

**UK COVID-19 INQUIRY DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE -
AMENDED DRAFT SHARED WITH THE PRIME MINISTER
BY INQUIRY CHAIR - 10 JANUARY 2021**

The inquiry will consider and report on the state's preparations and response to the pandemic in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, up to and including the Inquiry's formal setting-up date. In doing so, it will consider reserved and devolved matters in all four nations, as necessary, but will seek to minimise duplication of investigation, evidence gathering and reporting with any other public inquiry established by the devolved administrations.

The purposes of the inquiry are to:

1. Produce a factual narrative of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the UK, and of the UK's response, including:

- In relation to central and local public health decision-making:
 - preparedness and resilience;
 - how decisions were made, communicated and implemented;
 - legislative and regulatory control;
 - shielding and the protection of the clinically vulnerable;
 - the use of lockdowns and other 'non-pharmaceutical' interventions such as social distancing and the use of face coverings;
 - the closure and reopening of schools, and of the hospitality, retail, sport and leisure sectors, and cultural institutions;
 - housing and homelessness;
 - prisons and other places of detention;
 - the justice system; and
 - travel restrictions and border controls.
- The response of the UK's health and care systems, including:
 - NHS capacity and resilience;
 - the management of the pandemic in hospitals, including infection prevention and control, triage, critical care capacity, the impact on staff and staffing levels, and the discharge of patients;
 - the management of the pandemic in care homes and other care settings, including infection prevention and control, the transfer of residents to or from homes, treatment and care of residents, restrictions on visiting, and changes to inspections;
 - the procurement and distribution of key equipment and supplies, including PPE and ventilators;
 - testing and contact tracing, and isolation; and
 - the development and delivery of therapeutics and vaccines.
- The economic response to the pandemic and its impact, including government interventions by way of:
 - support for businesses and jobs, including the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme, loans schemes, business rates relief and grants;

- funding for local government services, education and children's services; and
- benefits and sick pay, and support for vulnerable people.

2. Identify the lessons to be learned from the above, thereby to inform the UK's preparations for future pandemics.

In meeting these purposes, the Inquiry will:

- consider the experiences of bereaved families and others who have suffered hardship or loss as a result of the pandemic (but will not investigate in detail individual cases of harm or death);
- consider the impact on NHS staff and care workers, and other key workers;
- consider any disparities evident in the impact of the pandemic and the state's response, including those relating to age, disability, race, sex and other protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010;
- have reasonable regard to relevant international comparisons; and
- produce its reports (including interim reports) and any recommendations in a timely manner.