



Department of Health & Social Care

*From Baroness Merron
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for
Women's Health and Mental Health*

39 Victoria Street
London
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22 January 2026

Dear Lord Carlile,

Thank you for your query on day 6 of Committee Stage for the Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill. This letter confirms the Government's response to the question you raised.

During the debate you asked for clarification on whether, if an amendment is passed on Report, the Government will provide assistance (similar to that available to the Bill Sponsor) to ensure the passed amendment is workable in the context of the Bill and other law.

The Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill is a Private Members' Bill and not a piece of government legislation. As you know, the Government remains neutral on this Bill, and it is for the Sponsors of the Bill and Parliament to decide the policy intent and content of the Bill.

The Government has a duty of care to the statute book and a responsibility to ensure any legislation that passes through Parliament is workable, effective and enforceable. To that end, we have been working with the Sponsors of the Bill on amendments to ensure operational workability were the Bill to pass. This is standard practice for a Private Members' Bill.

As you are aware, the Government will not provide drafting assistance to Peers prior to amendments being voted into the Bill.

The Sponsors' responsibility for the Bill includes policy content and engagement with Peers on their tabled amendments. It is not the role of Government, in relation to this Bill, to provide technical drafting support or policy advice on amendments tabled by Peers.

However, as I set out during the debate on Friday, should an amendment be voted into the Bill and the Government has legal, technical or operational workability concerns, Government would work to address these workability concerns, potentially through advice on further amendments. The Sponsor would, of course, continue to hold the lead responsibility for the Bill and its policy content.

I hope this letter has provided clarification on your question. I have copied this letter to all Peers who tabled amendments and/or spoke during the debate and will place a copy of this letter in the library of the House.

All good wishes,

Gillian

BARONESS MERRON