

David Tennant's terminally ill father launches passionate campaign for the right to die

David Tennant's father, the Very Reverend Sandy McDonald, has come out in support of giving people at the end of their lives more agency over how they die. "What I do want is the right to a peaceful end to my life," he said.

McDonald called for "assistance towards a peaceful death" to be taken into account for terminally ill patients such as himself.

"I have pulmonary fibrosis. It just gets worse, there is no cure. I have had to address it and decide what to do," he said.

Pulmonary fibrosis is a rare and devastating lung condition, and McDonald, 77, lives in a retirement flat in Paisley.

"I have an advance directive which says 'do not resuscitate'. I do not want to be fed by something in my stomach," McDonald added. "What I do want is the right to a peaceful end to my life."

McDonald was praised by his son at the National Television Awards. While on stage accepting the Special Recognition Award, Tennant said: "I would like to dedicate this to my dad. He's an inspiration and a role model. Thanks, Sandy."

Talking about the language used around the right to die or assisted suicide, McDonald argued that it's vital that it's made to sound less threatening. "I think we have the wrong slant, the wrong emphasis," he said. "The phrase - assisted suicide - has criminal overtones in the minds of many people.

"We need to take seriously the provision of a peaceful end of life for all those who need and want it. Of course there would have to be safeguards and that should be discussed."

McDonald was a Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. The church opposes assisted dying.

"We have got so many people in our nursing homes, in our care homes and our bed-blocked hospitals, whether elderly or seriously ill, who are saying 'it's time for me to die,'" McDonald said.

"I sympathise hugely with them. The doctors and nurses have their hands tied because they are liable to end up in court. I believe it is only just that the Church come together and discuss this."

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/david-tennants-terminally-ill-father-launches-passionate-campaign-for-the-right-to-die-10077956.html>