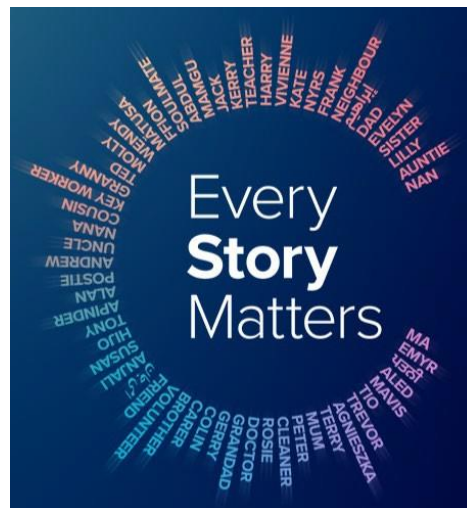




# UK Covid-19 Inquiry



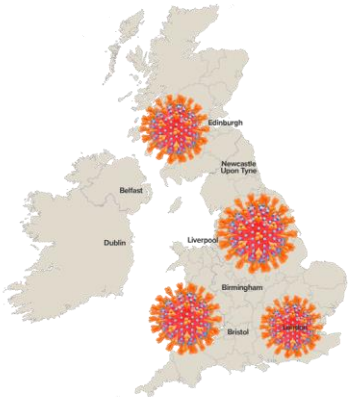
## Every Story Matters: Healthcare



## About the Inquiry

### The Covid Inquiry is

- finding out what happened during the covid-19 pandemic in the UK
- learning how to prepare for pandemics in the future

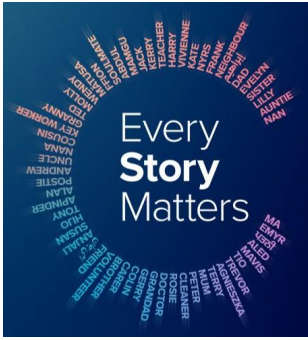


The Inquiry is divided into **modules**. Each module is about a different subject. Each module has:

- public hearings - events where people talk about their experiences
- a report



# Every Story Matters



**Every Story Matters** is how the Inquiry gathers people's experiences of the pandemic.



Anyone in the UK can share their stories with us. The stories are used in the Inquiry. We do not use people's names.



Stories help us to learn about what happened, then decide how to do things differently in future.



This document is about people's experiences of healthcare during the pandemic.

# Getting healthcare



## People told us they

- felt afraid to go to hospital and delayed getting treatment
- found it hard to speak to a GP
- waited too long for ambulances
- felt lonely and isolated



Face masks made it hard for d/Deaf people to understand what people were saying.



Many people told us they got good care, from staff who were tired and working very hard.

# Changes to healthcare

## People told us



- it was difficult to support family and friends at the end of their lives

- not being allowed visitors in hospital made things extremely hard



- not being able to visit also made it more difficult to cope with losing someone you love



- new mothers in hospital also had no visitors. Many mums felt lonely and afraid.

# Long Covid



Long Covid happens when people do not recover from having covid. It can last for many months.

## People told us

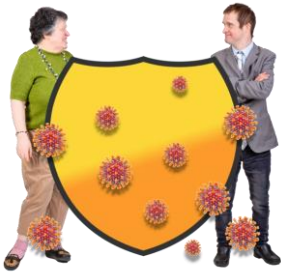


- long covid has a very big effect on their lives



- they felt disappointed, angry and frustrated with the care they got
- some people could not get any help with long covid, or found it difficult to get help

# Shielding



**Shielding** means staying at home, or wearing a face mask if you are out.



## People told us

- they had to shield for a long time, to prevent themselves getting ill
- they didn't know how long they would have to shield for
- they could not do things they enjoy
- they could not meet friends and family
- people felt isolated, lonely and afraid





# Working in healthcare



## Healthcare staff told us

- they had to do much more at work than before the pandemic
- they had to work in different ways



- they didn't get the training they needed to do unfamiliar work



- It was hard to find **PPE** that fitted properly.

**PPE** means **Personal Protective Equipment**, and includes face masks, aprons and gloves.



# Working in healthcare

## Healthcare staff told us



- they were all working together on a shared purpose, helping them to feel motivated.



- they felt exhausted. It affected their physical and mental health

- routines changed a lot



- it was hard to see families not being able to be together, especially if their loved one was dying

# Working in healthcare

## Healthcare staff told us:



- staff caught covid and had to stay at home. This made it even harder for the staff who were still working.



- health services started to use more technology.

For example, video calls for GP appointments.

- They are still feeling the effects of the pandemic now.



Life has not gone back to how it was before.

# Government Guidance



The government made lots of decisions during the pandemic.

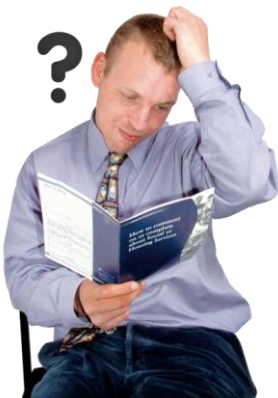


The Inquiry is finding out about these decisions.

## People told us



- hospitals and other health services were not ready for a pandemic



- it felt chaotic – everything was changing very fast, and people were not sure what was happening

# Government Guidance

## People told us:



- there was not enough PPE, and it did not fit properly. This made them feel unsafe.

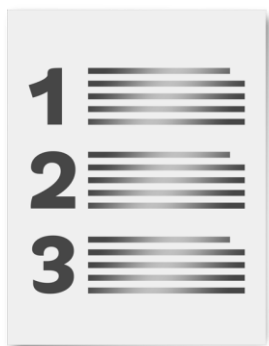


- at the start of the pandemic, there were no tests to find out if people had the virus



- the rules about what people could and couldn't do changed a lot.

They felt confused and unfairly treated



# Tell your story

You can share your experiences in  
**3 ways:**



## Our website

[https://covid19.public-inquiry.uk/every-story-matters\\_er/](https://covid19.public-inquiry.uk/every-story-matters_er/)



## Events

We run drop-in events in towns and cities across the UK.



## Research

We do research with selected groups of people.