

Danielle Smith

After repeated attempts to communicate with you in emails re the COVID19 response and its continuing impacts - with NO reply.

My dearest mother has been a resident in Dickinsfield for over ten years, three of them and counting through protocols in place for COVID19.

THREE years for most of these vulnerable souls "protected" to the day they die by faceless carers - and "living" this manufactured nightmare as we speak. Those working in LTC day in day out I don't think notice the physical and emotional changes that continuous masking and more has had on residents who, in many instances, are wholly dependent on them for their needs. I had one RN tell me (when I reminded her of how much more animated and engaged residents were pre protocols) that she came to the centre as masks were implemented and didn't know any different. In fact, she didn't even notice anymore she was wearing one. I found her comment terrifying, both for herself and for those she cares for. That does not take away from the exemplary care that she and others strive to provide.

With children (forced into masks to go to school and more) and taught by masked educators, in the developmental stage of their young lives, harms became rapidly evident. Still few - who should have known better - recognized it till untold damage occurred. With residents in care those negative impacts are just as debilitating - slower, more subtle but still stifling in their effect, fast tracking these poor souls to an earlier demise. Already compromised mentally and physically from age/illness, masks remove the only thing left that matters to them most - human connection. It is the cruellest form of torture. I have spoken to many residents (who can communicate). Isolation (not a virus) is their greatest fear. These useless barriers to real care need to be gone, consigned to historical horrors - but NEVER forgotten and NEVER to be implemented like this again. It is interesting that residents themselves, the most vulnerable, were never mandated to be masked in their congregate settings. If this was so deadly, then why? This political theatre with all its obvious "faces" of contradiction speaks volumes.

I've seen a resident scream for a carer to remove the mask so she could hear what was being said to her (when I intervened, we discovered she had waited weeks to have someone realize her hearing aids needed a battery). Another begged a

beloved long-time carer (leaving for a new position) to remove her mask for a photograph that the resident can treasure. I watch my mum hold her head in despair as carers mumble behind a mask leaving her no way of understanding what is being said (she is globally aphasic, hard of hearing and sight, lips reads and RELIES primarily on facial cues for communication). Challenges like these are common to most of those in long term care. A carer mum has known for years wrongly medicated her recently as direct result of masking and miscommunication. A student told me a new resident cried uncontrollably, pushing masked carers away, saying she couldn't hear them, as they tried to explain to her that they were simply helping her with peri-care (bathroom/hygiene needs). Whether carers realize this or not, this constitutes an assault AND IS AGAINST the health directive in place where the use of masks compromises care. I've heard from countless families with children with mental health and other health challenges about the damaging impacts of masking for their care. From health professionals in Alberta Hospital about how masks negatively affect how they support those in crisis. From a suicidal friend denied in person grief counselling because she couldn't wear a mask. How does anyone justify any of this after three years - with all the now real-world evidence - as acceptable, let alone continue to enforce it? David and I have done everything in our power to draw attention to this and advocate for as many as we can. But if more don't recognize the damage happening right in front of them and refuse to act, and YOU act, this never ends.

I will personally never forget the pain I have seen as a result of masking - along with ALL the protocols put in place in the last three years - for the most vulnerable, all in the name of "protection". SHAME on every last person responsible in positions of power who knew better based on information that was there from the start.

If you really "cared", Danielle, you would recognize, reply and react to this. But you don't care.

As MLA Mark Smith pointed out, regarding some of the government COVID matters we discussed during our meeting, this is no longer an issue of safety, this is an issue of compliance. YOU HAVE THESE QUESTIONS. And still, we have no answers.

<https://dksdata.com/Court/ToMLA-MarkSmith.pdf>