

# Government must urgently provide care homes with direction and support to prevent fatal spread of coronavirus, says Green Party



14 April 2020

- **Greens urge government to provide clear plan for quarantining and routine testing in care homes as a matter of urgency**
- **Party echoes charities' call for a daily update on deaths in care homes**
- **Co-leader Jonathan Bartley: "Ministers cannot be complacent about what is happening. Action must be taken today."**

The government must offer clear direction and guidance and set out plans for support today on how care homes can self-quarantine to prevent deaths, the Green Party has said.

The party has called for a comprehensive plan which could include allowing carers to voluntarily isolate in homes, ensure provision of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and provide care for the residents to reduce the risk of transmission.

Fears are growing that coronavirus could be spreading through care homes untracked, as the government's daily update does not include those who have died in care.

Care home providers have warned they have already seen hundreds of deaths in the care system. One provider alone said there had been more than 300 deaths with outbreaks in two thirds of its homes. [1]

The Greens have now also backed a call from leading charities for a daily update on deaths in the care system. [2]

Green Party co-leader Jonathan Bartley said: "The government has said vulnerable people must be cocooned from this terrible outbreak, yet we have not seen them take anywhere near sufficient action to protect those living in care homes.

"Ministers cannot be complacent about what is happening. Action must be taken today.

"Carers are being left to try and deal with this themselves, while the people who they have cared for years for are dying in front of their eyes.

"The government must come forward with a comprehensive plan of testing, provision of PPE and quarantine in order to slow the spread any further.

“The Government could allow carers and those with experience and appropriate checks to voluntarily self isolate within residential homes and provide care for the residents, while also safeguarding the jobs and livelihoods of care workers who are unable to.

“It is unconscionable that the government seems to be doing next to nothing to prevent or even track the spread of coronavirus among older people in care homes, while leaving carers, who are often among the most poorly paid members of society, to risk their lives and deal with this growing crisis by themselves.”

ENDS

## Notes

1

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/apr/14/uk-care-home-providers-report-521-coronavirus-deaths>

2

Representatives from Age UK, Marie Curie, Care England, Independent Age and the Alzheimer’s Society yesterday wrote to Health Secretary Matt Hancock to ask for a comprehensive plan to support social care through the coronavirus crisis

<https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/news/2020-04-13/our-letter-secretary-state-health-and-social-care>

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