

PE1841/UU

Clare White submission of 16 March 2021

I am the family member of a young disabled adult living in residential care.

I am writing in support of the petition that at least one designated visitor should be allowed into care homes in order to spend quality time with family and loved ones.

People need people. We are social beings and time spent in the company of those we love and cherish is essential for our wellbeing. We all need to feel the warmth and touch of someone who loves and values us. People with learning difficulties of whatever type don't understand why their friends and families no longer spend time with them and the lack is devastating and equivalent to a bereavement.

Risk can be managed and the fact that some care providers as well as medical experts have demonstrated that care homes can provide safe environments for family visits shows that more could be done to ensure that all care homes allow safe and well managed visiting provisions.

Too many care homes ignore or limit the visits that government guidance allows. That must be wrong. Family and friends can follow the same protocols as staff so why do so many care homes or supported accommodation providers resist visiting guidance.

Many care homes are for younger adults who may be at less risk so there should be guidance that recognizes and reflects their particular needs.

This is unlikely to be a one-off pandemic so proper management and guidance needs to be put in place so that in the future people in care homes or supported accommodation can continue to maintain their necessary and absolutely vital contact with their loved ones on a regular basis.

It shouldn't be regarded as a concession or an option where possible but an absolute and undisputed right.