

Correspondence between Noela Cerutti and Dr Philip Nitschke

10/5/2008: IN - - From: ncerutti@optusnet.com.au - To:ExitInternational

Subject: Assisted Suicide

I am truly horrified at the information you make so freely available on your internet and also in Nitschke published books especially "Killing me Softly". A dear friend of mine and her family are now in terrible emotional pain due to their sister who was suffering from depression following Nitschke's instructions to go to Mexico and purchase Nebutol to "euthanase" herself. This was the word she used in her note to her family - that she "euthanased" herself - she was somehow able to glamourise suicide based on Nitschke's book.

Erin has 4 children all under 9 years living back in Western Australia. She has a mother and 3 sisters, 2 of which are currently in Tijuana trying to deal with the fact that Erin is now in a coma because Nitschke's process obviously didn't work.

Erin was found in her hotel room purple and with strained breathing. She was taken to the Tijuana General Hospital which in relation to western hospitals is a flea hole!! Do you know that Mexico is a Catholic based society and that it is against their law to turn off any machines even if there is no brain stem function. Does Nitschke let people know that in his book!!!

How dare you and Nitschke not clearly state that it is not right for people with mental illness to use these euthanasia options to end their lives - how irresponsible of you. I am a believer in euthanasia and it being a personal decision for those people who have terminal illness but I am fervently opposed to the euthanasia methods getting into the wrong hand. Erin had quoted that in his book Nitschke said that "troubled teens should be able to kill themselves" to end their suffering - because we are in Mexico we haven't been able to access the book to validate this but my issue is if Erin could read his book and then get this impression then it is as good as him actually writing it.

You have a massive responsibility to ensure your message gets to the right people and is not reinterpreted by people who are sad, isolated, or mentally ill. I wish you would take this responsibility seriously.

This family is now dealing with the financial and emotional costs of keeping Erin alive. They have had to transfer her from the General Hospital as it is currently in lock down due to the ongoing drug war in Tijuana. Also there was a concern for her survival at this hospital as there was concern around the hygiene and medical treatment. So now Erin is in a private hospital at a cost of \$4,000 US per day. If she starts to recover a medical evacuation to Australia will cost around \$150,000 US. This family is not affluent and will have to go into financial debt to cover these costs. You should be ashamed of yourselves and for your very public communications re killing yourself.

Nitschke obviously sees himself as a hero to the terminally ill but I now see him as a very dangerous man who is not clearly getting his message out to the public which I believe makes him an accomplice to murder. I am ashamed that he is Australian and I am very sad that this family is going through such trauma and heartache!

Noela Cerutti
Currently in Tijuana Mexico for an undefined period.

11/5/08: **OUT**

Dear Ms Cerutti,

Thank you for contacting us with the details of the unfortunate situation in Mexico

I am sorry to hear of the tragic details you describe.

You may not be aware that we had some contact with Erin and advised her that there was no information we could provide and that our organisation was not appropriate for her issues.

The book you refer to is published in Australia by Penguin and freely available and details the philosophy behind the voluntary euthanasia issue. It is used as a reference text in some school courses and is in no way a "how to" guide.

The "troubled teens" quote was used in the book to describe how statements can be misreported and misused in the intensely political climate that surrounds this issue.

We trust that there will be some peaceful resolution to Erin's situation.

Kind regards,

Philip Nitschke

Director Exit International