

IN THE UK COVID-19 INQUIRY

Before the Right Honourable Baroness Hallett D.B.E.

MODULE 6 - THE WELSH GOVERNMENT'S STATEMENT

1. This is the written submission on behalf of the Welsh Government for the first preliminary hearing for Module 6 of the Inquiry on 19 March 2024.
2. The Welsh Government welcomes its designation as a core participant for Module 6 and re-affirms its full commitment to the Inquiry. The Welsh Government will continue to provide the fullest possible co-operation in this Module, as in all Modules, and is grateful to the Inquiry team for the constructive engagement that has already taken place in relation to Module 6.
3. The Welsh Government recognises the particular suffering and distress that has been experienced by those who have been involved with the adult care sector during the pandemic, including: individuals who use the services of the sector, such as care home services, for which the Welsh Government has statutory and regulatory responsibilities; their loved ones; and those who work in the sector, including those who are employed in the sector, unpaid carers, and volunteers. The Welsh Government re-states its sincere and profound gratitude to those who worked tirelessly to provide care in the most testing of circumstances, and its deep sympathy to those who lost loved ones or who otherwise suffered during the pandemic.
4. The Welsh Government has devolved responsibility for social care policy. Statutory responsibility for the delivery of social care services sits with the 22 local authorities in Wales, under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. Responsibility for the regulation of social care services sits with

Welsh Ministers under the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016, this function being discharged through the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW), which is funded by but operates independently of the Welsh Government. The important matters that will be considered by the Inquiry in Module 6 will require careful consideration of the decisions that were taken by the Welsh Government, and others, in response to the pandemic and its impact on the adult care sector.

5. Investigation of the issues that are relevant to Module 6 will require important questions to be asked. The Welsh Government recognises the importance of this scrutiny. Those who were affected by the issues to be considered in Module 6 have the right to receive complete and candid answers, so that lessons can be learned. The Welsh Government is ready to provide every assistance that it can to the Inquiry in its investigations.

Dated 11 March 2024