



## **Message from Claire Demaret, Interim Director of Policy, Research and Analysis**

Hello, I am Claire Demaret and welcome to our March newsletter. I lead the Inquiry's Policy, Research and Analysis team which supports the Chair and the legal teams to deliver their work in fulfilling the Inquiry's [Terms of Reference](#). We do this by providing policy advice and commissioning and providing research and expert reports, both of which can help inform the Chair's recommendations.

I would like to begin by recognising that this week marks the fourth anniversary of the 2020 pandemic lockdown. I know that this will be a difficult time for some. For those of you who do find the anniversary difficult, please see the [organisations listed on our website](#) that can offer support if needed.

Following last month's announcement of public hearing dates through to spring 2025 we are continuing work on current and upcoming investigations. You can access the transcripts and recordings for [Module 2A \(core decision making and political governance in Scotland\)](#) and the [Module 2B \(core decision making and political governance in Wales\) hearings](#) on our website. We are now preparing for a temporary move to Belfast for [Module 2C, our Northern Ireland-focused investigation](#) in late April. The Inquiry covers all of the UK and investigations from [Module 3 \(healthcare\)](#) onwards will continue to consider the response to and impact of the pandemic in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

The Inquiry exists to examine, consider and report on preparations for and the response to the pandemic. In the summer, the Chair will issue her first report on [Module 1 \(Resilience and Preparedness\)](#) and make recommendations to help ensure the UK is better prepared in the future. Baroness Hallett is very keen to see that any recommendations made do not fall by the wayside and to this end the Inquiry is taking on a role in overseeing this process during its lifetime. You can read more about this later in this newsletter.

We have recently announced a new investigation. [Module 7](#) that focuses on the approach to testing, tracing and isolation adopted during the pandemic. We are currently inviting applications for Core Participant status for this module and further information is set out below.

Thank you for your continued interest in the Inquiry's work. I look forward to seeing some of you at our Belfast hearings from 30 April and once hearings resume in London in September.

## **Hearings update: Public hearings for five investigations confirmed to summer 2025**

The Chair of the UK Covid-19 Inquiry, Baroness Hallett, has set out more detail on the timetable for public hearings for five investigations to run to summer 2025.

Baroness Hallett said:



*"We do not know when the next pandemic will strike. I want investigations to be concluded promptly and reports published regularly so that lessons can be learned as soon as possible. Today I am able to confirm my plans for five more of the Inquiry's public hearings, running to summer 2025."*

You can find details of the updated timetable [in the news story on our website](#).

### **Care sector (Module 6) Core Participants announced**

The Inquiry has published the list of organisations and individuals who have been granted Core Participant status for [Module 6, the investigation into the care sector](#). A Core Participant is a person, institution or organisation that has a specific interest in the work of the Inquiry and has a formal role defined by legislation. Core Participants have special rights in the Inquiry process. These include receiving documentation, being represented and making legal submissions, suggesting questions and receiving advance notice of the Inquiry's report. You do not need to be a Core Participant to provide evidence to the Inquiry.

The first preliminary hearing for Module 6 took place on Tuesday 19 March at Dorland House, the Inquiry's London hearing centre.

The [list of Core Participants for this module can be found on our website](#) and [further information about the recent hearing can be found in our news story](#).

### **Inquiry opens its seventh investigation: Test, Trace and Isolate**

On 19 March, the Inquiry opened [Module 7](#), which will examine, and make recommendations on, the approach to testing, tracing and isolation adopted during the pandemic. The Core Participant application window is open until 26 April and preliminary hearings for this module are scheduled for summer 2024.

[You can read more about the Module 7 launch in the news story on our website](#).

### **Module 2: Core UK Decision-making and Political Governance**

The Inquiry can confirm that the Module 2 oral evidence of Cabinet Secretary Simon Case has been rescheduled to be heard on Thursday 23 May 2024 at Dorland House, Paddington.

As per our other hearings, this will be livestreamed on our [YouTube channel](#) and seats will be available for reservation via our booking form from 12.00 on Monday 13 May. Please note that the form will be closed once maximum reservations have been allocated.

Further information can be found on the [public hearings page of our website](#), where the link to the reservation form will be published on 13 May.



## **Module 4 (Vaccines and Therapeutics) preliminary hearing**

The [second preliminary hearing for Module 4 \(Vaccines and Therapeutics\)](#) will take place on Wednesday 22 May.

A seat reservation form for this hearing will go live on the [public hearings page](#) at 12.00 on Monday 13 May. This will be a separate form from the Module 2 hearing to hear Simon Case's evidence.

## **Inquiry announces process to monitor acceptance and implementation of recommendations**

The Chair of the Inquiry, Baroness Hallett, has announced how she will monitor the acceptance and implementation of Inquiry recommendations.

The Inquiry will encourage institutions responsible for each recommendation to publish the steps they will take in response and the expected timetable for doing so. Unless otherwise stated, the Inquiry expects institutions to do this within six months of the recommendation being published.

The Inquiry will write at regular intervals to encourage those to whom recommendations have been addressed to adhere to this timetable.

If an institution does not publish a response within nine months of a recommendation being made the Inquiry will urge the institution to respond swiftly.

If after one year of the recommendation being published no response is published, the Inquiry will request the institution sets out the reasons it has failed to do so. All correspondence at this stage will be published on the Inquiry website.

[Further information can be found on our website.](#)

## **Bereaved forum**

The Inquiry has set up a bereaved forum, open to anyone who lost a loved one during the pandemic between 2020 and 2022.

Forum participants provide valuable insight based on their personal experiences to inform the Inquiry's approach to Every Story Matters and commemoration.

Those on the bereaved forum will receive a regular email detailing opportunities to provide the Inquiry with advice on our Every Story Matters and commemoration work.



If you are interested in joining the forum mailing list, please email [engagement@covid19.public-inquiry.uk](mailto:engagement@covid19.public-inquiry.uk).