

### **Written evidence from Anonymous (HCS0001)**

As a retired Emergency Medicine Consultant, I have faced many tough challenges. The last 18 months have undoubtedly been my worst.

My dear 93-year-old Mum died August 5<sup>th</sup>. Due to government guidance implemented by the Care Home Manager, I was not allowed to see her for 13 months and then for only 30-minute timed and escorted weekly visits until the last 5 days of her life when she could no longer speak, swallow, or recognise who I was. I sat by her side for the last 30 hours playing her favourite music, emotionally drained, sad, and angry that so many families have had to endure separation, isolation and loneliness resulting from these draconian guidelines.

Mum was disabled by Lewy Body dementia, a devastating disease which left her bed bound and totally dependent on carers. Like so many residents my mother had no understanding as to why her daughter was not visiting. Our 15 minute skype sessions were facilitated by over 25 carers, many of them strangers, all wearing masks. It made no sense that they were allowed to sit with Mum when I could not. Last summer the country opened up – I could still only see my Mum on Skype. My sister, the ‘nominated visitor’ was finally allowed weekly 15-minute visits for 2 months before the home closed again in September.

The sadness and frustration I have felt has been all consuming and at times overwhelming.

2000 care home residents die every week; most, like my Mum have spent little or no quality time with their families. The many stories have been harrowing and devastating. Families have watched their loved ones die through windows whilst a carer held their hand. It is impossible to comprehend how a caring society can allow this to happen. We have PPE, testing and vaccinations and yet Care Homes are still closing their doors.

Rights for Residents and John’s Campaign have campaigned tirelessly throughout the pandemic to ensure that every resident is allowed an essential visitor, enshrined in law. The people responsible are still not listening and should be ashamed. RIP Mum.

*22/09/2021*