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My Mum **Margaret Alice Rowley**: 29 April 1933 ~ 11 June 2003
Fairfield General Hospital: Pennine Acute NHS Trust:

In the year 2003 both my parents reached the age of 70 within 6 weeks of each other, they had been together nearly 50 years and married for 48 of those. At the beginning of that year we decided to phone around family members and friends to arrange a surprise party for them to fall halfway between their birthdays. The party was booked for 5 April 2003. It was to be the last ever happy occasion with all the family members present. I even managed to arrange for David Beckham my Mum's favourite footballer to sign a birthday card for her.

For Mum's birthday 29 April Dad took Mum along with my Aunt and Uncle for a holiday break. It was during this week that Mum started feeling ill and by the time they got home Mum could barely walk.

The doctor admitted my Mum to Fairfield General Hospital: Pennine Acute NHS Trust on 6 May 2003. Diagnosis gout, during the ensuing weeks the family concerns were totally ignored by the healthcare staff, my Mum had a history of ill health battling through Breast Cancer, Chrohns Disease, Heart and Lung Failure, she never once gave up the battle. Ward 7 the emergency admissions ward was dirty; the staff lax in their attitudes, one Nurse was even more interested in arranging her social life on her mobile phone whilst patients waited desperately for bedpans. It was also a mixed ward hardly dignifying for a lady of my Mum's age to be placed in a bed next to a young gentleman of less age than her own son. Mum was transferred 4 days later to ward 21 where staff were not much better and the cleanliness much to be desired. I stayed by her side for most of that 5 ½ week period, the staff never took any notice of the family telling them she was badly dehydrated and this resulted in her having renal failure on 23 May 2003 from that day I never left her side once as I had lost all faith and trust in the NHS staff supposedly taking care of my Mum. Mum was transferred to ICU and had to undergo an emergency bowel operation, at this point for the 2nd time during her stay in that hell hole of a hospital (formerly the work-house of Bury) we were told she may not make it. SHE DID and much to the amazement of the ICU staff came around within 2 days of the operation. They transferred Mum onto ward 14 on 1 June 2003 and that's when they informed us very casually your Mum has a 'little of no concern infection'. Both my husband and I believed them lets face it they are the 'Professionals'. For the first time in nearly five weeks I actually went home for some sleep that night totally and utterly believing my Mum was on the road to recovery. Just before we left that night Mum told Andy 'take her home she needs

some sleep, she looks worse than me' and then she added 'and don't forget your birthday me and you are sharing a steak'. Those were the last words my Mum ever uttered to us ~ 20 hours later she was back in ICU in a coma and on life support ~ the dash once more down the motorway was a nightmare, would we make it in time. MRSA was never explained to us as a family, never once were we given the implications or the true facts. For the next 11 days we had to stand helplessly by and watch my Mum deteriorate more every single day. On the day she died, I held her hand whilst they took the treatment down, because contrary to TV Programmes they do NOT switch off the life support what they do is switch it to a normal person's level of breathing which means the seriously ill patient cannot survive. My Mum fought every inch of the way and it took a further 8 hours for her to pass to the other side. From that day I have battled to find the truth, it took me 8 months to finally get them to admit it played a partial role in her death and it took me a further 2 years after that to find out my dear Mum was profuse with MRSA a fact that Fairfield General Hospital: Pennine Acute NHS Trust covered up blatantly. I spent over four and half years in the NHS complaints system, my family and I never wanted litigation but we did require truthful answers. Eventually in 2007 after an eternity of correspondence they finally conceded and I was given a document of changes Pennine Acute NHS Trust has had to implement following my complaint. To this day I still flag up whatever wrong doing I see and especially about non compliance with hand hygiene the Primary Infection Prevention method known to man.

I had the idea for the Hidden List of Victims which in April 2005 pre-election the first portion was handed over to Tony Blair who promised to personally look into it ~ of course after being re-elected he never did. I also started, authored and collated the Petition calling for a Full Parliamentary Debate & Public Enquiry into Healthcare Infections which was handed in to Downing St by me personally 28 November 2005. I now do numerous speaking engagements in which I present the Patients View on the aftermath of suffering medical harm, it is very hard but it's also important to get the message across. I also meet with a number of influential players/bodies in the field of Healthcare in the hopes that collaboratively we can affect a change for a safer system for everyone.

Since speaking out, I have been taking emails and phone calls from other distressed families who are getting no information whatsoever from the Healthcare providers. I am now providing the support and information that really should be the job of the medical profession.

May 2008 I was given the role of **Patient Safety Champion** for the Northwest and I hope this opportunity will enable me to help more families have more peace of mind that the Healthcare system we have will Care for them not Harm them.

All I have done since my Mum's death I could not possibly have achieved if I did not have the 200% support of my husband Andy. He has steadfastly stood by me even in times of complete stress and frustration, knowing that unless there is a change to the system then I will never give up. He purchased, built and maintains a website for **NCHI**, but it's also his way of giving a tribute to my Mum. They were great friends, indeed if it had not been for Andy, Mum and I might not have achieved the great friendship that we had until the end. Each night the phone goes and it's yet another distressed victim and he never once complains. The time and effort we all have to put into this cause is worth it because if we save just one family from going through what we went through it will be worthwhile.

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