



Media Release

Peaceful (suicide) Pill NZ selection begins

12th December 2004

The selection of elderly New Zealand participants for the Peaceful Pill manufacturing workshop is to take place in Auckland and Wellington this week.

The Director of EXIT International Dr Philip Nitschke is in New Zealand for the selection and noted that interest from New Zealand had been high. He said elderly people were keen to participate as they could see little hope for voluntary euthanasia legislation.

“The NZ selection is the first to take place overseas”, Dr Nitschke said, “and those selected will travel to an Australian rural location for a long weekend in early 2005 where over a 3 day period they will each make their own “Peaceful Pill”.

In Australia over 100 elderly people have indicated their interest in attending. They must be Exit members and have already attended preparatory Workshops where important aspects of the law as it relates to assisted suicide, palliative care and psychiatric illness are discussed. Exit workshops will run in NZ this week.

“Many people leave these workshops wanting more” Dr Nitschke said, “they want access to the best drugs, and the only option available is for them to make the drugs themselves... that is why the manufacturing workshop program was developed”.

It is anticipated that about 30 people will participate in the first manufacturing workshop. A laboratory will be set up for the sole purpose of manufacturing 10g of barbiturate based “Peaceful Pill” for each participant. There will be no excess, only those attending will obtain the pill and at the conclusion of the weekend the laboratory equipment will be disposed of. Other manufacturing workshops, including one located in NZ, and based on the experiences of the first group are scheduled to take place throughout 2005.

Dr Nitschke will also be at the gates of Arohata Prison to welcome his friend and voluntary euthanasia campaigner Lesley Martin at the completion of her jail sentence.

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