



**NOTICE OF DETERMINATION**  
**CORE PARTICIPANT APPLICATION**  
**MODULE 3 - ROYAL COLLEGE OF PSYCHIATRISTS**

**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 2 December 2022 the Inquiry received an application from the Royal College of Psychiatrists ("the Applicant") for Core Participant status in Module 3.
4. I made a provisional decision dated 9 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 16 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 the professional medical body responsible for supporting psychiatrists. It represents over 20,000 members across the UK. The Applicant sets out that it has played, and continues to play, a direct and significant role in the UK's response to the Covid-19 pandemic. It is said to have played a key leadership role throughout the pandemic in advocating for its members, the teams they work with and the patients and carers who receive treatment and support. The Applicant engaged extensively with Government bodies and other organisations across the UK. The Applicant also reports that it developed, published and disseminated guidance for clinicians across the UK. It also operated a Covid-19 Mental Health Improvement

Network where clinicians could share relevant learning and information with services and healthcare professionals.

9. The Applicant states that Module 3 needs to include the voice of those who treated, and continue to treat, people with mental illness as well as those whose mental health was affected by Covid-19. The Applicant says that it has a significant interest in Module 3 because it is the body which represents at least 90% of registered psychiatrists in the UK, and more than 90% of mental health providers in the UK participate in at least one of its quality and accreditation networks. The Applicant states that it explored making an application for Core Participant status with the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges (“the Academy”) but felt that the Academy’s broad representative role might preclude the Applicant from making detailed representations to the Inquiry about the impact the pandemic had on the preparedness and delivery of high-quality mental health services.

### **Decision for the Applicant**

10. I have considered with great care everything that is said in the application. Having done so, I have decided not to designate the Applicant as a Core Participant in Module 3.
11. 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.
12. The application is put on the basis that the Applicant played a direct and significant role in the matters to which Module 3 relates (Rule 5(2)(a)), and that the Applicant has a significant interest in an important aspect of the matters to which Module 3 relates (Rule 5(2)(b)).

13. I consider that the Applicant, by way of its representation of psychiatrists, played a direct and significant role in healthcare systems and also has a significant interest in an important aspect of Module 3. However, while I am bound to consider the factors set out in Rule 5(2), it is also open to me to take into account other relevant factors. I am not obliged to designate any particular person or organisation as a Core Participant. I am determined to run the Inquiry as thoroughly and as efficiently as possible, bearing in mind the Inquiry's wide-ranging Terms of Reference and the need for the Inquiry process to be rigorous and fair.
14. I have granted Core Participant status in Module 3 to the Academy. The Applicant is a member of the Academy. The Academy's application stated that it had consulted with all its member organisations on the Academy's decision to apply for Core Participant status and that all its member organisations supported the Academy's decision and indicated their wish to be involved with and support the Academy's role as a Core Participant, should it be appointed. I consider that, in the context of this application, the interests of the effective and efficient management of the Inquiry are best met by the Academy representing the interests of the Applicant as one of its member organisations.
15. As I have already indicated, I recognise that the Applicant may be able to provide assistance to Module 3. However, 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.
16. 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.
17. 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**