



**NOTICE OF DETERMINATION**  
**CORE PARTICIPANT APPLICATION**  
**MODULE 3 - PRACTITIONERS IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST**

**Introduction**

1. In my [Opening Statement](#) on 21 July 2022, I explained that Modules would be announced and opened in sequence, with those wishing to take a formal role in the Inquiry invited to apply to become Core Participants for each Module. On 8 November 2022, the Inquiry opened Module 3 and invited anyone who wished to be considered as a Core Participant to that Module to submit an application in writing to the Solicitor to the Inquiry by 5 December 2022
2. The Inquiry has published the Provisional Outline of Scope for Module 3, which states that this Module will consider the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on healthcare systems in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Further Modules will be announced and opened in due course, to address other aspects of the Inquiry's Terms of Reference.
3. On 5 December 2022 the Inquiry received an application from Practitioners in the Public Interest ("the Applicant") for Core Participant status in Module 3.
4. I made a provisional decision dated 16 January 2023 not to designate the Applicant as a Core Participant in Module 3, thereby declining the application ("the Provisional Decision"). The Applicant was provided with an opportunity to renew the application in writing by 4pm on 23 January 2023.
5. The Applicant did not renew the application by the prescribed deadline. Accordingly, this Notice sets out my final decision on the application.

## Application

6. Applications for Core Participant status are considered in accordance with Rule 5 of the Inquiry Rules 2006, which provides:

*5.—(1) The chairman may designate a person as a core participant at any time during the course of the inquiry, provided that person consents to being so designated.*

*(2) In deciding whether to designate a person as a core participant, the chairman must in particular consider whether—*

- (a) the person played, or may have played, a direct and significant role in relation to the matters to which the inquiry relates;*
- (b) the person has a significant interest in an important aspect of the matters to which the inquiry relates; or*
- (c) the person may be subject to explicit or significant criticism during the inquiry proceedings or in the report, or in any interim report.*

*(3) A person ceases to be a core participant on—*

- (a) the date specified by the chairman in writing; or*
- (b) the end of the inquiry.*

7. In accordance with the approach set out in my Opening Statement and the Inquiry's [Core Participant Protocol](#), I have considered whether the application fulfils the requirements set out in Rule 5(2) in relation to the issues set out in the Provisional Outline of Scope for Module 3.

## Summary of Application

8. The Applicant is described as a collective of 11 individuals who are said to have professional experience in healthcare, experience in academic research in health, public policy, leadership of a local authority responsible for public health, housing and social care, leadership of a nationwide pensioners organisation, leadership roles in professional bodies including a Royal College, senior clinical and/or management responsibilities at NHS Trusts providing hospital and social care and trade union experience. The Applicant also relies upon the fact that a number of its members were involved in the People's Covid Inquiry. The Applicant says that there will be other Core Participants with “matching or superior experience” but it is said that the Applicant group is unique in bringing together the range of its members’ understanding and

experience for the particular focus required in Module 3. It is said that collectively, the Applicant brings an understanding of how public services can and should work together across primary care, secondary care in hospital and community, local authority and public health, hospital, and academic institutions and the voluntary sector. The application also includes examples of the work its members have previously undertaken.

### **Decision for the Applicant**

9. I have considered with great care everything that is said in the application. Having done so, I consider that the Applicant does not meet the criteria set out in Rule 5 for designation as a Core Participant in Module 3 and, therefore, I have decided not to designate the Applicant as a Core Participant in Module 3.
10. Module 3 will consider the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on healthcare systems in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. This will include consideration of the healthcare consequences of how the governments and the public responded to the pandemic. It will examine the capacity of healthcare systems to respond to a pandemic and how this evolved during the pandemic. It will consider the primary, secondary and tertiary healthcare sectors and services and people's experience of healthcare during the pandemic, including through illustrative accounts. It will also examine healthcare-related inequalities (such as in relation to death rates, PPE and oximeters), with further detailed consideration in a separate designated Module.
11. The application is put on the basis that as a result of the individual experience and knowledge of the 11 individuals who collectively make up the Applicant and the Applicant's collective understanding, it has an important contribution to offer to the Inquiry as a Core Participant. The application does not state in express terms the specific grounds within Rule 5(2) of the Inquiry Rules 2006 on which it is put. I have nonetheless gone on to consider the criteria set out in Rule 5(2).
12. While some of the members of the Applicant may have played a direct role in healthcare systems, which is the focus of Module 3, I do not consider that the Applicant played a direct and significant role in healthcare systems. While the Applicant can be said to have a broad interest in such matters, this does not amount

to a significant interest in an important aspect of the matters to which Module 3 relates in accordance with Rule 5(2)(b). I therefore conclude that neither Rule 5(2)(a) nor 5(2)(b) of the Inquiry Rules 2006 are met.

13. It is not necessary for an individual or organisation to be a Core Participant in order to provide evidence to the Inquiry. It is likely that the Inquiry will in due course seek information from a range of individuals, organisations and bodies who may have information relevant to the issues raised in the Modules and, where appropriate, make requests for witness statements and documents.
14. For all of those reasons, having considered all of the information provided by the Applicant in light of the Provisional Outline of Scope for Module 3, I have decided that the Applicant should not be designated as a Core Participant in Module 3 and I confirm that this is my final decision.
15. I will keep the scope of Module 3 under review. My decision not to designate the Applicant as a Core Participant in Module 3 does not preclude it from making any further applications in respect of any later modules. I will consider any future applications the Applicant may wish to make on their merits at the time they are made.

**Rt Hon Baroness (Heather) Hallett DBE**  
**Chair of the UK Covid-19 Inquiry**  
**13 February 2023**