



NOTICE OF DETERMINATION
CORE PARTICIPANT APPLICATION
MODULE 3 - HEALTH ADVISORY AND RECOVERY TEAM

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 the Health Advisory and Recovery Team ("the Applicant") for Core Participant status in Module 3.
4. I made a provisional decision dated 13 January 2023 not to designate the Applicant as a Core Participant in Module 3, thereby declining its application ("the Provisional Decision"). The Applicant was provided with an opportunity to renew the application in writing by 4pm on 20 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 describes itself as a group of doctors, scientists, economists, psychologists and other professionals, who came together to share concerns about policy making and guidance relating to Covid-19. The application explains that the Applicant is a voluntary group with no external funding, the members of which have given up their time to challenge the “official narrative when it has been demonstrably at odds with the real world data”. The Applicant refers to a variety of evidential sources which raise issues it says must be investigated and interrogated including: the accuracy of Covid-19 death certification, the impact of people not seeking or receiving medical treatment, the impact of the Covid-19 response on conditions other than Covid-19, including cancer diagnoses, the impact of routine Covid-19 testing by asymptomatic medical staff, the effectiveness of shielding and the “marked difference”

in protocols for treating Covid pneumonia compared to those in place for other viral pneumonias.

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 Applicant states that it is applying as an independent organisation under Rule 5(2)(b) to be a Core Participant in Module 3. The application sets out a number of matters which the Applicant contends are critical to the Inquiry's understanding of events. While the application does not specifically set out why the Applicant considers it satisfies the criteria in Rule 5(2), I have nonetheless considered whether the Applicant does meet any of the limbs of that Rule.
12. I do not consider that the Applicant played or may have played a direct and significant role in the matters to which Module 3 relates (Rule 5(2)(a)). As a voluntary group of doctors, scientists, economists, psychologists and other professionals, the Applicant can be said to have an interest in such matters. However, this does not amount to significant interest in an important aspect of the matters to which Module 3 relates in accordance with Rule 5(2)(b). It would not be practicable to grant Core Participant status to everyone with an interest in scientific or health research arising from the

Covid-19 pandemic. I therefore do not consider that the Applicant meets the criteria set out in Rule 5(2) for designation as a Core Participant in Module 3.

13. I bear in mind that the Applicant has placed emphasis on the matters about which it would like to provide the Inquiry with evidence. 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.
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 Participants 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

14 February 2023