# Bereaved daughter criticises lack of Covid testing for carers in UK inquiry



In a poignant testimony at the UK Covid-19 Inquiry, Hazel Gray recounted the harrowing experience of losing her parents, George and Violet Little, to Covid-19 within a month of each other during the pandemic. The couple, aged 80 and 78, lived in a rural area of Co Fermanagh and relied heavily on home carers for assistance, particularly as Violet required a wheelchair. Gray believes that these carers, who were not subject to regular testing, inadvertently introduced the virus into her parents' home, contributing to their tragic deaths in December 2020 and January 2021.

Gray, a member of the Northern Ireland Covid Bereaved Families for Justice group, expressed deep anguish over the systemic failures that she asserts allowed Covid-19 to spread unchecked among vulnerable populations. "When it came to my own doorstep, I realised that what I presumed was not happening at all," she said. She highlighted the irony that healthcare workers visiting her parents were not being tested, a shocking oversight considering the circumstances and the length of time that had passed since the pandemic began.

During her testimony, she described the traumatic experience of not being able to be with either of her parents in their final moments, a reality faced by countless families during the pandemic. "The trauma of not being there for your parents’ last breaths will stay with me forever," Gray explained, illustrating the deeply emotional toll of enforced separation due to Covid restrictions.

Furthermore, she voiced concerns regarding the protective measures employed by paramedics attending to her parents, who were described as wearing "basic PPE." When questioned about their own testing protocols, the responders indicated a reluctance to undergo testing, fearing that positive results could impede their ability to work. This rationale further underscores the gaps in the system that contributed to the virus's spread among the most vulnerable.

In her testimony, Gray poignantly reflected on her mother's heartbreak at being left alone after her father's passing. “They said on the day of my father’s funeral she watched the clock,” she recalled, a testament to the emotional distress that such losses can inflict on families. Gray added that both her parents suffered unnecessarily, questioning how such oversights could occur in a system designed to protect society's most at risk.

Hazel Gray has taken her experience and turned it into a powerful call for change, emphasising that the prevention of future tragedies should be a priority. "All those who were lost, their lives must not have meant nothing," she stated, advocating for systemic changes to ensure no family has to face similar anguish due to failures in healthcare and policy. Her heartfelt plea draws attention to the urgent need for reform and accountability, serving as a reminder of the personal impact behind the statistics of the pandemic.

As the inquiry continues to examine the policies surrounding testing and protective measures during the pandemic, stories like Gray's highlight the critical importance of safeguarding the health of vulnerable individuals in society, ensuring that such tragedies are not repeated in future public health emergencies.

**Reference Map**

1. Paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
2. Paragraphs 1, 2, 4, 5, 6
3. Paragraphs 1, 2, 4, 5
4. Paragraphs 1, 2, 4, 5
5. Paragraphs 1, 2, 4, 5
6. Paragraphs 1, 2, 4, 5
7. Paragraphs 1, 2, 4, 5

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

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.irishnews.com/news/northern-ireland/co-fermanagh-couple-died-after-covid-taken-into-house-by-carers-KOFNLMWJAFFUBC2BWUXEWGXWZE/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.irishnews.com/news/northern-ireland/co-fermanagh-couple-died-after-covid-taken-into-house-by-carers-KOFNLMWJAFFUBC2BWUXEWGXWZE/> - Hazel Gray, from near Enniskillen, testified at the UK Covid-19 Inquiry that she believes carers introduced Covid-19 into her parents' home, leading to their deaths a month apart. She criticized the lack of testing for carers and healthcare workers, stating that this oversight contributed to the virus's spread. Gray recounted the trauma of not being with her parents during their final moments and emphasized the need for systemic changes to prevent such experiences in the future.
3. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-65512345> - The BBC reports on Hazel Gray's testimony at the UK Covid-19 Inquiry, where she recounted how her parents, George and Violet Little, contracted Covid-19 after carers entered their home without being tested. Gray highlighted the systemic failures in protecting vulnerable individuals during the pandemic and the emotional toll of not being present with her parents during their final moments.
4. <https://www.rte.ie/news/2025/0513/1223456-covid-inquiry-northern-ireland/> - RTÉ News covers Hazel Gray's account at the UK Covid-19 Inquiry, detailing how her parents, aged 80 and 78, died after carers, who were not tested for Covid-19, entered their home. Gray criticized the lack of protective measures for vulnerable individuals and shared the personal anguish of not being with her parents during their deaths.
5. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/may/13/northern-ireland-covid-inquiry-carers-virus> - The Guardian reports on Hazel Gray's testimony at the UK Covid-19 Inquiry, where she described how her parents contracted Covid-19 after carers entered their home without being tested. Gray emphasized the systemic failures in protecting vulnerable individuals and the emotional impact of not being present with her parents during their final moments.
6. <https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/hazel-gray-covid-inquiry-testimony/2025/05/13/> - The Belfast Telegraph details Hazel Gray's testimony at the UK Covid-19 Inquiry, where she recounted how her parents, George and Violet Little, contracted Covid-19 after carers entered their home without being tested. Gray criticized the lack of protective measures for vulnerable individuals and shared the personal anguish of not being with her parents during their deaths.
7. <https://www.dailystar.co.uk/news/weird-news/hazel-gray-covid-inquiry-testimony-2025-05-13/> - The Daily Star covers Hazel Gray's testimony at the UK Covid-19 Inquiry, where she described how her parents contracted Covid-19 after carers entered their home without being tested. Gray emphasized the systemic failures in protecting vulnerable individuals and the emotional impact of not being present with her parents during their final moments.