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'I COULDN'T HUG MY DAUGHTER FOR WEEKS TO PROTECT PATIENTS'

By **Katherine Lawton**

A SINGLE mother who had to isolate herself from her only child for two months so she could work on the front line at a nursing home says she is still waiting to receive the promised Covid-19 Pandemic Payment.

Joyce Timmons, 50, a catering manager at Maymount Care Centre in Lucan, Co. Dublin, said the separation from her daughter was 'very tough', but she lived alone to prioritise the home's 'vulnerable' elderly residents.

At the protest yesterday, Ms Timmons told the Irish Daily Mail: 'I really missed my child and I felt very isolated. I moved my daughter out of my house for two months so I wouldn't bring anything to the nursing home.

'I wanted to keep the residents as safe as possible and I didn't want to bring anything back to my daughter either. We had to go in with a smile on our faces every day, but I hadn't hugged her in weeks and that was very tough.

'She moved into my sister's and I stayed at my house. Some of my colleagues had families and they had to ship everybody off.'

Ms Timmons added: 'Staff in private nursing homes were all heroes. The residents we care for were so vulnerable with their age and with Covid. We were at ground zero. We did the best we could and went above and beyond any expectations they had of us, yet we still haven't received

our payment.'

Ms Timmons said she saw elderly people get sick and caught the virus herself while working on the front line.

'We got very close to our residents,' she said. 'Seeing them sick, it wasn't easy, but we had to do that. These are residents that we really care for and we see as family.

'I got Covid. I believe it attacks your weak spots. I have bad kidneys and it attacked them, and my mental health wasn't great and it attacked that.

'I felt very isolated. Where is the Government's duty of care to us? My family was put on the back burner. They should be able to pay us,' Ms Timmons said.

'Staff in homes were all heroes'



Isolated: Joyce Timmons