

Rights group says UK government violated older people's human rights

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Rights group says UK government violated older people's human rights during coronavirus pandemic. (Photo: Reuters)

London, October 6 (RHC)-- The deaths of tens of thousands of elderly people in care homes during the pandemic remains the most controversial aspect of the British government's mishandling of the COVID-19 crisis.

A leading human rights organization has accused the British government of violating elderly citizens' human rights at the onset of the coronavirus pandemic in March. An Amnesty International (AI) report claims the government's decision to send older and untested patients into care homes at the beginning of the pandemic were "inexplicable" and "disastrous."

Citing 18,000 COVID-19 related deaths in care homes, AI has called on the government to begin a promised "public inquiry" with immediate effect.

According to the AI report, multiple "poor decisions" at both the national and local levels had a considerable adverse impact on the "health and lives" of older people in care homes which effectively amounted to "infringement" of their human rights as enshrined in law.

As part of their work to produce the report, AI researchers interviewed relatives of older people - who either died in care homes or are currently residing in one -- in addition to care home owners and staff, as well as legal and medical professionals.

AI claims it received reports of care home residents being denied General Practitioner (GP) and National Health Service (NHS) hospital services during the pandemic. The organization maintains that the denial of services amounts to the violation of older people's "right to health" and potentially their "right to life," as well as their right to "non-discrimination."

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