

PE1841/V

Care Home Relatives Scotland submission of 3 March 2021

March 2021 will sadly mark a year since residents in care homes have been isolated from their nearest and dearest. Whilst at the beginning of the pandemic (March 2020) we knew this was needed until we knew what we were dealing with, we never once imagined we would hit the year mark and still be in the same situation. A year where residents in care homes never benefited from the likes of relaxations in summer 2020 or even a christmas day bubble 2020. We never imagined their human rights would be treated so differently to those living in the community.

Care Home Relatives Scotland have been working with relative groups in England, Ireland, Northern Ireland and Wales, and on March 1st 2021 we issued a joint statement calling for Governments to stop this inhumane situation and introduce legislation to ensure this will never happen again. A copy of this statement can be seen below.

We have written this statement together to assert the ethical basis of the society we all wish to live in and grow old in. We believe future generations will look back at this period of unchosen separations and disregard of human rights with horror and disbelief.

We fully support petition PE01841 and urge the Scottish Government to fully back legislation being dubbed “Annes Law” and lead the way in enshrining the rights of residents in care homes so that future generations never have to be separated in this way again.

We need to welcome back being partners in care and see the worth family members bring in support to relatives and staff.

Copy of 5 Nations United statement dated 1st March 2021

5 Countries call for compassion in care

After a year of fear, distress, and countless separations, family members from our five nations want to re-assert the larger picture of what a society should be. Over the months of the pandemic, the deepest ties of love – the things that make us glad to be alive - have been treated as unimportant. Spouses, life partners, parents and children, have been treated as inessential to each other; their wishes have not been considered, their voices have not been listened to. Residents of care homes have been shut in; those who love them have been shut out.

People living in residential and nursing homes, for whatever reason, have been treated differently to the rest of society. They have had no agency. Those they have trusted to speak for them have not been properly listened to. Their well-being has been compromised in the name of care.

This is not the society we wish to pass on to the next generation or grow old in ourselves. The test of a democracy is how it gives respect and choice to all of its members, young or old, in health or in sickness. Love is the bedrock of a good society, but for hundreds of thousands of people those bonds of love have been cruelly disregarded. As members of our individual nations and as fellow human beings, we call upon our governments and everyone with influence to assert what is inalienably right – for all our sakes.