



Dianne Ngoza faces an anxious wait. Photos: NEIL CROSS

Fight on to save Dianne from deportation

Community rallies to back Zambian nurse

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A Zambian-born nurse who has been living in Barrow could be on the brink of being deported.

Dianne Ngoza (47), has lived at various addresses across Lancashire in her 14 years in the country. But she now faces an anxious wait to find out if she can stay.

The mum-of-one moved to the UK in 2002 to work as a nurse – one of many overseas medical staff working in the NHS – before volunteering for a number of community organisations and churches across the Ribble Valley.

The budding professor of

electrical engineering was left destitute and has been forced to live in shelters across the north west for many months.

She was detained on November 16th, but thanks to persistent campaigning by dozens of Ribble Valley residents she was allowed to stay.

Dianne was then kept at Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre, in Bedford, before friends Tom and Kathryn Clay agreed her £500 insurance, allowing her to leave on bail.

Dianne now lives at their Ribble Valley home in Barrow and is urging local folk to get behind her allowing her to live and work in England.

She said: "When I lived in Zambia my family were involved in a lot of politics which meant we were never safe.

"We moved around a lot and

tried to stay in the country, but it just wasn't possible because we were scared for our lives. I came to England to work as a nurse and before my two-year visa expired I went to apply to renew it.

"After problems with my lawyers including them incorrectly applying for asylum I was evicted from my home.

"I left Zambia 22 years ago and I don't have any contact there; in fact, I have no network of social, family or work with anyone back in Africa.

"My residence permit for South Africa has expired. After such a long time, I don't consider myself to be Zambian or South African: I consider myself British. I have no work experience in Africa and my qualifications from there are no longer valid. I only speak English and I



Dianne Ngoza faces the prospect of deportation after 14 years in the UK, but has received support from across the community and especially from Tom and Kathryn Clay

don't speak any African dialect.

"I would like to live with dignity in this country, working and taking care of myself, my daughter and others and the support I have received from the community has been amazing and I can't thank everyone enough.

Tom said: "We instantly liked Dianne the first time we met her. She is a very talented person with lots to offer to this

country and we want to do everything we can do to help her stay in this country."

Kathryn added: "Although this is a personal crisis for Dianne, it's not about religion, creed or colour, this is a humanitarian crisis and we are partly responsible for it. The judge did a very thorough and fair assessment of the case and concluded that she should be released on bail and I am delighted.

"However, we just want to campaign so that the Government listens and allows Dianne to remain and work in the UK."

Dianne's support has been widespread including Ribbles Valley MP Nigel Evans and charity Caritas Diocese of Salford.

Director of the charity, Mark Wiggin said: "I get drawn to people who need help and Dianne was one of those people.

"She has so much dignity

and expects nothing but is so grateful for everything she gets. That's what makes us want to do everything we can to help her."

Meanwhile, MP Nigel Evans has declared to take Dianne's plight to Parliament. He commented: "It is deeply saddening that Dianne is being put in her current situation.

"Dianne is as ardently attached to Lancashire as anyone else who lives here and I believe

that she should be given leave to remain. It is perfectly clear that I am not the only one either.

"I was overwhelmed by the volume of correspondence I received from my constituents in support of Dianne. I wrote to Robert Goodwill MP, the Minister of State for Immigration, to compel him to look into the matter given the level of outrage from the public.

"I am further concerned

by Dianne's treatment in Yarl's Wood and the way that she was separated from her daughter.

"This matter is far from over and it is vitally important that we remember that Dianne's way of life is at stake.

"We must all continue to raise our voices for Dianne. We must carry on making as much noise as possible to show that the deportation of Dianne Ngoza is not acceptable."