

**PE1841/T**

Ms Cassidy submission of 3 March 2021

I'm supporting the breaking hearts campaign as I feel that residents in care homes have been let down by the scandalous behaviour of our government.

Our loved ones are slowly dying inside of loneliness. At this stage of their lives they should be feeling loved and cherished, sharing memories and being part of our lives. This has been cruelly stolen away from them, little by little until they feel completely alone and unloved.

I was reading a bit about prisoners and solitary confinement. Our loved ones have been treated worse than prisoners, for crimes they haven't committed. Prisoners have rights to outside time and exercise. There's also a maximum time they can spend in solitary confinement as it's not good for mental health. So where are the human rights for our frail, elderly and children that have been locked up in solitary confinement, or segregation, if you'd rather put it that way, for nearly a year. It has been proven it affects you mentally and can also cause psychosis. People who experience solitary confinement are more likely to develop anxiety, depression, suicidal thoughts and psychosis. The practice also affects physical health increasing a person's risk for a range of conditions, including fractures, weight loss, and chronic pain.

As much as no one wants to recognise this fact, the fact is that it's happening in care homes all over the UK. There NEEDS to be legislation put in place that this NEVER EVER happens again. We can NEVER get that time back with our loved ones, NEVER create those lost memories, it's the worst kind of torture you could endure on anyone, especially our old, ill and frail who are at the end of their lives. You're not saving them by locking them up and locking us out, you're slowly killing them. The cruelty is beyond belief, its barbaric.

For so many of our loved ones, it's too late. So, keeping us out didn't prevent the virus from getting in. But it's stopped us being there for their last breaths. leaving them to die alone, with no family there to tell them how loved they are. If they are getting in, it's far too late as by that time they're no longer conscious and are unaware of the love being shown to them.

There needs to be legislation as this needs to stop right here and right now. There's no second chances in life, you've got to grab it with both hands and make the most of it. To be locked in a small room 24/7, is totally unacceptable, the isolation itself is soul destroying. I, for one, NEVER, EVER thought that in this day and age I'd be banned from giving a hug or holding a hand, to see someone else, being allowed to touch or hold our loved ones is the worst torture in the world. Will we ever have that close bond again? The carers do a great job, but they're not family, they have a heavy workload, so can't spend quality time with them. Well WE can!!! We WANT to. They can't reminisce with them. WE CAN!!! And they certainly can't give them the love that WE CAN!!! It's the hardest thing ever when you have to make the decision that you're loved ones have to go into a Care Home, our only solace was that we could go most days or every day to see them, to love them, to care for them, to just be there for them, but alas that was cruelly ripped away from us.

The irony is, it would have been SO simple. Treat us as carers, and let us in. We would have been less likely to have gave them Covid, as they're OUR family. We wouldn't have put their lives at risk. But the government chose not to use common sense and locked them up for nearly a year. And yet again, guidance has been set, and care homes are still doing what they want. Some refusing closeness and touch, others giving us prison like visits, 30mins once a week. That is NOT meaningful visiting.

Humans crave human touch, it's how we're built. That cannot be changed by what the government decide, you can't switch love and feelings off and pause them for a year.

**LET US IN. PASS LEGISLATION SO THIS SCANDELOUS BEHAVIOUR NEVER EVER HAPPENS AGAIN!!!!!!**