

Charlie Gard's life became 'soap opera': clinician

August 5 2017

A clinician who treated Charlie Gard, the terminally-ill British baby who died last month, said Saturday his short life became a soap opera fuelled by President Donald Trump and the pope.

Gard's plight drew world attention and sparked a debate about [medical ethics](#), as his parents fought a lengthy legal battle to allow him to be taken to the United States for treatment of a [rare genetic condition](#).

London's Great Ormond Street Hospital (GOSH) wanted to remove his life support, and some staff received death threats.

But one GOSH clinician, writing anonymously in The Guardian newspaper, said they had a "legal and [moral obligation](#)" to say "enough is enough".

"Like all of the staff who work in our unit, I loved this child to bits. But it got to the point where there was nothing more we could do," the health worker wrote.

Gard died in a hospice on July 29, one week short of his first birthday.

His case drew sympathy from many including Trump and Pope Francis, while 350,000 people signed a petition demanding he be allowed to receive experimental treatment in the United States.

"Parts of the media and some members of the public turned a poorly

baby's life into a [soap opera](#)," the clinician wrote.

The clinician said the case had an impact on other families at the hospital, with parents anxious medical staff might not do the right thing for their child.

Gard was born on August 4 last year with a rare form of mitochondrial disease that causes [progressive muscle weakness](#), including in key organs such as the heart.

The case triggered debate about whether parents or the state should have a final say on a child's wellbeing and whether a child's fate should be settled in a courtroom.

© 2017 AFP

Citation: Charlie Gard's life became 'soap opera': clinician (2017, August 5) retrieved 17 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2017-08-charlie-gard-life-soap-opera.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--