



Written by [Michael Tennant](#) on August 1, 2019

U.K.'s Health Service Wants to Let Little Girl Die, Won't Let Parents Seek Treatment in Italy

In a case reminiscent of those of [Charlie Gard](#) and [Alfie Evans](#), U.K. National Health Service (NHS) doctors are refusing to allow the parents of a five-year-old girl who suffered a brain injury and is on life support to take their daughter to Italy, where physicians believe they may be able to save her. Instead, the NHS wants to remove her life support and let her die.



Tafida Raqeeb, a previously healthy little girl, “collapsed at home and suffered a cardiac and respiratory attack” after a blood vessel in her brain burst in February, according to the [Sun](#). “She was rushed to hospital and later transferred to a specialist hospital for brain surgery.”

Tafida was diagnosed with arteriovenous malformation, a rare and possibly fatal blood-vessel condition. She is on a ventilator and in a coma.

Doctors at the NHS trust believe Tafida’s case is hopeless and “further invasive medical treatment is futile,” they said in a statement. “As such we are ensuring that we keep the family involved and uphold Tafida’s best interests, recommending withdrawal of life sustaining treatment and instigating palliative care.”

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The NHS — which, after all, considers patients such as Tafida nothing but a drain on its limited, taxpayer-funded resources — has wanted to let Tafida die almost from the start. Tafida’s mother, Shelina Begum, told [LifeSiteNews](#) that “surgeons did not operate on her child until five hours after the then-four-year-old suffered the stroke and afterward the girl’s medical team repeatedly suggested ‘end of life’ to the distraught parents.” The trust even went to court without Tafida’s parents’ knowledge to try to get an order allowing them to deny her lifesaving treatment.

“Throughout the past five months, we have been repeatedly told Tafida was dying,” Begum told [LifeSiteNews](#). “However, she continued to fight for her life. She survived the initial critical period which they said she wouldn’t. She then survived three surgeries and continues to fight. It is only fair that she is given a chance to make a recovery.”

Begum and the girl’s father, Mohammed Raqeeb, say they’ve seen encouraging signs from their daughter, including opening her eyes and moving her limbs. They also say she is on “very minimal” life support, reported the [Press Association](#).

Best of all, doctors at a hospital in Genoa, Italy, have offered to treat Tafida, believing she stands a good chance of emerging from her coma. Travel and treatment would be at private expense, not costing the



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NHS a farthing. Yet the NHS, the epitome of socialized medicine, refuses to release Tafida into her parents' custody.

"There are experienced and respected doctors who are willing to treat Tafida, to give her the chance at life she so deserves," Begum told the [Daily Mail](#). "We simply want the chance to be allowed to try. It breaks our hearts to be told that she is not allowed to leave the hospital."

Doctors "clearly know that Tafida is not end of life and they are still trying to do this [remove her life support]," she told the Press Association. "I feel disgusted that they are still pursuing this."

Sun columnist [Rod Liddle](#) remarked: "I can understand doctors telling Mohammed and Shelina there is nothing more that they can do for their little girl. What is beyond belief — beyond imagination — is that they would insist on keeping the child there to die when there is genuine hope she might be cured."

That, however, is par for the course with the NHS, which has seen fit to prevent other parents from taking their ailing children abroad for treatment. In one case, a five-year-old boy's parents had to [kidnap him from an NHS hospital](#) and flee the country so he could be treated for brain cancer according to their wishes. His parents were arrested in Spain, but the U.K.'s High Court allowed them to seek the treatment they desired, and today their son is cancer-free.

Tafida's parents haven't gone to those lengths yet, but they are taking their case to the High Court, which will [hear arguments in September](#). Meanwhile, to quote Liddle again, "Let us all pray Tafida makes it to Genoa and the treatment works."

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