# British pub landlord paralysed in Benidorm faces insurance battle over hospital bill



Robert Atkinson, a 67-year-old British pub landlord, has been left paralysed following a medical emergency while on holiday in Benidorm, Spain. The incident occurred during a final meal with his 64-year-old wife, Carol, in the popular Mediterranean resort. According to reports, Mr Atkinson’s legs suddenly gave way beneath him, leaving him unable to walk. With the assistance of his wife, he managed to crawl to bed, but by the next morning, he found himself unable to get out of bed or use his legs at all.

Emergency services were called, and Mr Atkinson was rushed to hospital, where neurosurgeons performed urgent spinal surgery. During the operation, doctors discovered a spinal tumour, which appeared to be the cause of his sudden paralysis. Medical staff cautioned that he might never regain the ability to walk. He has since been in intensive care in a private hospital in Benidorm.

Mr Atkinson’s situation has been complicated by issues with his travel insurance. Although paramedics took him to a private medical facility, as per his pre-arranged insurance provisions, the insurer initially agreed to cover the hospital costs but later refused to pay the £60,000 bill. The insurer’s refusal is reportedly due to the large and unusual nature of the claim, particularly because Mr Atkinson had consumed a glass of wine with dinner prior to falling ill. This has led to the family describing his position as being ‘held hostage’ in the hospital, as he remains unable to return home until the financial and medical arrangements can be resolved.

Bob’s sister has been actively involved in liaising with both the insurance company and medical providers. She revealed that plans are underway for Mr Atkinson to return to the UK by land transport, as he is currently not medically fit to fly. “As you can imagine all the stress of getting him home is very upsetting for him. I am in the UK now and fighting from this side. Carol is struggling with all the difficult navigation needed to get Bob home. Phone calls etc,” she said.

To assist with the mounting costs, the family established a GoFundMe campaign, which had raised over £11,000 towards their £15,000 target at the time of reporting. Mr Atkinson, who was affectionately known as ‘Benidorm Bob,’ is originally from Yorkshire and is a well-known figure in his community. His sudden paralysis and the ensuing insurance dispute have attracted significant public sympathy.

The Express is reporting that Mr Atkinson remains in intensive care and the family continues to work tirelessly to secure his safe and timely return to the UK. Meanwhile, negotiations with the insurer are ongoing as the family seeks resolution over the outstanding hospital fees.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.gbnews.com/news/british-grandfather-held-hostage-spanish-hospital-insurance-refuses-pay-bill-drunk-wine> - Corroborates Robert Atkinson's situation of being 'held hostage' in a Spanish hospital due to insurance issues, particularly the refusal to pay his £60,000 medical bill caused by traces of alcohol in his blood and treatment at a private hospital.
* <https://www.yorkshirepost.co.uk/news/people/daughter-says-paralysed-york-grandad-who-is-stuck-in-benidorm-hospital-treated-badly-5085022> - Details Mr. Atkinson's condition and the challenges faced by his family while he remains in the hospital in Benidorm.
* <https://yorkmix.com/well-known-york-publican-stranded-abroad-after-being-partially-paralysed-by-tumour/> - Reports on Mr. Atkinson's medical emergency and his current situation in Benidorm, highlighting his paralysis due to a spinal tumor.
* <https://www.gbnews.com/news/british-grandfather-held-hostage-spanish-hospital-insurance-refuses-pay-bill-drunk-wine> - Also mentions the family's efforts to raise funds using a GoFundMe page to cover Mr. Atkinson's medical expenses and arrange his return to the UK.
* <https://www.yorkshirepost.co.uk/news/people/daughter-says-paralysed-york-grandad-who-is-stuck-in-benidorm-hospital-treated-badly-5085022> - Discusses the difficulties faced by Mr. Atkinson's wife in communicating with hospital staff and the stress of navigating his medical and insurance situation.