

As COVID-19 inquiry opens, bereaved families reveal why it's 'a death like no other'

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Credit: University of Liverpool

As the UK COVID-19 Inquiry finally launches, researchers behind a major report into those bereaved by COVID-19 have released a video reflecting the experiences of those who lost loved ones, and seeking to

ensure "things are better next time".

The University of Liverpool Management School's Lived Experiences of People Bereaved by COVID-19 report made its way to Government Minister's desks and prompted a question in the House of Commons.

It was backed by COVID-19 Bereaved Families for Justice (CBFJ)—the group representing those who lost [family members](#) and friends during the pandemic.

Now, report Co-Author, Professor Lynn Sudbury-Riley has worked with CBFJ and research participants to put together an emotional [video](#) called A Death Like No Other, detailing the [experiences](#) of those left behind, and calling for truth and transparency through the inquiry process.

In the video, Professor Sudbury-Riley, who lost her father when he contracted COVID-19 while in hospital for a foot operation in March 2020, says that "being bereaved during a pandemic is very, very different to being bereaved at other times, and that is because of the total absence of contact with loved ones."

"That's not just contact with the person that was sick, and who was dying, it's contact with the person once they were deceased."

"There was a denial of what we call death and mourning rituals and they are so, so important for bereaved people."

CBFJ spokesperson, Fran Hall also appears in A Death Like No Other. She says that "the people that have been most affected are the people that have lost someone to COVID-19."

"Lynn's research is about the lived experience of losing somebody, and what actually it was like to see somebody that you love become ill, and

then disappear—either to die, or to be taken to hospital and then not to see them again."

The video also features testimony from research participants who lost family members, and Elkan Abrahamson, Director of Broudie, Jackson and Canter solicitors, who is helping support those bereaved by COVID-19.

Professor Sudbury Riley, an expert in services for [vulnerable people](#), including end of life care, says that "we need the voices of those who lived through this to be heard. This isn't just about systems and processes and numbers, it's about people."

The UK COVID-19 Public Inquiry launched its first investigation on July 21, with preliminary hearings taking place in September and October and public hearings expected to start in 2023.

More information: Report: [www.liverpool.ac.uk/humanities ... arch/covid-bereaved/](http://www.liverpool.ac.uk/humanities/arch/covid-bereaved/)

Video: stream.liv.ac.uk/hajst2e8

Provided by University of Liverpool

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