

**Friday 12 March 2010**

**If Assisted Suicide were legalized: how should health care professionals be involved?**

**Witnesses: Professor Ilora Finlay Professor Sheila McLean and Mr John Paley**

**Panelists: Natasha Cooper, Jean Gaffin, Ian Taylor MP**

This is intended to be a stimulating and engaging public debate examining the moral issues behind a subject that touches on all of our professional lives.

The discussion format will be based on that of the 'Moral Maze' - a popular programme on Radio 4 in the UK - whereby a panel of three people who are not palliative care specialists, ask questions of three expert witnesses, each of whom has an extensive understanding of the subject of assisted suicide and its implications for individuals, society and healthcare professionals were it to be legalised.

Each expert witness will be asked questions separately by panel members. The panel will then discuss their opinions of the lines of reasoning put forward by the witnesses, summarising key arguments and points that have been made that have had an impact on their views.

There will not be a formal vote on the subject, but time is allocated at the end specifically for members of the audience to put questions directly to the witnesses and panel members.

**Professor Sheila A.M. McLean LL.B., M.Litt., Ph.D., LL.D. (Edin), LL.D. (Abertay, Dundee), F.R.S.E., F.R.C.G.P., F.Med.Sci, FIBiol, F.R.C.P.E. (Edin), F.R.S.A.**

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Professor McLean is the first holder of the International Bar Association Chair of Law and Ethics in Medicine at Glasgow University and is Director of the Institute of Law and Ethics in Medicine at Glasgow University and co-director of the Centre for Applied Ethics and Legal Philosophy. She has acted as a consultant to the World Health Organisation, the Council of Europe, and a number of individual states. She has acted as an expert reviewer for many of the major grant awarding bodies and similar organisations outwith the United Kingdom. She has published extensively in the area of medical law, is on the Editorial Board of a number of national and international Journals and is regularly consulted by the media on matters of medical law and ethics. In 2005 she was awarded the first ever Lifetime Achievement Award at the Scottish Legal Awards. Her most recent book, *Assisted Dying: Reflections on the Need for Law Reform* was awarded the Minty Prize of the Royal Society of Authors and the Royal Society of Medicine in 2008.

**John Paley** has a degree in philosophy from Cambridge, but pursued a career as a jobbing researcher until the 1990s, when he reverted to being a philosopher. Since then he has written on a number of philosophical topics in health care, especially nursing. His current interests include clinical cognition, complexity theory, philosophy of qualitative research methods, narrative, spirituality in health care, and nursing ethics. However, in real life he plays bass in an old codgers' rock band.