

29/11/2020

To PEAC inquiry

My 11 y.o. daughter has Cystic fibrosis, and is extremely vulnerable to respiratory infections. I am expert in respiratory illness, having studied and lived with my daughters chronically deteriorating lung function caused by infections of various pathogens over 11 years. At times I've nursed her through pathogens considered infectious via airborne and contact transmission. Coronavirus poses the same threat to my family as hundreds of virus, bacteria and fungus, but we don't live our life in fear of these pathogens, as we agree quality of life is far more important to us than quantity. Isolation will not stop my daughter's vulnerable lungs deteriorating further.

Since March 16th 2020, I have watched as politicians inhumanely interfered with Melbourne's health system, increased restrictions crippled our hospital, as specialists, volunteers, palliative and other care teams services were suspended. By October 2020 inpatients were virtually imprisoned at hospital, and not allowed outside for fresh air. My daughter's long term symptoms, cough, fever, shortness of breath, prompted hospital to preform 17 Coronavirus tests, all negative. We were told that restrictions were necessary to "save vulnerable people from COVID." I know more about my family's vulnerability and health risks, than politicians and a Chief Health Officer, who shut down most of our care, support, community services, in their narrow-minded pursuit of coronavirus suppression. Some people feared catching Coronavirus, we don't fear respiratory infections but bravely fight them. CHO directions to stay isolated and under lockdown made it much harder than usual to care for my daughter's health.

Politicians interfering with the hospital system and making rules to save vulnerable people from a virus is a dangerous game. Patients and families were inhumanely made to suffer in isolation, with most support services suspended, "*due to COVID restrictions*"

Our health care, treatments, vulnerability and exposure risks should be decided between our family and our health care specialists, and so long as not posing a threat to others, tailored to our individual choices of what quality of life is important in our health journey.

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Cystic Fibrosis Specialist Carer.

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