



Linda with her beloved mum Rita

Linda's tragic CONFESSION

The Loose Woman opens up about her darkest day

Losing a loved one is never an easy experience and *Birds Of A Feather* star Linda Robson has revealed the tragic decision she took to help her own mother, Rita, pass away.

'My mum was in a Marie Curie hospital for five months,' said Linda in a startling confession, 'and it was sort of put into our hands if we wanted to assist her passing nicely, rather than watch her struggle. They came and talked to us about the Liverpool Care Pathway [which sets out methods for palliative care for terminally ill patients]. That was really hard.'

Linda's heart-wrenching admission came in the wake of the right-to-die debate sparked by the Hayley Cropper storyline in *Coronation Street* last month, which saw the much-loved character take her own life before cancer took over her body and brain completely. Hayley's death lead to a discussion on *Loose Women* about the controversial decision, when Linda made her confession.

Linda, 55, revealed, 'Mum had been in there a long time. She had dementia and cancer, so they introduced morphine gradually and she did slip away in no pain at all. But she wasn't able to decide that herself - we had to do that.' It was a tough

Linda talked about her painful decision in the wake of the Hayley Cropper right-to-die storyline

choice for all the family, as Linda adds, 'It was really hard for me and my two sisters to sit down and decide.'

'We sat holding her hand'

Linda was always close to her mum, who passed away in August 2012 at the age of 75 and has previously spoken about how she even spent nights sleeping on the hospice floor, alongside her sisters Debbie and Tina, and cousin Jackie, to be with Rita in her last days.

'The nurse woke us at 2.30am to tell us she was gone,' said Linda. 'We were so disorientated, we said 'Who's gone?' The howling that we did when we realised... We stayed there with mum all day until 4pm. We sat holding her hand.'

Fortunately, Linda was able to rely on her own close-knit family for comfort, with husband Mark and children Lauren, 30, Louis, 21, and Bobbie, 16, to lean on. And she's also spoken about how her granddaughter, Lila, one, helped her through her grief and her happiness that Rita was able to meet her great-

granddaughter before she died. 'I am obsessed with my beautiful granddaughter,' says Linda. 'To say she is very special to me would be an understatement.'

We're sure those closest to Linda will be proud of her bravery in speaking out about this emotional time. **EW**

'WE HOWLED WHEN WE REALISED'

LIVERPOOL CARE PATHWAY



Dr Ellie explains...

'The LCP (Liverpool Care Pathway) was a system designed to offer dying people the best care as it can be hard to make clinical decisions at

such an emotional time. The LCP gave guidelines on how to look after a dying person: such as what pain relief to use or how to control sickness. Its aim was to standardise care to help doctors and relatives make difficult decisions, but it was stopped as it caused controversy because of cases where patients and their relatives felt the LCP was discussed even though the patient was not dying.'

WORDS: HELEN STUART. PHOTOS: REX. TO KNOW MORE ABOUT HELPING FRIENDS AND RELATIVES SUFFERING FROM CANCER, SEE MACMILLAN.ORG.UK OR CALL 0808 808 0000