

PE1841/DD

Morven Palmer submission of 12 March 2021

I support this petition from Natasha Hamilton for the following reasons.

My personal story is that I have a family member with profound learning and physical disabilities in a care centre. Family were with them every day until the 16 March 2020 when the Care centre took the decision to “lock down”. We were shut out of their life. They do not understand why the most significant and consistent people in their life are no longer with them. They do not understand what Covid 19 is.

I find it difficult to comprehend how care staff are able to take advantage of lessening of restrictions, socialise, mix with family etc, and we as relatives cannot be with our loved ones. We are more than aware of the vulnerability of care home residents and would never want to put them in harms way.

So, why is it not possible to have those that are nearest and dearest to residents to be considered as part of the care team. Testing, PPE etc and allow them unlimited access to their loved ones. The benefits of this would be immense in the wellbeing of residents and support to care staff. Isolation from family at any age is detrimental to anyone’s mental health.

Guidance laid out by the government is interpreted or misinterpreted by care providers as they see fit. There is too much ambiguity in guidance. There needs to be legislation to stop the disparity between care providers.

Given my family member’s experience, I believe that legally and morally I would be remiss in not supporting this petition as I believe their human rights are being compromised.