

Hi everyone, and thank you for your relentless work on this issue. Here are my thoughts:

I would like to implore Governor Lamont to issue an Executive Order establishing an Essential Caregiver policy for the nursing homes in our State.

The nursing home lock down is now entering its tenth month. Still, there are no stated plans to lift this lock down even with the rollout of the vaccine. Volunteers are still not allowed access to nursing homes, and family members and other visitors are extremely restricted, typically to one 30 minute visit per week. The staff of nursing homes has been further stretched to a breaking point in many facilities, as the help that volunteers and family members used to provide has not been there. This situation cannot be allowed to continue any further, as residents are getting sick every day from dehydration, malnutrition, pneumonia and other illnesses to which insufficient care contributes. Isolation and lack of recreation activities is having a documented impact on the will to live for many residents.

It is critical that nursing home residents have access to designated essential caregivers NOW so that these caregivers can begin to help reverse this deplorable situation. Governor Lamont can make this happen now.

Thank you,

Sheilah Smith, Greenwich CT
Brother, age 70, resident of Nathaniel Witherell