

# Toyah: They put my mum on the death pathway but didn't tell me

By **John Stevens**  
and **Sandi Jones**

**SHE** made the decision to move her mother into a hospice to ensure she spent her last days in as much comfort as possible.

But singer Toyah Willcox was horrified to discover that 81-year-old Barbara, who was battling cancer, had been placed on the controversial Liverpool Care Pathway without her permission.

Miss Willcox spoke of her shock when she overheard a nurse tell her mother: 'It's all right Barbara, the end is near.'

The star discovered that the hospice had been preparing to place her mother on the 'end of life care' system.

The LCP typically involves removing the tubes providing a patient with fluids and nutrition and giving them sedative drugs.

She said: 'For me it was not something I wanted my mother to be told about without me being there to support her.'

'I was not asked or referred to about her last days, so the decision to put her on the LCP was not one I was party to.'

'What unsettles me about the Liverpool Care Pathway is that my mother was told about it whilst



**Scared:** Mrs Barbara Willcox, 81

she was alone. I shed tears thinking how fearful she must have been at that moment.'

Miss Willcox told nurses that she and her family wanted to manage their mother's death in their own way.

Hours after the conversation Mrs Willcox became unconscious, and for the next four days her daughter nursed her.



**Horrified: The singer described the discovery as 'unsettling'**

She eventually died in her sleep in September 2011 - a week after being admitted to St Richard's Hospice in Worcester.

Her death marked the end of the complicated relationship between the singer and her mother.

She said: 'I would have liked to have been friends with my mother. But my memories of her are not particularly happy ones.'

'She actively didn't like her family and she would say that to us.'

'So she would be quite cruel to us and I think she realised that in the end. She realised that it was

**'She must have been so fearful'**

wrong.'

Miss Willcox, who chose never to have children, believes the time she spent caring for her mother finally allowed them to bond.

She said: 'I nursed her for her last two years which was really tough.'

'When she was unconscious I said a lot of what I wanted to say and I'm sure she could hear me. It was the only time I could tell her I loved her.'

'I could never say that to her when she was awake because she wouldn't have it.'

'They put her on the Liverpool Pathway and she screamed for me. I held her until she died. It was the

only time she allowed me to hold her.'

Miss Willcox, often described as the high priestess of punk, revealed that she and her husband musician Robert Fripp had found an unusual way of dealing with the loss.

She said: 'We mime picking the phone up, dialling, and it's how we deal with it.'

'I say: "Hi Mum, I'm in Bromley, we are in front of 500 women, say hello to Mum. I'm having a lovely time."'

The singer, whose career has spanned three decades, has released 13 top-40 singles and recorded 20 albums.

She is best known for the hits It's a Mystery, Thunder in the Mountains and I Want To Be Free.

Currently starring in a touring production of Hormonal Housewives, she has appeared in more than 40 plays, made ten feature films and presented television shows including Songs Of Praise.

Yesterday a spokesman for St Richard's Hospice said: 'We have not received any comments from family members directly.'

'And we do not comment on individual cases.'

'We support the appropriate use of the Liverpool Care Pathway and make it clear that it is not in any way about ending life, but rather about supporting the delivery of excellent end of life care.'