10. Dying and Death

This chapter examines the legal and ethical aspects of death. It begins with a discussion of the difficulty of the choosing a definition of ‘death’. It then sets out the law on a range of ‘end-of-life issues’, including euthanasia, assisted suicide, and refusal of medical treatment. It considers some particularly complex cases in which the law is not always easy to apply. These include the administration of pain-relieving drugs, the treatment of severely disabled newborn children, and the position of patients suffering from PVS. Next, the chapter considers the ethical debates surrounding euthanasia, assisted suicide, and terminating treatment. This is followed by a discussion of palliative care and hospices.

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