Epileptic boy Billy Caldwell, 12, given back medicinal cannabis oil that Home Office seized from mum

Charlotte Caldwell tried to bring the medication into the UK in a last-ditch effort to treat her gravely-ill son

Billy Caldwell
The Home Office is returning a severely epileptic boy’s cannabis oil medication after confiscating it from his mum.

Charlotte Caldwell tried to bring the medication into Heathrow Airport in a last-ditch effort to treat her gravely-ill 12-year-old son Billy, but it was seized by border officials.

A spokesman for the Caldwells announced that the drug - used to treat up to 100 seizures a day - has been released by the Home Office and it was on its way to the London hospital where Billy is being treated.

https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/breaking-epileptic-boy-billy-caldwell-12720611#ICID=sharebar_twitter
Home Secretary Sajid Javid confirmed he used an “exceptional power” to allow Billy to be treated with cannabis oil on the advice of doctors who have called the youngster’s situation a “medical emergency”.

Afterwards, Mrs Caldwell celebrated getting the licence, saying they had “achieved the impossible”.

It is understood the change of heart was triggered after a public outcry when the media revealed Billy’s life was on a knife edge following a series of seizures on Friday.

Mrs Caldwell, from Castlederg, Co Tyrone, Northern Ireland, had pleaded with the Home Office for days and accused a minister of likely signing her son’s “death warrant”.

On Saturday, she criticised the “dreadful, horrific, cruel experience” that has deeply affected 12-year-old Billy, saying: “His little body has been completely broken and his little mind.

“I truly believe that somewhere in the Home Office there’s someone with a heart and I truly believe that Billy was pulling on their heart strings.”

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Billy's mum has said he will "die" without the medication

She vowed to keep up her fight to allow others in the UK to have access to the medication they need.

Mrs Caldwell, 50, added: "My experience leaves me in no doubt that the Home Office can no longer play a role in the administration of medication for sick children in our country.

"Children are dying in our country and it needs to stop now."

Earlier, a family spokesman said: "The medication that she brought into the country and was confiscated, this medication is on the way to the hospital."

Billy Caldwell's emotional mum says minister signed son's 'death warrant' by stopping cannabis medication

The Home Secretary said: "This morning, I've used an exceptional power as Home Secretary to urgently issue a licence to allow Billy Caldwell to be treated with cannabis oil.

"This is a very complex situation, but our immediate priority is making sure Billy receives the most effective treatment possible in a safe way.

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"We have been in close contact with Billy's medical team overnight and my decision is based on the advice of senior clinicians who have made clear this is a medical emergency.

"The Policing Minister met with the family on Monday and since then has been working to reach an urgent solution."

Mrs Caldwell says Billy was seizure-free for more than 300 days while using the drug (Image: Phil Harris/Daily Mirror)

Before Saturday's decision, Mrs Caldwell had said her son would "die" without cannabis oil treatment that has seen his life-threatening seizures stop for more than 300 days while using it.

She said previously: “My son is dying. They are letting him die. The only thing that can save him, his anti-epileptic medication, is sitting on a desk in the Home Office out of our reach.”

This week she accused Policing Minister Nick Hurd of having "likely signed my son's death warrant" ahead of a meeting.

https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/breaking-epileptic-boy-billy-caldwell-12720611#ICID=sharebar_twitter
On Saturday, she said the boy’s condition had worsened since the medication ran out and warned that his seizures had intensified, pushing him into a “crisis situation”.

But, she added, the Home Office had been working with the family “extremely hard” throughout the night to negotiate access to the medication.

Billy and his mum travelled to Canada to obtain medical cannabis oil (Image: PA)

Billy had travelled to Toronto, Canada with his mum to obtain a six-month supply of cannabis oil after his doctor in the UK was ordered to stop prescribing it.

But Mrs Caldwell was stopped by Border Force officials on Monday as she attempted to bring the drug, which was prescribed by a Canadian hospital, into the country.

The Home Office had previously said that while it was sympathetic to the boy's plight, it had a duty to stop banned substances from entering Britain.

Billy was then admitted to London’s Chelsea and Westminster Hospital on Friday after suffering several seizures.

The youngster started the treatment in 2016 in the US, where medical marijuana is legal.

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He became the first person in the UK to receive a prescription after his local GP in Northern Ireland, Brendan O'Hare, began writing scripts.

Dr O'Hare was summoned to a meeting with Home Office officials recently and told to stop.

The Caldwell family have received support from several members of parliament from different political parties in their fight to obtain a licence that would allow Billy to be treated with the drug.

Cannabis is an illegal class B drug under British law and is not recognised as having a therapeutic value.

It can be used for research purposes and clinical trials, but only under a Home Office licence.