



NOTICE OF DETERMINATION
CORE PARTICIPANT APPLICATION
MODULE 4 - CHILDREN'S COVID VACCINE ADVISORY COUNCIL

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 the Children's Covid Vaccine Advisory Council ("CCVAC") for Core Participant status in Module 4.
4. I made a provisional decision not to designate CCVAC as a Core Participant in Module 4, thereby declining its application ("the Provisional Decision"), on 17 July 2023. CCVAC was provided with an opportunity to renew the application in writing by 4pm on 24 July 2023.

5. On 24 July 2023, CCVAC submitted a renewed application for Core Participant status in Module 4. This notice sets out my determination of CCVAC's application for Core Participant status in Module 4.

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 4.

Summary of Application

8. In its original application, the applicant explained that CCVAC was launched in February 2022 amid mounting concerns about the safety or necessity of Covid-19 vaccines for children, albeit the work of CCVAC dates back to February 2021. CCVAC said that it could assist in some of the detailed questioning around the decision making process for the roll-out of the vaccines to children. CCVAC noted that it

corresponded (and continues to correspond) with the MHRA, the JCVI, the CMO and the Secretary of State in relation to the vaccination of children.

9. In its renewed application, CCVAC points to the fact that it is the only group of health professionals which has been consistently questioning the appropriateness of mRNA or DNA vaccines for children. It refers to having become aware, since its original application, of children being recruited to a Moderna booster trial in a number of UK centres. CCVAC says it is concerned that this appears to be in contravention of the Declaration of Helsinki and the Medicines for Human Use (Clinical Trials) Regulations 2004. CCVAC notes that many members of its group have been referred by DHSC to the Counter Disinformation Unit in June 2021. It says that questions posed to the Secretary of State and MHRA over the last 2 years have been consistently ignored, and that if such questions had been heeded, would have reduced the risk of harm to children.
10. CCVAC asks for assurance that if it is not granted Core Participant status, there is another body which has taken on the role of speaking up for children in respect of what it describes as a potentially life-changing procedure.

Decision for the Applicant

11. I have considered with great care everything that is said in CCVAC's renewed application. I have also reminded myself of what was said in the original application to enable me to assess the merits of the application as a whole. Having done so, in my discretion, I have decided not to grant CCVAC Core Participant status in Module 4 of the Inquiry.
12. CCVAC clearly has a deep and genuine concern for the issues set out in the application and renewed application. While CCVAC clearly has an interest in Module 4 matters, in particular the vaccination of children, I do not consider, having regard in particular to the need to manage the Inquiry effectively and efficiently, that the interest is a "significant interest" for the purposes of Rule 5(2)(b).
13. 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. Given the vast numbers of people who were involved with, or adversely affected by, the Covid-19 pandemic, very many people and organisations in this country could potentially have an interest in the Inquiry. It would not be practicable to grant Core Participant status to every such individual or body. Further, I do not consider that it is necessary for me to grant Core Participant status to CCVAC (or any other specific group representing the interests of children) to enable me appropriately to consider matters relevant to the interests of children which fall within the scope of Module 4.

14. I reiterate that it is not necessary for an individual or organisation to be a Core Participant in order to provide evidence to the Inquiry. CCVAC may have relevant information to give in relation to matters being examined in the Inquiry and I have asked the Module 4 legal team to liaise with CCVAC to make sure the concerns it raises are reflected in the Inquiry investigation.
15. For all of these reasons, having considered all of the information provided by CCVAC, and in light of the Provisional Outline of Scope for Module 4, I consider that CCVAC does not have a significant interest in an important aspect of the matters to which Module 4 relates. Taking into account all relevant considerations, I have decided that CCVAC should not be designated as a Core Participant in Module 4 and I confirm that this is my final decision.
16. I will keep the scope of Module 4 under review. My decision not to designate CCVAC as a Core Participant in Module 4 does not preclude it from making any further applications in respect of later modules. I will consider any future applications CCVAC 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
4 August 2023