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UK TV presenter arrested over mercy killing of lover

LONDON: A veteran British broadcaster was arrested on suspicion of murder last Wednesday after admitting he smothered an ex-lover who had AIDS, highlighting intense debate over assisted suicide.

Ray Gosling, 70, made the confession in a television programme this week about assisted suicide, ahead of the publication of new government guidelines on the issue next week.

He said he killed the unnamed man as he lay seriously ill in hospital "in the early period of AIDS" - likely to be during the 1980s.

A spokeswoman for Nottinghamshire Police in central England said officers "this morning arrested a 70-year-old Nottingham man on suspicion of murder following comments on the BBC's Inside Out programme on Monday."

Gosling's confession comes amid a fierce debate in Britain about so-called mercy killings and whether people with terminal illnesses should be allowed to commit assisted suicide.

New, fuller guidelines on when prosecutions in such cases should be brought will be published on Thursday next week, the Crown Prosecution Service said Wednesday.

In the programme, Gosling told of how he had taken his lover's life after they agreed a pact.

"In a hospital one hot afternoon, the doctor said, 'There's nothing we can do, and he was in terrible, terrible pain,' he told viewers. "I said to the doctor, 'Leave me just for a bit' and he went away.

"I picked up the pillow and smothered him until he was dead." - AFP