

News

Parents challenge decision to deny daughter morphine

A couple are fighting for their terminally ill daughter's right to have pain relief after doctors took her off morphine because they believed it was causing liver damage.

Melody Driscoll, 11, suffers from Rett Syndrome, a genetic disorder that means she cannot walk or talk. Doctors at King's College Hospital in London say that her pain medication is unnecessary and could dramatically shorten her life. They are weaning her off the morphine and steroids.

Her parents, Karina and Nigel, are preparing to take the hospital to court in an effort to keep their daughter on morphine, which they believe is essential for her welfare.

Mrs Driscoll, 35, said that being pain free was more important than

longevity. "I know these drugs might make Melody die sooner but she's already terminally ill so we are going to lose her — we know that," she told the *Sunday Mirror*. "We want as much time with her as we can, but understand that should be about quality, not quantity. I'd rather have one more year with Melody where she was not in pain, than five years of watching her like this."

She and her husband Nigel have set up a fundraising page to enable them to hire a lawyer to fight the decision.

King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust said: "All decisions taken by our expert clinical team are in our patients' best interests. We are unable to comment further on this case."



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