, you can call Samaritans on **116 123** (UK and ROI), visit their website or contact them on: jo@samaritans.org
- If you are reporting or writing about a case of death by suicide, whether assisted or non-assisted, please consult the [Samaritans’ media guidelines](#) on how to do so responsibly.
- For more background information on this issue, see [this brief explainer on Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide](#).
- To read some of the submissions made by the Anscombe Bioethics Centre’s staff to public inquiries and consultations on assisted suicide and euthanasia, see the [Reports and Submissions](#) on our website.
- For more information on the Anscombe Bioethics Centre, see our website: www.bioethics.org.uk
- For interviews or comment, contact: media@bioethics.org.uk