



**NOTICE OF DETERMINATION**  
**CORE PARTICIPANT APPLICATION**  
**MODULE 4 - SCOTTISH COVID BEREAVED**

**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 5 June 2023, the Inquiry opened Module 4 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 30 June 2023.
2. The Inquiry has published the [Provisional Outline of Scope](#) for Module 4, which states that this module will consider a range of issues relating to the development of Covid-19 vaccines and the implementation of the vaccine rollout programme in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Issues relating to the treatment of Covid-19 through both existing and new medications will be examined in parallel. Further modules will be announced and opened in due course, to address other aspects of the Inquiry's Terms of Reference.
3. On 30 June 2023 the Inquiry received an application from Scottish Covid Bereaved ("the Applicant") for Core Participant status in Module 4. This Notice sets out my determination of the application.

**Application**

4. 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.*

5. In accordance with the approach set out in my Opening Statement and the Inquiry's [Core Participant Protocol](#), I 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 4.

## **Summary of Application**

6. The application is made by the Scottish Covid Bereaved ("**SCB**"). SCB relies on both Rule 5(2)(a) and (b) of the Inquiry Rules 2006, as well as section 17 of the Inquiries Act 2005.
7. SCB's application points out that access to the vaccination programme in Scotland lagged behind the vaccine roll-out in England; and varied significantly across different health boards in Scotland. It sets out a number of its members' direct experiences in relation to the vaccine roll-out, such as poor record keeping of vaccine administration in care homes, wastage of vaccine doses and difficulty with accessing vaccine appointments for those living in rural areas, amongst others.
8. The application states that SCB are keen to share their experiences in relation to the treatment of Covid-19, noting that SCB had loved ones who were not given or not timeously given, oxygen therapy, ventilation or anti-viral medication.
9. In relation to vaccine safety, the application notes that certain members of SCB had adverse reactions to the vaccine and it is of importance to the SCB that there is a user-friendly scheme for vaccine damage payments.

## **Decision for the Applicant**

10. I wish to reiterate my deep sympathy to each and every individual who has experienced the loss of a loved one as a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic including those represented by the Applicant.
11. I have considered with great care everything that is said in the application. Having done so, I have decided to designate the Applicant as a Core Participant in Module 4.
12. The Core Participant Protocol provides that while I am bound to consider the factors set out in Rule 5(2), it is open to me to take into account other relevant matters. I am also not bound to designate a person or organisation which meets the criteria set out in Rule 5 as a Core Participant. I have a wide discretion which I exercise fairly and with an open mind. The Protocol further explains that I particularly invite applications from groups of individuals and organisations with similar interests, which assists the fair and efficient running of the Inquiry. I additionally have regard to my duty to act with fairness and with regard to the need to avoid any unnecessary cost to public funds.
13. Module 4 will consider the use of the Covid-19 vaccine and therapeutics. This will include consideration of the delivery of the vaccine and the use of new and existing therapeutics in each of the devolved nations. It will also consider disparities in vaccine uptake and the reasons for vaccine hesitancy, in addition to vaccine safety concerns.
14. I consider that the Applicant is well placed to assist the Inquiry to achieve its aims in Module 4 by representing the collective interests of a broad spectrum of those bereaved in Scotland as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic in relation to matters relevant to Module 4.

## **Legal Representation**

15. Applications for designation as the Recognised Legal Representative of a Core Participant are governed by Rules 6 and 7 of the Inquiry Rules 2006, which provide:

*6.—(1) Where—*

*(a) a core participant, other than a core participant referred to in rule 7; or*  
*(b) any other person required or permitted to give evidence or produce documents during the course of the inquiry,*  
*has appointed a qualified lawyer to act on that person's behalf, the chairman must designate that lawyer as that person's recognised legal representative in respect of the inquiry proceedings.*

*7.—(1) This rule applies where there are two or more core participants, each of whom seeks to be legally represented, and the chairman considers that—*

- (a) their interests in the outcome of the inquiry are similar;*  
*(b) the facts they are likely to rely on in the course of the inquiry are similar;*  
*and*  
*(c) it is fair and proper for them to be jointly represented.*

*(2) The chairman must direct that those core participants shall be represented by a single recognised legal representative, and the chairman may designate a qualified lawyer for that purpose.*

*(3) Subject to paragraph (4), any designation must be agreed by the core participants in question.*

*(4) If no agreement on a designation is forthcoming within a reasonable period, the chairman may designate an appropriate lawyer who, in his opinion, has sufficient knowledge and experience to act in this capacity.*

16. I am satisfied that Scottish Covid Bereaved has appointed Sarah Murray of Aamer Anwar and Co as its qualified lawyer in relation to this Module. I therefore designate Ms Murray as Scottish Covid Bereaved's recognised legal representative in accordance with Rule 6(1).

17. Directions will be given in relation to applications for an award under section 40(1)(b) of the Inquiries Act 2005 of expenses to be incurred in respect of legal representation, at the forthcoming preliminary hearing. I will determine any such applications in accordance with the provisions of section 40 of the Inquiries Act 2005, the Inquiry Rules 2006, the [Prime Minister's determination](#) under section 40(4) and the [Inquiry's Costs Protocol](#).

**Rt Hon Baroness Heather Hallett DBE**  
**Chair of the UK Covid-19 Inquiry**  
**17 July 2023**