

Dutch gov't to extend euthanasia option to children aged 1 to 12

Dutch Health Minister Ernst Kuipers Friday announced that regulations were being drafted so that euthanasia can be applied to that small group of children aged 1 to 12 “for whom palliative care options are not sufficient to alleviate their suffering” and who has “such a serious illness or disorder that death is inevitable.”

The rule change requires the government to modify an existing protocol, without the need for parliamentary approval.

In a letter to the Dutch Parliament, Kuipers insisted that assisted dying will be possible “when it is the only reasonable alternative for a doctor to end the desperate and unbearable suffering of the child.”

“This is a very complex subject that deals with harrowing situations that you would not wish on anyone,” Kuipers said. “I am pleased that after intensive consultation with all parties involved, we have come to a solution with which we can help these terminally-ill children, their parents, and also their practitioners,” he added.

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