



As many of you may know, Alfie Evans, a 23-month-old child, was required to die last week by hospital officials at Alder Hey Hospital in Liverpool. Like the Charlie Gard case only a few months ago, Alfie's parents had fought the system for weeks to be allowed to get their little boy removed from the hospital in order to seek other treatment after doctors decided there was no value in continuing life-sustaining treatment. That was not to be as even the High Courts refused to allow this young couple to care for their son as they saw fit.

Alfie was not dying from his condition, but he was severely disabled. In fact, doctors had never actually provided his parents with any clear diagnosis, yet they decided there was no good reason to continue to support his life. In the end Alfie fought for several days for his own life even after being removed from life support.

If you ever needed a reason to understand why VSHL fights for life at every stage, this case is great proof of the critical work we all do. This sort of situation is much closer than many people know!

VSHL's efforts during the recent General Assembly to fix the terrible law in Virginia that gave doctors unlimited authority to end life-sustaining treatment for any reason whatsoever could not have been more timely. Although not perfect, it is so important that protections to prevent patients with disability or age from being denied treatment based on a doctor's decision, and the right to seek court action, are vitally important provisions. The notion that preserving life as the ultimate good is slipping away from many medical personnel as the cost factor of treating a so-called "hopeless case", is more and more a danger that families are facing right here in our country.

Please understand that we have more to do. Too many look at the profoundly disabled in our society as a drain on resources. Too costly to care for and not a life worth protecting. Many people are already becoming victims of health care rationing. It is only the pro-life movement that stands up and fights for every human life regardless of age, health or condition. Let's not forget that we are the voices of all the voiceless.

If you are troubled, as I am, considering what happened in Great Britain last week then remember that you are part of the solution here in Virginia. I encourage you to share tools to protect loved ones in the face of questionable medical actions. The Virginia Will to Live document from NRLC is a powerful legal document that will help clarify your wishes in medical situations. Please go to [this web site](#) from National Right to Life to read more and download your own Will to Live Document.

Let us all remember Alfie and his brave, broken hearted parents, Kate and Tom Evans, in our thoughts and prayer this week. The marvel of one little boy's brief, fragile life has been an awakening of many around the world to the dangers of medical systems that place value judgments on the people they serve. We must not forget little Charlie or Alfie as we continue to stand together to defend life.

