

Questionnaire

UK COVID-19 Inquiry: Module 2 - Rule 9 Request to Covid-19 Bereaved Families for Justice Cymru

Reference: M2/R9R/CBFFJC/TJS

Please provide the following information:

- 1) **A brief overview of the history, legal status and aims of the organisation or body. Please explain whether the work of the organisation or body is UK wide, or is instead confined to England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland only.**

CBFJ Cymru is comprised of a group of individuals, led by Anna-Louise Marsh-Rees, Sam Smith Higgins and Liz Grant who represent the full spectrum of families in Wales who are bereaved by Covid-19. CBFJ Cymru originated out of the Covid-19 Bereaved Families for Justice (CBFJ) group but have always been autonomous, Welsh members of CBFJ established CBFJ Cymru on 15 July 2021 to ensure that there was proper scrutiny of all governmental decision-making relevant to Wales (including in Westminster and the devolved administration in Wales). Since its establishment, CBFJ Cymru has become the most prominent organisation in Wales in the discourse surrounding the Covid-19 pandemic and the call for a Welsh Inquiry and/or proper scrutiny of decision-making impacting on Wales in a UK Inquiry. CBFJ Cymru has campaigned tirelessly for justice for families in Wales who are experiencing bereavement due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Legal status - an unfunded group set up by the Covid bereaved for the Covid bereaved in Wales

Aims

1. CBFJC Primary aims:
 - a. to understand why decisions were made and for errors to be publicly acknowledged so lessons can be learned
 - b. to call for a Wales-specific inquiry
 - c. to work with the Welsh Government to ensure Wales is fully represented in the UK Covid-19 Inquiry
 - d. to call for a Wales Covid-19 Inquiry special purposes committee that will investigate any potential gaps in the UK Covid-19 Inquiry
2. CBFJC Secondary aims:
 - a. an investigation into all nosocomial deaths in Wales
 - b. changes to infection control in health care settings in Wales
 - c. supporting members through the NHS Wales health board complaints process
 - i. bereavement support both practical and psychological following Covid deaths in hospitals
 - ii. championing the rights of older people in Wales inc. human rights, ethical practises, DNACPR process, withdrawal of treatment, Frailty

- Score, dignity in death
- iii. patient privacy and the right not to be photographed for books and PR purposes when dying/dead in NHS Wales hospitals
 - iv. raising the awareness in Wales of why a public Covid-19 inquiry is needed

2) A brief description of the group(s) which the organisation or body supports or represents.

CBFJC represents those bereaved by Covid in Wales. Members join either by signing up to the autonomous CBFJC Facebook Group or signing up with Harding Evans.

3) A brief overview of the work of the organisation or body in supporting or representing the relevant group(s) between January 2020 and Spring 2022 as it relates to the response to Covid-19 of (a) the UK Government; (b) the Scottish Government; (c) the Welsh Government; and/or (d) the Northern Ireland Executive.

Welsh Government

- i) CBFJC have gathered and represent the collective experiences of the full spectrum of families in Wales, bereaved by Covid-19
- ii) CBFJC work with the Welsh Government initially to campaign for a Wales inquiry - 6 x meetings with First Minister and the Welsh Inquiry team. Input into the UK Inquiry Terms of Reference
- iii) CBFJC have quarterly meetings with the Health Minister and Deputy Chief Medical Officer for Wales and influenced the Welsh Government £4.5m nosocomial investigation
- iv) CBFJC liaise with Welsh Government organisations to better understand Wales Government decisions inc. Wales Covid Evidence Centre, National Bereavement Steering Group, Community Health Councils
- v) CBFJC have campaigned for patient privacy and the right not to be photographed for books and PR purposes when dying/dead in NHS Wales hospitals
 - vi) Established the Group as the voice of the bereaved in Wales ie. lobbying politicians, a petition, visits to the Senedd and via high profile media appearances inc. Question Time, BBC Politics Today, IPPO & numerous online and offline interviews
 - vii) Establishing bereavement support working groups in health boards across Wales.

