

**PE1841/OO**

Mrs Bissett submission of 15 March 2021

I am writing to support this petition to support the legislation that one designated visitor is always allowed access into Care Homes to assist with the care and wellbeing of their loved ones.

We now have PPE and lateral flow testing in place, which makes it safer for the residents, the staff and the families visiting. However, the virus was able to get into the care homes despite the family being locked out and the residents have really suffered being separated from their families.

Some are deaf or blind and for them connecting electronically was and is not possible. A window visit was possible only if your relative was on the ground floor and these were also extremely distressing for both parties. I remember going to window and seeing my relative distressed and desperately trying to get someone to help.

My family in the care home rely on me so much I deliver all the things special and personal to them, their TV magazine, their favourite cake, treats for lunch or dinner that are not on the care home menu. Special family recipes that they have been eating their whole life and bring them comfort.

My family member has a brain tumour and mobility is an issue, I would go to the home at least four times a week and just walk up and down the corridors with family member to make sure mobility was maintained. Sadly, the staff had no time to do this during lockdown and my family member was sat in a chair on the 16<sup>th</sup> March 2020 and very rarely moved since. Some residents are not able to walk unassisted so would be unable to leave the room. Care Home staff are now using lifting gear with my family member.

Sitting for so long impacts all residents wellbeing as sitting in the chair can impact a persons digestive track, and blood flow, which in turn causes more infections not to mention pressure sores. I have since been allowed in and have hired a private physiotherapist to try and see if we can reverse some of the damage and allow them at the very least the dignity of walking to the bathroom.

This needs to never happen again my family members have been denied their human rights and separated from their families in a time of great unknowns which I think increased their anxiety and fear about their own mortality. One of my family members said they did not want to live anymore.

We need Anne's Law to allow the family connection and network to continue, no matter what the circumstances, families need each other in times of hardship and fear it is not enough for the government to issue guidance to care homes it is far too vague and some care home managers through fear and lack of understanding maybe are choosing to ignore it and still keep people out. I firmly believe they should not have this much power and control over our families and be able to keep us out. This needs to be made legislation as we have failed our families over the last 12 months, and it should never be allowed to happen again. We should learn from all

the mistakes made this year and protect both the old and young currently in care home facilities but also all the future generations who may find themselves in the same situation.