



## **Wife of Muslim man in a vegetative state pleads for him to be kept alive so he can have a 'good death' in line with his faith**

- **She said he reacted to the presence of family and had 'sniffed' perfume brought back from Mecca**
- **NHS Trust wants permission not to resuscitate if his condition deteriorates further**
- **The 55-year-old has severe brain damage following a heart attack**
- **His wife told the court his religious beliefs mean 'prolonging life for as long as possible'**

By [Emma Reynolds](#) and [Martin Robinson](#)

A disabled man who is in a vegetative state must be kept alive for as long as possible so he can have a 'good' Muslim death, his wife has pleaded.

She told the High Court her 55-year-old husband responds to family visiting the hospital in Greater Manchester and enjoyed smelling some perfume 'brought from Mecca' despite his severe brain damage. The man, who can only be referred to as L, had a heart attack last month and the Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust has applied for an order allowing it not to resuscitate if his condition deteriorates further.

'Responsive': The wife of the 55-year-old man told the Court of Protection at the Royal Courts of Justice, pictured, that not resuscitating him would go against his wishes

His wife, however, told a judge that her husband had 'sniffed' the perfume and reacts to touch.

The family argue that it would be contrary to the religious beliefs of L, who suffered a cardiac arrest in mid-July, not to do all that could be done to keep him living for as long as possible.

Pleading for doctors to continue doing all they can to save him, his wife of 40 years told the court today he has shown active signs of life.

Speaking through an interpreter, the mother-of-eight criticised the quality of care her husband has received from hospital staff.

Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust, which is based in Oldham, is seeking a court declaration that it would not be in his best interests to offer him ventilation or resuscitation if there was 'a life-threatening event'.

Religious beliefs: The man's wife said he was able to 'sniff' perfume brought back from Mecca, pictured Claire Watson, appearing for the Trust, said it was the unanimous view of clinicians treating L, as well as independent experts, that he was in a persistent vegetative state 'with minimal prospects of improving any neurological function and no meaningful prospect of further recovery'.

Ms Watson told Mr Justice Moylan, sitting in the Court of Protection in London, that treatment would lead to 'the prolongation of death and lack of dignity'.

But Mrs L said her husband was 'a very good Muslim' and had said he wanted 'a good death in line with

his faith' - and that involved prolonging life 'for as long as you can'.

Jenni Richards QC, appearing for Mrs L, asked her why she disagreed with the doctors' diagnosis that he was in a vegetative state and incapable of any meaningful response to anyone or his environment.

Mrs L said that on occasions when the family visits him, her husband 'takes a deep breath and is aware that someone is there'.

Mrs L described how she had visited her husband on the day of Eid, following the conclusion of Ramadan at the weekend.

She said through the interpreter: 'I took a scarf and there was perfume he (Mr L) himself had brought from Mecca, so I put it on that scarf.

'Then we put the scarf in his hands and we felt like somebody is having a sniff, and he took a sniff of it.

'It is true sometimes he does not realise what is happening, but sometimes he does.'