



Written by [Lisa Shaw](#) on August 7, 2017

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## Is Charlie Gard Government Property?

The London-based case of Charlie Gard has gained international attention as parents Chris Gard and Connie Yates fight tirelessly against dictatorial government and hospital officials to save the life of their now 11-month-old son.

When Gard and Yates admitted eight-month-old Charlie to Great Ormond Street Hospital (GOSH) for Children in London last September, they could not have known the power struggle that would ensue. As GOSH received Charlie, it seems they assumed all rights to his life, as well.

With a diagnosis of mitochondrial DNA depletion syndrome, a rare genetic disease causing neurological problems and progressive muscle weakness, the hospital eventually determined that in the child's "best interest" he be removed from life support.

In obvious opposition to GOSH's decision and with a determination to keep their baby alive, Yates began to research possible cures for the disease and discovered an American doctor willing to provide an experimental treatment for Charlie. Encouraged, the parents took their struggle to social media, raising over \$1.6 million in private donations from around the world. This amount was enough to transport Charlie to the United States, and cover the cost of the treatment, at no expense or burden to the London hospital.

However, this was an unacceptable plan of action to GOSH. The prestigious hospital, whose motto is "The child first and always," refused to release Charlie, electing instead to legally fight to kill the sick child, claiming it was "in Charlie's best interests to be allowed to die with dignity," regardless of the wishes of the parents.

The hospital's decision to fight to kill the child was a nightmarish turn of events, as these parents found themselves defending Charlie's right to life and their rights as his parents, declaring, "He is our son. Please listen to us." Their pleas were to no avail. After exhausting all legal resources in the U.K., Gard and Yates made one last appeal to the European Court of Human Rights, which ultimately sided with the children's hospital and previous courts, leaving the couple devastated and driving many defenders of life and liberty to action.

*Photo: AP Images*

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"This is what happens when you have laws designed to promote death over life, when you have a court willing to promote death over life," Catherine Glenn Foster — president and CEO of Americans United for Life — said in a press conference, also stating, "It could be my child, or your child, or any one of us."

Arina Grossu of the Family Research Council concluded, "This is a case about parental rights coming





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into conflict with socialized medicine.” She continued, “Who should decide what’s in the best interest of Charlie? His parents. Not the courts. Not the hospital. Not the government.”

The hospital’s attorney, Katie Gallop, submitted a statement implying that Gard and Yates were only two of several parties with a responsibility for Charlie: “Charlie’s parents fundamentally believe that they alone have the right to decide what treatment Charlie has and does not have.”

Gallop proudly noted that her client is governed by “different principles,” repeating the hospital’s mantra about the child being first.

According to GOSH, “A world where only parents speak and decide for children and where children have no separate identity or rights and no court to hear and protect them is far from the world in which GOSH treats its child patients.”

But the hospital has turned the situation on its head. It wants to kill the child, though not killing the child may lead to a working treatment, and it is cutting the parents out of the picture — and has since the beginning.

While the hospital promised to keep the couple informed of decisions being made concerning their child, their actions didn’t follow suit. Yates disclosed the reality of being excluded from “various meetings” held by the hospital staff. This is not surprising since this institution regards parents as a menace to be defended against.

And Charlie’s government-appointed voice is in agreement with the government — surprise. Charlie’s representative is Victoria Butler Cole. According to the *Telegraph*, Cole is also the chairman of Compassion in Dying. Its sister organization, Dignity in Dying, was formerly the Voluntary Euthanasia Society. That Cole would be appointed to Charlie’s case is an unlikely coincidence, and certainly a conflict of interest.

Thankfully, another hearing has been granted, and U.S. Doctor Michio Hirano was given permission to examine Charlie and saw him on July 17. However, as relieving as these victories may be, the lack of ethics driving this case cannot be overlooked, as it will pave the way for the future. As Foster said in her press statement, “I am Charlie. We all are Charlie.”

*Photo: AP Images*



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