



UNIVERSITY of
STIRLING




**Older people in care homes-
Covid19 as a catalyst for change?**

Scottish Case study

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BE THE DIFFERENCE

Things I will cover

- ▶ Scottish context
 - ▶ Care home for older people in Scotland and Covid19
 - ▶ Personal experience with my father
 - ▶ Current challenges and possibilities for change
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Scotland: a nation within the UK (?)

'Scots Law'

Additional tax raising powers

Independent social work law and institutions

Population 5.5M (est)

More socially democratic?

Nicola Sturgeon, First Minister

A very modern Scottish Parliament



Care homes for older people in Scotland

- ▶ 1,056,080 or 19% aged 65 and over
 - Estimated 30,520 or 2.8% live in care homes
 - Estimated decrease of 5% in last 10 years
- ▶ Increasing dominance of multi-national companies e.g. HC1
- ▶ Personal care element is 'free'
- ▶ Social work role 1: Care management
 - Assessment > arranging placement > review
- ▶ Social work role 2: Investigations into harm and abuse
 - Individual
 - Large scale inquiries
- ▶ Regulated by (Scottish) Care Inspectorate
- ▶ Pre covid- lower standards of care tolerated

Quality Indicator: support plan rating in care homes

Subtype	Unsatisfactory	Weak	Adequate	Good	Very good	Excellent
	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Children & Young People	0.3%	0.3%	11.1%	34.7%	49.0%	4.5%
Learning Disabilities	0.0%	2.0%	8.8%	34.5%	50.7%	4.1%
Mental Health Problems	0.0%	0.0%	14.3%	22.4%	59.2%	4.1%
Older People	0.1%	2.3%	22.2%	45.0%	28.0%	2.3%
Physical and Sensory Impairment	0.0%	5.9%	8.8%	32.4%	50.0%	2.9%
Respite Care and Short Breaks	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	42.9%	42.9%	14.3%

General Impact of Covid 19

- ▶ As per UK –push to discharge all older people from hospital
- ▶ 1 / 3 of first 10,000 deaths were care home residents
- ▶ From May 2020, Scottish Government required fortnightly updates of Care Inspectorate visits for care homes
 - Revealed which homes were struggling to meet standards

Personal impact: Introducing my father

- ▶ James
- ▶ DOB 03/04/1927
- ▶ February 2014– dementia diagnosis
- ▶ January 2020–care home 1
- ▶ April 2020 – hospital dementia assessment unit
- ▶ August 2020–care home 2



Nightmare moment.....

- ▶ Being told to pick from 3 care homes by 'bed manager' to quickly move Dad from dementia assessment unit.
 - All 3 homes scored lower on support plan
 - 2 of 3 homes having extra visits due to covid safety concerns
- ▶ Dad's social worker and NHS assessment staff were strong advocate for him
- ▶ He stayed till where he was till care home 2 had space

(Social work) practice in care home 2

Bending the covid rules

- ▶ Being in Dad's room when he arrived
- ▶ With Dad for his final seven days
- ▶ Sister allowed in even though she flew into country and was self isolating

Relational practice

- ▶ Unit manager was a social worker
- ▶ Keeping me updated/asking me questions
- ▶ All staff knew and implemented plan, via
- ▶ Unique ways of working around 'challenging behaviour'

Possibilities for change

- ▶ Nicola Sturgeon, First Minister, announcing an adult social care review:–
 - ‘This is a moment to be bold and to build a service fit for the future. The National Health Service was born out of the tragedy of World War 2. Let us resolve that we will build out of this COVID crisis, the lasting and positive legacy of a high quality, National Care Service for all who need it.’

1 September 2020
- ▶ Review report published March 2021
- ▶ Scottish Government consultation on national care service not so bold.....

Lasting and positive legacy?

Proposals relevant to care homes:

- ▶ Improved pay, training and support for social care workers
- ▶ Commissioning for the public good
- ▶ Review report noted ‘We () want to record () that we share the unease expressed by many about whether it is right – in a country committed to health-care free at the point of need to all of its citizens, regardless of age or any other characteristic – that an important part of our care system is largely run on a profit-making basis’ p 40

How can Scottish social work(ers) push for change

- ▶ Some SW bodies have narrowly focussed proposals for national social work agency
 - ▶ Good SW relies on good social care
 - ▶ Social Work Action Network (Scotland) building campaign partnership for investment in social care and staff
 - to challenge evidence base for proposals
 - to keep public eye on the core issues: quality of staff and quality of care
 - to seek changes as we move from Scottish Government published plan for a National Care Service to scrutiny in Scottish Parliament
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