



# The Worrying Use of Do-Not-Resuscitate-Orders During COVID-19

AUTHOR / KEY CONTACT



Parisa Jones  
Partner

✉ parisa.jones@la-law.com  
☎ 01202 786267

The CQC have undertaken a review of the application of DNAR Orders. According to the CQC's Interim Report, the review was prompted by concerns about the blanket application of the orders without consultation of the person concerned. There is also evidence of unacceptable and inappropriate orders being made at the start of the pandemic.

The [Care Quality Commission's](#) (CQC) review into the application of Do-Not-Attempt-Resuscitate (DNAR) orders during the Covid-19 pandemic reveals incorrect and ageist use. As solicitors specialising in supporting [older and vulnerable people](#) in and around Dorset we know that sadly, this is nothing new.

It's horrifying to think about DNAR orders being applied to groups of vulnerable people. This isn't how they should be used and however stretched our health and care services are, this kind of disregard for older people cannot be tolerated.

[Best practice guidelines](#) have been set out by the Resuscitation Council UK, but they aren't being followed everywhere. Clinicians need to do better here, too often it's ignored or treated as a tick box exercise rather than prompting meaningful consultation with patients and loved ones.

There is clearly a need for all of us to initiate our own conversations about whether we'd want CPR, and also about our wider care wishes. Once we're in an emergency situation it's often too late.

Worryingly, only 59% of those aged 70+ have talked to loved ones about their care wishes. And whilst 81% of us think planning for later life is important, only 22% of us have a [Lasting Power of Attorney](#) in place, setting out our wishes in writing in a legally binding way.

As a country, we must start talking about our wishes should we lose mental and/or physical capacity or require emergency medical treatment. This recent investigation into the use of DNARs must encourage us all to have those difficult, but vital conversations, no matter our age.

It is so important to be prepared and plan what you would want to happen, and if you were unable to make decisions for yourself, who would make these decisions for you. Having a Health & Welfare Lasting Power of Attorney in place can ensure that there is someone appointed to act on your behalf and in line with any wishes that you may have.

If you would like to speak to a member of [our specialist private client team](#) regarding any information within this article, please email [online.enquiries@la-law.com](mailto:online.enquiries@la-law.com) or call 01202 702612.