

Helpline Calls Report 5 Covid Crisis

The Ongoing Damage

By Eileen Chubb ©

Since Our Last report on May 5th there have been a total of **29** new calls to our helpline, we also continue to give ongoing support to previous callers.

Of the **29** new calls from staff working in,

13 Residential Care Homes (Non Nursing)
8 Nursing Homes
7 Care Agency's

To date we have received calls from staff working in,

121 Residential Care Homes
50 Nursing Homes
30 Care Agency's

What is clear since this crisis began is the persistant damage that has been done.

The Government Policy to Place Covid 19 Patients from hospitals into care homes and not send sick residents to hospital has resulted in a catastrophic loss of trust that cannot be undone.

What holds care homes and agency's together is the core of good staff, some have more good staff than others but as long as that core of good staff exists then basic care is guaranteed. I cannot stress this point enough. I am now seeing basic care suffer as a direct result of the Covid crisis.

The Government have acted way too late and the damage from their earlier actions cannot be undone. The Government response to give money to the care industry is seen by many staff as giving money to

care providers which will never reach the staff nor those they care for.

The change in staff moral and the dynamics within care homes in particular is having a knock on effect which will change some homes forever.

Care Agency staff are affected just as severely but as they are working often in isolation in the community are less effected by team dynamics but equally impacted by staff shortages and moral.

Voices From The Front Line.

"I blew the whistle about the PPE, what happens they get some, I went on shift yesterday and saw staff taking used PPE out of the dustbin, the manager told them to spray it with disinfectant and use it again. There's a cupboard full of PPE down the hall locked, just for anyone to be shown, like the bloody CQC, just for fucking show, I give up"

"The company were never great always penny pinching on everything but there used to be a great team working here, we all got on really well, everything was about the care of people. Its not like that anymore, lots of people want to leave after this is over and it feels depressing"

"We have PPE now, but look how long we had to wait for it, it really has hit all the staff hard that even if we died it did not matter to the company"

"It feels really quite now, staff are down. Yes, we have PPE but its just so bad to think that we had to wait all that time"

"I just keep thinking of all the shifts with no PPE all the risks we took, they just expected us to get

on with it. I wake up in the night and think about it, was it worth dying for? there must be easier jobs”

“This was a lovely care home a really nice place to work, its like all resentment now, anger at what happened. Staff want to leave, and I don’t blame them”

“We have PPE now and we are supposed to be grateful for that? We waited ages, people were sick, staff got sick and all because no one would listen, Lots of times in the last week I have come on shift and found residents unwashed still in bed, that would not have happened before there would have been heads rolling if that happened but now staff just shrug and say so what”

“I feel sick in my stomach when I remember how people suffered, there was no need for it they should have been in hospital they needed proper medical care”

“Yes we have PPE now but it is being rationed, the manager told us we did not need to wear masks the other day, they said it was all over, can you believe it? the person in charge knows nothing, some staff never came back the next day”

“There is lots of poor care all the time, there are less good staff on shifts with me and I don’t know why all the shifts are up the wall. You come in and find people thirsty, soiled that is the new normal in here”

“Staff are all very quiet, no one speaks much anymore. The residents are feeling it, there’s no laughter. Everyone feels demoralized by what’s happened, we don’t believe them (the company) they don’t care about us staff, look what they did put everyone at risk because they had to fill one bloody bed”

"All that matters to them (The company) is the money they can get, people are dead because of it, are we supposed to just forget that? I am leaving so are others. We told them people will die if you bring in people with Covid "

"We have PPE but what about all the weeks we didn't have it, they put us all in here at risk. I don't want to work for people like that, its not worth caring it just gets you down"

"I went into a client and I was meant to be helping them get ready for bed, they were already in bed they said no one had come to get them up that morning, they were starving and thirsty just laying there all day waiting, I told the office, they just said oh dear I will make a note but they sounded like they could not be bothered about it at all"

"When you see people die in a bad way, it's like no one is calling an ambulance, no one is bothered this person is suffering, its all alright just accept the suffering and do nothing, is that care? How do you come back from this, when will the suffering become unacceptable again? I don't think it will. They don't care (The Company) residents have died in a really bad way, there was no need for it, You were coming to work and being asked not to care, like care could be switched off like a tap and then on when this stops"

"They bloody put someone in here with Covid from hospital and then people died, the company should never have done that, why would they do that? I don't trust them, they just did not care, how are we supposed to care when they don't, it has made the job so hard."

