

A new right to a Care Supporter

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The logo for Care Rights UK, featuring the text "Care Rights UK" in white, stacked vertically, inside a blue, irregular, cloud-like shape.

Care
Rights
UK

Your care champion

Care Rights UK: your care champion

The charity focused on defending the rights of people in care

We want people to know their rights and how to use them. We offer information, advice and support to empower people using care services, and their relatives and friends.

As a community of families and experts, we have joined forces to fight for better lives for people in care. We challenge poor care, highlight good practice and demand a better system.



Your care champion

Rights For Residents Campaign

We are campaigning for Gloria's Law.

Rights For Residents Ambassador, Ruthie Henshall, witnessed the decline of her mum, Gloria, from the care home window.

Gloria's Law would give all of us a legal right to a Care Supporter across all health and care settings.



Why?

Why?

Loss of contact with family carers:

- Impact of isolation on health and wellbeing
- Loss of family advocate, confidant, voice, eyes, ears
- People giving up on life
- People facing the end of life alone

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Grandma had not been able to leave her care home for over a year. She told me 'it's like a prison...will I be stuck in here for the rest of my life?' saying she would rather end it all instead. When the home had an outbreak, Grandma had to quarantine in her room which had a grave impact on her mental wellbeing. She became withdrawn and took to her bed, seeing no reason to get up. She said she longed for some wallpaper to look at, rather than the blank white walls.

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Mum used her mobile phone to contact me up to 30 times a day. When she rang to say she needed help or was in pain, I could only respond by telling her to use her call bell, or by ringing the staff myself... I couldn't even do the small things that she needed – making sure she had the right glasses, tissues, clean nails, putting an extra blanket when she felt cold. This was so frustrating that sometimes I felt I could cry.

“

My wife starved herself to death. Her death was due to the pandemic – but she didn't die from the virus itself. It wasn't coronavirus, or the 'frailty of old age' [as listed on her death certificate]. It was death due to a refusal to eat.

How?

How?

A new legal right to a Care Supporter

- Not about visiting
- About recognising the vital role of family carers in law
- Shifting the power imbalance in care by giving a legal right to the person

How?

A new legal right to a Care Supporter

- A legal right for a person who needs care and support
- To unrestricted in-person support
- From at least one essential Care Supporter
- A person important to them such as a relative or friend
- In private if the person chooses

How?

A duty on health and care providers

- To facilitate this contact
- Wherever the person is receiving care and support
- Regardless of how it is funded
- Monitored and enforced by the regulator

How?

Restrictions on this right

- Only to be permitted where it is necessary to protect from a known and immediate risk of harm from the care supporter (they are infectious or for safeguarding)
- Must be proportionate to that risk
- Following an individual assessment, involving the person/their representatives

How?

Alternative contact

- Where a restriction on this right is necessary and proportionate, an individual assessment must take place to agree alternative means of contact with that person
- And an alternative care supporter for private in-person contact

How?

Builds on existing legal duties

- Human Rights Act – right to autonomy, wellbeing and family life
- Care Act – wellbeing principle
- Mental Capacity Act – best interests decisions
- Equality Act – support for the Care Supporters

When?



“

I find it impossible to over state how strongly I feel about the need for this right to see people in all circumstances. Our family had two years of agony when we couldn't see our mum/grandmother for months at a time because of the lockdowns. She was deprived of the contact she craved when she most needed it, at the end of her life.

Jill, Gloria's Law pledge, April 2023

Cross-party support

- Over 60 MPs wrote to the (then) Secretary of State in May 2022 in support
- A cross-party coalition of MPs are taking this forward
- The Care Supporters Bill unanimously agreed to at first reading in the House of Commons (6 June)
- Second reading on 24 November



Get involved

- Sign our pledge:
www.carerightsuk.org/care-supporter-pledge
- Ask your care provider or charity to add their support
- Keep in touch:
www.carerightsuk.org/enews
[@CareRightsUK](https://twitter.com/CareRightsUK)
www.facebook.com/groups/RightsforResidents
team@carerightsuk.org