UK Government

- viii) Worked with the First Minister for Wales and UK Government to ensure Wales gets parity with UK/England in the UK Covid-19 Inquiry
 - ix) Liaised with Welsh MPs to update, raise concerns and keep the focus on Wales in UK Covid-19 Inquiry
- 4) A list of any articles or reports the organisation or body has published or contributed to, and/or evidence it has given (for example to Parliamentary Select Committees) regarding the impact on the group(s) which the organisation or body supports or represents of the response to Covid-19 by (a) the UK Government; (b) the Scottish Government; (c) the Welsh Government; and/or (d) the Northern Ireland Executive. Please include links to those documents where possible.**

Welsh Government

- i) £4.5m nosocomial investigation
 - ii) National Bereavement Steering Group
 - iii) 2x Senedd debates calling for a Wales inquiry
 - iv) CBFJC frequently named and debated in First Minister's Questions
- 5) The view of the organisation or body as to whether the group(s) it supports or represents was adequately considered when decisions about the response to Covid-19 were made by (a) the UK Government; (b) the Scottish Government; (c) the Welsh Government; and/or (d) the Northern Ireland Executive. Please also explain the reasons for the view expressed by the organisation or body in this respect.**

CBFJC were not established until the July 2021 but have lobbied for changes to the response to Covid-19 in Wales since their inception. The group is recognised as the voice of the bereaved in Wales & called on to relay their experiences and consulted on for Covid bereavement recommendations by many organisations including the National Bereavement Steering Group, Community Health Councils, health boards

- 6) Whether the organisation or body raised any concerns about the consideration being given to the group(s) which it supports or represents with (a) the UK Government; (b) the Scottish Government; (c) the Welsh Government; and/or (d) the Northern Ireland Executive, when the Government(s) and/or Executive were making decisions about their response to Covid-19. Please provide a list of any such correspondence or meetings with the UK Government, Scottish Government, Welsh Government and/or the Northern Ireland Executive, including the dates on which the body or organisation wrote or such meetings were held, to whom the correspondence was addressed or with whom the meeting was held, and any response received from the**

UK Government, Scottish Government, Welsh Government and/or Northern Ireland Executive addressing such concerns.

Meetings

First Minister for Wales, Mark Drakeford	7 Oct 2021
	2 Dec 2021
	26 Jan 2021
	24 Feb 2022
	30 Aug 2022
Health Minister for Wales , Eluned Morgan & the Deputy Chief Medical Officer, Chris Jones	3 Feb 2022
	4 May 2022

Letters

Letter from First Minister to Harding Evans	27 September 2021
Letter from First Minister re: UK Inquiry	29 Oct 2021
Letter from First Minister re: Lessons Learned	5 Jan 2022
Letter from First Minister re: Lessons Learned	22 Mar 2022
Letter from First Minister re: CP status	8 Aug 2022
Letter from First Minister re: Nosocomial Investigation response	11 Mar 2022
Letter from First Minister re: Nosocomial Investigation data	26 Aug 2022

7) A brief summary of the views of the organisation or body as to any lessons, if any, that

can be learned from any consideration which was given to the group(s) that the organisation or body supports or represents by (a) the UK Government; (b) the Scottish Government; (c) the Welsh Government; and/or (d) the Northern Ireland Executive when they were making decisions about their response to Covid-19.

- a) Understand how the actions of the UK Government were interpreted by Welsh Government:
 - i) Would it have been beneficial to adhere to the Civil Contingencies Act rather than create a new Coronavirus Act 2020 which allowed each devolved nations to govern independently and make their own decisions
 - ii) Understand why UK Government and Welsh Government interpret the science so differently in their decision making

- b) Understand how the actions of the Welsh Government, which were different in many aspects to the UK Government decisions impacted the Covid death rate in Wales:
 - i) Lack of pandemic preparedness- despite research and reports commissioned by Welsh Government since devolution no action was taken inc resource planning, PPE, infection control
 - ii) Lack of resilience- NHS Wales real estate not fit for purpose despite recommendations made since devolution
 - iii) NHS Wales structure & governance is very different to NHS England – understand how this impacted the response to the pandemic
 - iv) Welsh Governance allowed super spreader events in March 2020 despite advice not to ie rugby and Stereophonics concerts
 - v) Welsh Government issued confusing public communications
 - vi) Lockdowns/firebreaks- huge differences in Wales with little evidence that the science was being followed
 - vii) Transferring patients from ward to ward, hospital to hospital, hospital to home/care homes untested and/or with Covid. Welsh Government did not start testing hospital to care home patients until 2 weeks after UK changed guidance
 - viii) Late mandating of masks – Welsh Government mandated masks 2 months after UK Government
 - ix) Late introduction of asymptomatic testing for staff- Welsh Government introduced these 4 months + after UK Government
 - x) Vaccine rollout- Welsh Government prioritised non-patient facing NHS workers over vulnerable citizens
 - xi) Reported issues of applied blanket DNACPRs
 - xii) Health and social care are politized in Wales – understand the impact this has had