

## Our daughter, five, is scared of father with brain damage

A SEVERELY brain-damaged police officer and Gulf War veteran would be "horrified" at being kept alive because even his daughter is "scared of him", his wife told a judge yesterday as she broke down in tears.

The Court of Protection heard that Paul Briggs, 43, from Merseyside, was described by some doctors as being in a "minimally conscious state", as his wife, Lindsey, argued for his life-support to be withdrawn. The couple have a five-year-old daughter, Ella.

Mr Briggs, who is being treated at the Walton Centre in Liverpool, suffered a bleed on the brain, five fractures of his spine, bruising to internal organs and several other severe injuries in a car crash in July last year.

Mrs Briggs told the hearing in Manchester yesterday that he did not recognise her or respond when she visited. "The most important thing to him is independence," she said, adding that



Paul Briggs, 43, is described as in a 'minimally conscious state'. His wife said he would be horrified at his condition

he is a "loving dad" and the "kind of person who lives for the moment".

The court was told medical experts predict that, at best, Pc Briggs would remain severely physically disabled.

Asked what he might think of his situation, Mrs Briggs said: "I think he would be horrified. Horrified for his daughter, that she's scared of him."

She added: "I think he would see it as torture, just as hell, that everything he believes in and he lives for would just be taken away from him.

"He would be living for no reason."

She said when she looked into his eyes she saw "at best, nothing there, or at worst, distress or suffering".

But Conrad Hallin, representing the Walton Centre NHS Foundation Trust and the Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group, said doctors had noticed signs of improvement in his condition. The life expectancy of people in his condition is estimated to be nine to 10 years.

Pc Briggs's mother, Jan, said: "Every time I see Paul I can't help thinking about the person he was and it's very, very difficult to see him as he is now."

She added: "I just don't want him to suffer any more." The hearing is expected to last four days.

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Lindsey Briggs is asking a court to allow her husband's life-support to be withdrawn