

PE01841/S

Care Home Relatives Scotland submission of 3 March 2021

We fully support petition PE01841 calling for legislation to ensure residents are never again separated from their loved ones. The impact on residents and relatives has been devastating and we feel that it is imperative that the committee are aware of the reality of the past 12 months.

Below are experiences of some of our members in their own words.

- We are sitting with my lovely father - in - law who is at the end of his life. The care staff in the nursing home are wonderful. However, we were all called in because the staff thought the end was near. We were then confronted by a very officious manager, who in his presence went through us all and threw us out of the room. We all feel he is still aware - what an end to his life.
- I'm not allowed into see my Mum, plus not even outdoor door visits as they are 'building a more permanent solution outside' so no visits while that's happening. However, a Social worker is being allowed to go visit my Mum today as we are hoping to move her to another form of housing. All she has to do is get a lateral flow test when she arrives at the home. Surely, I should be able to see my Mum if I get the same test?
- I had my weekly 30 mins with my Dad via a window. After visit I was told one of the staff wanted to talk to me. Turns out Dad is being moved to care home this Friday (Currently in comm hospital which is run like care home) I asked if could have 5 mins to explain to him what was going to happen - he has dementia to be told that would be against the guidance. I now don't know when I will see him again - I know when he moves there will be 14 days quarantine. I know in the last few weeks he has had at least 2 visits from social workers etc from outside unit but I can't even have 5 mins with him.
- I just wanted to give a slightly different view on what the restrictions on care home visits is doing to those left outside. My Mum is in a care home and has dementia, she seems to be coping but can't understand why my Dad isn't visiting. However, the effects on my Dad have been heart-breaking. My Dad is in his 80's and has actually survived covid but he has barely been able to visit Mum as his mobility is poor, even when they were allowed to book visits my Dad couldn't always make it and as I live quite far away I often couldn't get to them due to the tier systems. When visiting due to the social distancing my Dad can't hear her as he is very hard of hearing. My Dad has become so depressed it's been almost a year since he was able to hold her hand or give her a kiss. He has carers of his own but has even talked of taking her home even though there is no way he would cope. The last time he was there I took him and brought him home and he was broken I have so rarely seen my Dad cry but his despair at not being able to hear her or hold her was absolutely heart-breaking. I am scared he is giving up and that by the time he is able to visit and actually hold her she may not remember who he is.

- My Mum's deteriorated hugely in the last few weeks and especially the last few days, her gp confirmed she is at end of life. She was in excruciating pain for hours on Friday due to spasms and is now on morphine, I visited her in her room yesterday and Friday after a test for myself, yesterday she was calm but very drowsy and confused. I have a pod visit booked today but I really feel she isn't strong enough for that yet the home say she is well enough and are not authorising an essential visit for today, they said when she woke this morning she was bright as a button. I've asked for a video call ASAP to see how she is prior to my visit but I really feel she won't manage getting up and it will too traumatic for her after being in bed and so unwell for a week.
- My Mum is so depressed and after saying multiple times that she wanted to just die (as would be her only way to get out of her 'prison'), I've decided to bring her home to live with my family and I, maybe for a few months, maybe forever (will depend on work & family impacts). Not sure how long she will be here but know this is the right thing to do for her and us.