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News

Peer: Continued lockdown for elderly ‘patronising and insulting’



By Daisy Busel

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Baroness Ros Altmann has urged the government not to keep elderly people in a continued coronavirus lockdown.

Speaking to talkRADIO’s Julia Hartley-Brewer, the Conservative peer said stopping over-70s from leaving their homes when the UK begins to ease social distancing measures was “patronising and insulting”.

It comes after NHS England’s national medical director Professor Stephen Powis said on Friday that officials will be studying whether stricter measures should continue to apply to the elderly when restrictions are relaxed.

Baroness Altmann, who was formerly a work and pensions minister, said: “At any given day of the year an older person is more likely to die than a younger person.

“So many of them [elderly people] are furious at the idea that they won’t be allowed the same freedom and liberty to leave their own home and go about their own life and be trusted to know what they need to look after themselves best.”

She added: “Some of them say, we’re more likely to die because we’re being locked down than being let out.”

However, campaigner Dame Esther Rantzen told talkRADIO on Monday that she supported continued enforced social distancing for the elderly.

“You’re protecting the resources, you’re protecting the NHS staff. We don’t want them to go down with this horrible disease, we don’t want to use up the capacity,” she told Mike Graham.