



An Bille Cróinéirí (Leasú), 2015
Coroners (Amendment) Bill 2015

Meabhrán Mínitheach
Explanatory Memorandum



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This Bill is to be known as “Jake’s Amendment”.

On the 20th March 2013, 14 year old Jake McGill Lynch, shortly after being prescribed the antidepressant Prozac, ended his own life using a firearm. Jake, who was diagnosed with Asperger’s Syndrome, was given the antidepressant drug despite research stating that the drug has no benefit for children with Asperger’s and despite the emerging evidence of harm. In the midst of their grief, Jake’s parents have come to understand that their personal tragedy is one that has been shared by thousands of families whose loved ones have died as a result of antidepressant induced suicide.

The publishing of this Bill is symbolic.

It is obvious that the Coroners Act of 1962 is no longer fit for purpose and should be repealed and replaced with an amended version of the Coroners Bill 2007 as a matter of priority. In the amended version of the 2007 Bill there should be a comprehensive list of verdicts open for a Coroner or a jury as the case may be, to return. This list should contain provision for a verdict of “Iatrogenic Suicide” to be made.

This Bill however, deals solely with the issue of Iatrogenic Suicide. It is an issue that must be highlighted. A verdict of Suicide, returned in accordance with the provisions of the Act of 1962, must be differentiated from a verdict of Iatrogenic Suicide. Iatrogenic Suicide is the ending of one’s own life where the effect of medical treatment undertaken by the deceased, including any prescribed medication, is the primary cause of such an action.

This Bill seeks to change the law to give recognition to this differentiation in relation to a verdict that can be made following an inquest undertaken under the Coroners Act 1962.

Section 1: Interpretation

Section 1 Defines the “Act of 1962” as the Coroners Act 1962

Section 2: Insertion of new section 29A

Section 2 symbolically amends the Act of 1962 by inserting a new section into the Act to provide for the possibility of a verdict of Iatrogenic Suicide. This section also defines Iatrogenic Suicide. There is also a safeguard contained in this section to ensure that a verdict of Iatrogenic Suicide does not contravene section 30 of the Act of 1962 in so far as the apportion of civil or criminal liability is concerned.

Section 3: Short title

Section 3 provides for the short title of the Act.

Pádraig Mac Lochlainn T.D.

Iúil, 2015.

