

Reference for Request - M2/SAGE/01/MM

1. A brief overview of your qualifications, career history, professional expertise and major publications.

I am a consultant in Infectious Diseases at University College London Hospital and Associate Professor at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine. I hold post graduate qualifications in Infectious Diseases (MSc, DTM&H) and Public Health and Epidemiology (PhD).

I have worked predominantly on the epidemiology of various infectious diseases in both the UK and overseas. I have published >150 peer-reviewed papers on a range of topics including in major journals such as the Lancet, the New England Journal of Medicine, Lancet Infectious Diseases and Lancet Respiratory Medicine.

I led the first paper to definitively show that the viral load of COVID-19 was associated with the onward risk of transmission ([https://www.thelancet.com/journals/laninf/article/PIIS1473-3099\(20\)30985-3/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/laninf/article/PIIS1473-3099(20)30985-3/fulltext)) and have been a co-investigator on the PHOSP-COVID study a large UK wide study on long term outcomes following COVID-19. I have also held grants from NIHR on the transmission of SARS-CoV-2 in the UK Jewish population and from the EU on SARS-CoV-2 surveillance in Ghana.

2. A list of the groups (i.e. SAGE and/or any of its sub-groups) in which you have been a participant, and the relevant time periods.

I was an invited speaker at SAGE on a single occasion. Details are included as my answer to the following question

I was a member of the secretariat for UK-CTAP from approx. December 2021 through to March 2022.

3. An overview of your involvement with those groups between January 2020 and February 2022, including:

- 1. When and how you came to be a participant;**
- 2. The number of meetings you attended, and your contributions to those meetings;**
- 3. Your role in providing research, information and advice.**

SAGE: I attended a single SAGE meeting. I was invited to present results of a study that had been conducted examining high rates of COVID-19 infection amongst the strictly orthodox Jewish population in London as an exemplar of work to understand the disproportionate impact of SARS CoV-2 on ethnic minority groups.

UK-CTAP: I was approached to be a member of UK-CTAP by Alastair Lamb when the committee was re-stood up in December 2021 in response to the Omicron variant-of-concern. CTAP was stood down again in approximately April 2022.

In my role as a member of the secretariat I was asked to write short technical briefings on therapeutic agents (drugs) that were being considered for inclusion in to UK trials of treatment for COVID-19 such as the RECOVERY trial. Drugs were selected for review by the CTAP panel itself (not by the secretariat) and then the secretariat were tasked with providing short briefing documents. I was not involved in deciding which drugs should be reviewed by CTAP nor in the decisions of CTAP as to which drugs should be prioritised for trials.

4. A summary of any documents to which you contributed for the purpose of advising SAGE and/or its related subgroups on the Covid-19 pandemic. Please include links to those documents where possible.

I did not contribute to any specific document for SAGE or its subgroups. Findings from our study which was presented to SAGE are reported here: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/34308409/>

The minutes from the single SAGE meeting I attended are a matter of public record.

For CTAP I prepared technical briefings on a number of potential therapeutic agents.

5. A summary of any articles you have written, interviews and/or evidence you have given regarding the work of the above-mentioned groups and/or the UK's response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Please include links to those documents where possible.

I have not written any specific articles or given evidence about the work of these groups nor the UK response to the COVID-19 pandemic. My scientific output on COVID-19 has been predominantly on

- 1) Work on the risk of transmission of SARS-CoV-2 in relation to viral load*
- 2) The work on strictly Orthodox Jewish community (as above)*
- 3) Studies on the long-term outcomes of individuals hospitalised with COVID-19*
- 4) Work on COVID-19 surveillance in Ghana*

6. Your views as to whether the work of the above-mentioned groups in responding to the Covid-19 pandemic (or the UK's response more generally) succeeded in its aims. This may include, but is not limited to, your views on:

- a. The composition of the groups and/or their diversity of expertise; b. The way in which the groups were commissioned to work on the relevant issues;**
- c. The resources and support that were available;**
- d. The advice given and/or recommendations that were made;**
- e. The extent to which the groups worked effectively together;**
- f. The extent to which applicable structures and policies were utilised and/or complied with and their effectiveness.**

As I only attended a single meeting of SAGE I am unable to comment on these issues in any detail. I am however a colleague of members of several groups including SAGE, SPI-M and NERV-TAG and consider all the people I know on this committees to have been highly appropriate to advise the government in their areas of expertise.

Your views as to any lessons that can be learned from the UK's response to the Covid-19 pandemic, in particular relating to the work of the above-mentioned groups. Please describe any changes that have already been made, and set out any recommendations for further changes that you think the Inquiry should consider making.

I am unaware of what (if any changes) have been made in response to the pandemic. I would suggest that HMG considers establishing similar working groups to SAGE to address areas such as the economy which clearly fall outside the remit of SAGE but which may play an important part in making decisions on policy as a whole.

7. A brief description of documentation relating to these matters that you hold

(including soft copy material held electronically). Please retain all such material. I am not asking for you to provide us with this material at this stage, but I may request that you do so in due course.

I have copies of minutes/decisions made at the CTAP meetings I attended. The minutes of the SAGE meeting I attended are a matter of public record.