UNIVERSITY CLIENT:

ARGUMENTATION ABOUT EUTHANASIA

Topic: **Do you agree or disagree with euthanasia or mercy killing?**

Euthanasia is the deliberate advancement of a person's death for the benefit of that person. In most cases euthanasia is carried out because the person asks to die, but there are cases where a person can't make such a request. A person who undergoes euthanasia is usually terminally ill. Euthanasia can be carried out either by doing something, such as administering a lethal injection, or by not doing something necessary to keep the person alive (for example failing to keep their feeding tube going).

A right is a moral claim and we do not have a claim on death, rather, death has a claim on us. Some see the "right to die" as parallel to the "right to life." In fact, however, they are opposite. The "right to life" is based on the fact that life is a gift that we do not possess as a piece of property (which we can purchase or sell or give away or destroy at will), but rather is an inviolable right. It cannot be taken away by another or by the person him/herself. On the other hand, the "right to die" is based, rather, on the idea of life as a "thing we possess" and may discard when it no longer meets our satisfaction. The "Right to die" philosophy says there is such a thing as a "life not worth living." For a Christian, however, life is worthy in and of itself, and not because it meets certain criteria that others or we might set.

Affirmative side: Yes, I agree with the issue about euthanasia or mercy killing because it frees up hospital beds and resources. Long term palliative care for the terminally ill is a huge and ultimately wasteful drain on medical resources. Why waste these precious resources on someone who has expressed a desire to die, when they could be improving the life of someone who wants to live?

Negative side: No. I disagree with that issue, it’s not just because beds in hospitals are needed by others is no reason to allow a person to die! Some can be cared for at home, or in special hospices. If we stopped caring for the terminally ill at all where would we draw the line? Is treating the elderly also a waste of resources because they are nearing the end of their lives anyway? I think that to describe palliative care as a "huge and ultimately wasteful drain on medical resources" is rather harsh! I’m not sure that families of the terminally ill would agree with you there.

Affirmative side: Definitely yes, I agree with that because it relieves suffering. If a terminal patient faces a long, slow, painful death, surely it is much kinder to spare them this kind of suffering and allow them to end their life comfortably. Pain medications used to alleviate symptoms often have unpleasant side effects or may leave the patient in a state of sedation. It is not as if they are really ‘living’ during this time, they are merely waiting to die. They should have the right to avoid this kind of torturous existence and be allowed to die in a humane way.

Negative side: I disagree with that issue because suffering is part of the human condition and part of life's experience. Also medication can be improved to help a person's quality of life and make their deaths as humane as possible. Furthermore, even if a person is in a state of sedation they still biologically exist and still have what some would say an obligation to live their life until its natural conclusion.

Affirmative side: Yes, I agree with this issue because relatives spared the agony of watching their loved ones deteriorate beyond recognition. Families of individuals suffering with such diseases see their bright, happy relative reduced to a shadow of their former self. Their loved one suffers a slow and painful death. Surely, it is kinder to put a mother, father, brother or sister out of their misery and allow them to die a peaceful death, as is their last wish.

Negative side: No, because even if their relatives may be suffering from watching their loved one's condition deteriorate, they have no right to either decide or put pressure on a person to end their own life because of their own suffering. Just as it may be the individual's right to die it is also the right of the individuals to "rage against the dying of the light" with their support of their family so to speak. While it may be an 'agony to watch a loved one deteriorate' many will also want to spend as long as possible with their loved ones, and more than likely a family will be split on the matter meaning that the views of the family would have to have no impact on the matter.

Affirmative side: Yes I agree with this because it may reduce the spread of diseases. When a person is sick, there a chance that a contagious agent exists within the host. The longer the duration that the individual is kept alive, it may increase the risk of others being affected by the disease if the individual is not handled properly.

Negative side: No, because this will consider that euthanasia, the equivalent of murder, which is against the law everywhere in civilized society. So, we should maintain the respect for human life in a secular pluralistic society.