UK Covid-19 Inquiry

Report and Recommendations
July 2024

About Covid-19

Covid-19 is a virus. It suddenly appeared in the UK in 2020.
It spread very quickly.

People across the world became ill. Many people died. This meant it was called a **pandemic**.

There were lockdowns, where people had to stay at home. Hospitals and care homes struggled to cope.

The UK Covid-19 Inquiry is looking at what happened before and during the pandemic. The results will help us prepare for next time.

About this report

This is the Inquiry's first report.

It is about **resilience** and **preparedness**.

Resilience means the UK's strength and ability to cope with a pandemic.

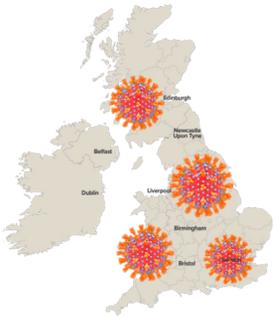**Preparedness** – did we prepare well enough, before it happened?

People from all over the UK told us about their experiences.

Baroness Hallett is the Chair of the Inquiry. She is gathering the information and writing reports.

What we found out

The Inquiry found out that the UK was not properly prepared for Covid-19. Reasons include

- Lots of organisations were involved in making plans. This made things too complicated.

- We did not find out enough about the risk of a pandemic like Covid-19 happening, and what the effects might be. This meant we couldn't plan properly.

- The government's pandemic plan was out of date and not flexible enough.

What we found out

- Before the pandemic, some groups of people were already not getting good enough healthcare.

  This is called **health inequality**.

  Thinking about this should have been part of the planning for a pandemic.

- We did not learn enough from other pandemics that have happened.

- We were not ready to test and isolate so many people.

What we found out

- Policies were out of date, too complicated and used language that people did not understand.

This can make it take longer to make decisions and organise things, when a pandemic happens.

- Government ministers got advice from a small group of experts. They needed to hear more opinions, from more people.

Ministers did not ask enough questions about the advice.

What we found out

- Experts who gave advice to the government did not feel free to give a wide range of opinions.

Everyone agreed with each other too often, because they did not hear enough different views.

We could have saved lives and money, if we had been better prepared for the Covid-19 pandemic.

What should happen next

- Make everything simpler: plans, policies, and the ways people work together.

- Learn more about the **risks** in a pandemic.

This means finding out about harmful things that might happen, then making plans to make them less likely to happen.

- Involve all of the UK in making plans. Use our experience of pandemics to make better plans.

What should happen next

- Build better systems to collect and share information.
  Do more research about pandemics.

- Every 3 years, practice the pandemic plans. Publish the results, so everyone can read about it.

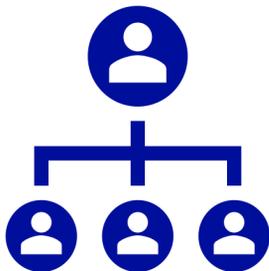- Ask a wide range of experts what they think about the plans for coping with a pandemic.

  Let them ask difficult questions.

What should happen next

- Write regular reports about how prepared we are for a pandemic.

- Create a new organisation to
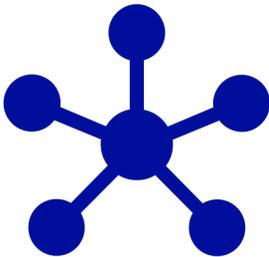
  o plan for pandemics

  o respond to pandemics

  o give advice to the government

It must work closely with experts and communities.

What should happen next

All these recommendations are designed to work well together.

Baroness Hallett expects that **all** of the recommendations will happen.

The Inquiry will be finding out whether things change or not.

Future reports

There will be more reports about

- decisions the government made

- healthcare

- vaccines and treatments

- things that were bought – like medical equipment and software

- test, trace and isolate

- social care

- children and young people

- how the UK's money was spent

Find out more

If you want to find out more, please go to this website

https://covid19.public-inquiry.uk/reports/

Thank you for reading our report.