

Anne's Law factsheet

What is Anne's Law?

Anne's Law is a piece of planned Scottish legislation which is intended to strengthen the rights of people living in adult and older people's care homes to see and spend time with the people who are important to them, even in the event of an outbreak of infectious disease. It recognises that meaningful contact is a fundamental right and is essential to supporting health and wellbeing.

How did it come about?

Anne's Law is the result of campaigning by family members of people in care homes who were separated from their loved ones for lengthy periods during the Covid-19 pandemic, with devastating impacts on people's health and wellbeing. A petition to the Scottish Parliament, lodged in November 2020, called on the government to allow a designated visitor into care homes to support loved ones. Subsequent [public consultation](#) on Anne's Law found widespread support for the overall aim - that people in care homes should always have the right to see their loved ones. Family carers seek to be recognised as essential caregivers, with the same access rights to care homes as staff.

Is Anne's Law currently in force?

Anne's Law has not yet been enacted into legislation. It is being taken forward as part of the National Care Service (Scotland) Bill. Currently, the Bill is at Stage 2 of the process to become legislation. It is not yet known when all the stages will be completed. Discussion with relevant stakeholders regarding the detailed provisions of the Bill is ongoing to ensure any necessary restrictions to visiting during an outbreak are balanced with people's health and wellbeing needs and their human rights.

What is happening in the meantime?

Pending implementation of Anne's Law, [two new Health and Social Care Standards](#) were introduced in March 2022. These reinforce the rights of people in care homes to see and get support from people important to them, even in the event of an infectious disease outbreak. All registered care homes for adults and older people are expected to meet these standards, and they are used by the Care Inspectorate during its regulatory activity to assess outcomes for people.

Where can I find more information?

The Care Inspectorate's [dedicated webpage](#) provides further information and guidance for care home residents, their families and friends, and care home providers and staff on visiting, meaningful connection and Anne's Law. This includes advice for people on how they can seek assistance if they have any concerns.