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Your ref: CAF 19-147
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26 September 2019

Dear Ms Soeder,

Re: Freedom of Information request

Thank you for your email of 04 September 2019. You made the following requests for information:

Action day :4th September Broken Bonds : Palace of Westminster : Parliamentary Debate (current parliamentary situation allowing)

The plight of grandchildren estranged from their grandparents.

“Broken Bonds between Grandparents and their Grandchildren is a form of abuse. This has been recognised and the EU court of Justice ruled that ‘Grandparents have the right to see their grandchildren. CAFCASS use harmful methods that do not enable this.

Today Dame Esther Rantzen , Nigel Huddleston MP Dr Matthew Offord MP with researchers in the field of family Psychology and experts in law about the detrimental long term effects and serious HARM caused to both Grandparents and Grandchildren which information from FOIA and CAFCASS unfit to deal with these groups discrimination shared. It is reassuring to know that many experts know exactly the harm and damage CAFCASS are causing to Grandparents.

Added to disability discrimination and associative discrimination CAFCASS undertaking practice gathering witness statements that only a judge can order, Disability having been invisible to CAFCASS builds a cumulative picture of how CAFCASS have added to cause HARM; not just in words but clinically can be demonstrated.

Edward Timpson CBE Chair
Jacky Tiotto Chief Executive





CAFCASS are Indirectly Discriminating against disabled grandparents in multiple ways but 'organisationally' operating with a "Principle underlying private law" Adult Behaviour" should be defined and described as behaviours NOT classifications DIAGNOSES or Jargon which is horrifying where they have a yet to be ethically established and cogent explanation which may have affected groups of disabled people with a medical diagnosis. CAFCCASS refusing to justify the source of the principle in its entirety means Experts are required to examine the principle. In the meantime CAFCCASS should explain this monstrosity ?

As it stand the PCP in its entirety is INDIRECT DISCRIMINATION applying it to all adults in the same way. CAFCCASS believe that GRANDPARENTS who have done nothing but lavish a grandchild with love (which CAFCCASS admit) without even a parking ticket to their name MAY be a risk to Grandchildren because of 'symptoms of illness' which includes emotional outbursts which Grand parents with Dementia, Frailty, Autism, Anorexia, Epilepsy, Multiple Sclerosis, Huntington's disease, Brain injury, Stroke, Depression, , PTSD, Malnutrition, Alzheimer's. These emotional outbursts are clinically defined as arising in consequence of Diagnosis . CAFCCASS believe grandparent with medical diagnosis REGARDLESS of reasons for symptoms/emotional outbursts BEHAVIOUR is a RISK " in their words "EVEN IF THERE IS A MEDICAL REASON FOR IT"

This is the outcome of such a dangerous PCP with no Equality Act application. They have spent years destroying families but now they're set loose on grandparents: "with no tools or training" to meet the needs of this group, worse with disability.

1. What information do CAFCCASS hold that allows an FCA to DISREGARD medical explanations ?

Cafcass does not hold information that allows Family Court Advisers FCAs to disregard medical opinions.

FCAs may report on medical information about a service user obtained from a medical professional and include this information as part of their assessment. All practitioner recommendations are based on their professional judgement of the child's welfare and on their professional assessment of the circumstances as presented to the court, which will include the result of any safeguarding checks with wider agencies.

2. Doctors having medical school and clinical training totalling 10 years, Psychologists being BSP accredited and Psychiatrists '12' years clinical training to assess a Grandparents medical conditions, symptoms and behaviour and other specialists of each listed group 'years of training to diagnose' then what training does CAFCCASS hold (seemingly elevated over these specialists) to allow the FCA to DISREGARD medical reasons ?

Edward Timpson CBE Chair
Jacky Tiotto Chief Executive





Cafcass does not hold or deliver training which allows FCA to disregard medical reasons. FCAs may report on medical information about a service user obtained from a medical professional and include this information as part of their assessment. All practitioner recommendations are based on their professional judgement of the child's welfare and on their professional assessment of the circumstances as presented to the court, which will include the result of any safeguarding checks with wider agencies.

3. What information does CAFCASS hold and what guidelines do CAFCASS follow to define a 'principle underlying private law' and who ratifies the principle and gives ethical clearance before it is applied to humans.

Please note that the 'Underlying principles of a Cafcass private law assessment' document outlines the principles for Cafcass FCAs to consider when conducting their analysis and assessment in private law cases. The 'Underlying principles of a Cafcass private law assessment' document was developed internally within Cafcass as part of the [Child Impact Assessment Framework](#). The framework and its documentations, including the Underlying principles of a Cafcass private law assessment' document builds on existing knowledge, skills and practice guidance within Cafcass. The 'Underlying principles of a Cafcass private law assessment' document is a collation of the fundamental principles of our private law practice which are detailed within our tools, policies and the [Operating Framework](#).

When CAFCASS' seemingly strange, ad hoc and arbitrary PCP is applied in assessments without application of the Equality Act which they have adopted and maintained which excludes from the ambit of the Equality Act CAFCASS are discriminating causing harm therefore CAFCASS need to explain this PCP in its entirety as it has been applied in real terms in assessment: thus harmful.

CAFCASS have now elevated themselves above highly specialised leading medical experts in the international field.

CAFCASS, not having tools or skills to work with grandparents and medical issues that affect this group and not applying the Equality Act discriminating against age and disability are not fit to work with grandparents and are applying unvalidated tools to this group.

CAFCASS were warned, repeatedly about the dangers of what they were rolling out without expert scrutiny so they have no excuse where harm and damage has resulted from their rollout. They have horrifically marched to the beat of their own drum. Whilst they scabble to cobble explanations experts can scrutinise this draconian sham.

Edward Timpson CBE Chair
Jacky Tiotto Chief Executive





Please note this is not a valid Freedom of Information request as this is not a request for organisational information held by Cafcass.

We hope that you feel your question has been answered effectively. If you are unhappy with the decisions made in relation to your request, you may ask for an internal review to be undertaken. If you are dissatisfied with the way the internal review is handled or with the final decision made at that review about the information released, you are free to contact the Information Commissioner's Office (<https://ico.org.uk/>):

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Yours sincerely,

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Edward Timpson CBE Chair
Jacky Tiotto Chief Executive

