

MIGRATION AMENDMENT (REPAIRING MEDICAL TRANSFERS) BILL 2019

We strongly **disagree with the proposal to repeal the Medevac legislation** to be debated in the Senate in October.

Through the Manus Lives Matter campaign two Canberra residents, Mr Tim McKenna and Sister Jane Keogh, have been providing support to asylum seekers on Manus Island on a regular basis for several years. They have first-hand knowledge of the conditions under which these men are living. They report a serious and ongoing decline in both the physical and mental health of many of the men. Medical support is limited, and often inappropriate.

Under the new approval method for medical transfer, comprehensive safeguards ensure that only those who meet stringent criteria would be transferred: the legislation currently in force only applies to people already incarcerated on Manus or Nauru; recommendation by two doctors, rather than public servants, is required; Minister Dutton retains the power of veto.

There is no evidence to suggest that Australia's borders have been compromised since the medical evacuation of some 135 men since October last year, as intimated by Minister Dutton.

Given that there is no appetite by either of our major parties to allow any remaining asylum seekers ever to reside in Australia, there is at the very least an obligation to ensure satisfactory treatment of the health conditions induced by their incarceration for over six years.

We are ashamed to be Australian.

Angela Mawbey and Richard Summerrell