"Staff really are down, we have PPE yes, but look at those weeks we had nothing, and no one cared at all. This job it looks very different now, I am angry lots of staff are angry, but we don't matter we realize

that now I think, this company they don't deserve decent staff"

"Now care homes are on the news, but we were on our own when people were dying and dying in pain. Us staff we had nothing, no PPE, no support. Our lives did not matter a jot. There's easier ways to get a wage than a shit job, for a shit company who expect you to break your back doing this job, but this Covid thing has opened my eyes, I was frightened all the time, now I am angry all the time"

"Only the people, the residents keep me here, no one cares about them, no one calls an ambulance or a doctor, everything, all the rules have gone out the window, now there are no more rules"

"Someone I used to work with, a friend who was working in another care home is dead, that drives it home alright. Its hard to believe they expect you to risk your life and for what? They have plenty of money the owners, expensive cars and always on holiday, but we had no PPE and now have a small amount but that's all the staff see now"

"When you whistle-blow about what was happening in here, no PPE, not enough staff, people not cared for, big things, people lives, I realise that if ever I see anything wrong again I wont be able to say, its better to go work somewhere easy, where there is not any bad stuff to see, so you wont feel bad all the time"

"I don't trust them and that's it, if you say anything about it being bad you are the one doing it wrong for saying. Its easy if you don't care"

"People are neglected and its accepted no one is taking it in anymore, I am numb, like this horror never really happened"

“Don’t see anything bad and don’t say anything about it, don’t care, that’s it, people should never have died, it is all a mess, chaos someone should be made to answer for it”

“After all the promises that we would have PPE, we have it now but are told only one lot for the whole shift, that’s caring for people with Covid and then going into the next person who hasn’t got it, the whole thing is a sorry mess”

“Its not just the PPE, its that our lives, the resident’s lives do not matter, that is what I find hard, they all knew and they all bloody well wrote us off, just save the NHS and fuck the elderly and care staff”

“I think the Government, Matt Hancock thinks because we are care staff, we must be stupid, People have died, are dying for no reason, I have worked in care a few years and never had to whistle blow before, now I know what happens, really bad things reported but it makes no difference at all, your just ignored”

Summery

Whilst there is some improvement in some places it has come way too late and trust has been lost. What is also evident is that care providers are developing strategies to give the appearance of having stocks of adequate PPE.

The toll on staffs physical and mental health is something we have seen deteriorate in these last weeks. The government now say they are supporting staff with a contact number for the Samaritans. An alleged special service that is available to the public anyway.

We then have an announcement from Government that there is to be a clinical lead for care homes. If those homes are residential a clinical lead implies someone leading those with clinical training which is not the reality.

We have several sources telling us that this clinical lead is merely someone who can be phoned by a home for advice rather than what is needed, which is a person sited in each care home full time.

The care system has been beyond accountability for so long that Covid 19 is merely revealing the ugly truth about the wholesale privatisation of social care. Council owned homes along with small good quality providers is the way forward. Not offshore tax avoiding profiteers. Sticking more sticking plasters on the culprits is not the answer, if you need to tell a care company to be transparent, then they are unfit to be operating in the first place.

How the elderly have been judged officially expendable during Covid 19 is a damning indictment of this country. How quickly human rights were discarded by so many in power needs a full and independent inquiry.

As to whistleblowing, we have long put the case for Edna's Law, No genuine whistle-blower needs an incentive to report wrong. This Government have disgusted the staff of an entire industry and continue to insult them with green badges and other misguided afterthoughts in recent weeks.

My video message on whistleblowing and Covid 19 in care homes can be viewed on the below video,

[The bodies pile up but only the money is counted](#)

Thank you to all those who have trusted us with their testimony, your all amazing and deserve so much better from the Government, The law and Employers.

Compassion In Care