

## Doctors for dying 'focused on care'

THE Palliative Care Association has countered euthanasia campaigner Philip Nitschke's assertion that doctors toy with the law when they proscribe large doses of painkillers to terminally ill patients and speed up death.

Instead, the association said, medical professionals were anxious not to hasten nature's course and their main concern was to provide good care.

West Australian Health Minister Kim Hames has admitted that, as a GP, he gave a cancer patient in the final stages of life a painkiller that caused the patient to die possibly half an hour earlier than otherwise would have occurred.

Dr Nitschke said doctors knew this could happen, but as long as they maintained that their intention was to ease suffering rather than to deliberately kill, it was legal and they could continue ending lives without it being regarded as euthanasia.

Palliative Care WA executive director Will Hallahan said yesterday there was nothing untoward or controversial about doctors preventing pain.

"In my experience, the bulk of doctors involved are anxious not to hasten nature's course," Mr

Hallahan said. "Nonetheless, their principal intention is to provide good palliative care, which means people need to be free from pain.

"And they're not afraid to prescribe medications which will achieve that, even if they know the secondary effects might be to hasten a person's death. But on the whole they're quite anxious to avoid that situation."

Mr Hallahan said he had only ever heard of one or two complaints against doctors by families of the deceased in these cases.

Australian Medical Association WA president Dave Mountain said the vast majority of people understood doctors were trying to do the right thing by their loved one.

"It's a frank and proper discussion and people understand intentions and benefits," he said.

A euthanasia bill brought by West Australian Greens MP Robin Chapple was defeated in the state's Legislative Council on Wednesday night.

Mr Chapple said he would introduce another bill if re-elected at the next election.

NICOLAS PERPITCH

## Cop 'prompted talk of jihad'

AN undercover policeman encouraged a man allegedly involved in a conspiracy to attack the Holsworthy army base to talk about jihad, suggested he go to Sydney to flee assault charges in Melbourne and texted him the location of the army base, the man's lawyer has told a court.

The undercover officer denied each of the claims in the Victorian Supreme Court yesterday. He said he wanted his target, Wissam Fattal, to believe he was "like-minded".

He agreed with barrister Patrick Tehan, for Mr Fattal, that he had told Mr Fattal he wanted to go overseas to fight for Islam and told him he would like to kill Australian soldiers. He said he did this to gain insights into Mr Fattal's character.

The officer agreed that at no stage in their discussions did Mr Fattal say that if he were unable to go overseas to fight for Islam he would commit an act of

encourage Mr Fattal to go to Sydney to escape an assault charge, did not give a secret phone number to keep in contact, and did not send him a text message from a public phone giving the army base's location.

When Mr Tehan suggested the officer got Mr Fattal to the army base on the pretext that he would find work nearby, the officer replied "No".

The officer, giving evidence by video link, agreed he might have offered Mr Fattal a car so he could go "possibly to Sydney if he needed it".

Mr Fattal, 34, of Melbourne; Nayef El Sayed, 26, of Glenroy; Saney Edow Aweys, 27, of Carlton North; Yacqub Khayre, 23, of Meadow Heights; and Abdirahmin Mohamad Ahmed, 26, of Preston have all pleaded not guilty to conspiring to do acts in preparation for, or planning, a terrorist act.

They were arrested on August

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