



Message from Ben Connah, Secretary to the Inquiry



Welcome to our September newsletter. This month marks the publication of our [Every Story Matters: Healthcare record](#), on the first day of our Module 3 hearing.

The Every Story Matters record is the result of almost two years of listening to the experiences of people across the UK about how the pandemic affected their lives, their communities and the lives of their loved ones, as they received or provided healthcare during 2020-2022. We've heard from a huge range of people including bereaved individuals, frontline healthcare workers, people living with Long Covid, people who had critical treatments delayed or cancelled due to the pandemic and mothers who gave birth during the pandemic to name a few. We have of course also listened to experiences on many other important topics, such as social care, vaccines, children and young people and the economic response to the pandemic. These will form the basis of future records.

Baroness Hallett has underlined the importance of the Inquiry hearing how the pandemic affected people from across society in this way. Each Every Story Matters record will be entered as evidence in the relevant investigation and help inform questioning of witnesses and Baroness Hallett's reports and recommendations.

We offer a [number of ways to take part, including our web and paper forms](#) and [public events across the UK](#). We have already visited towns and cities from the south coast of England to the Scottish Highlands, as well as multiple locations in Wales and Northern Ireland. Further details of our next events are set out below. Do consider coming along to an event or sharing your experience at home if you haven't already done so and please encourage friends and family to share their stories too. The Inquiry wants as many people as possible to contribute, to help ensure it captures the widest possible range of experiences to inform its work.

This month we have also opened our final investigation. [Module 10](#) will look at the impact of the pandemic on society, including on mental health, key workers, vulnerable people and those who lost loved ones.

Thank you for your interest in the Inquiry and I look forward to seeing some of you at our hearing centre, Dorland House, or at one of our upcoming Every Story Matters events.

Every Story Matters Healthcare record

On Monday 9 September we published the [Every Story Matters: Healthcare record](#). This is the first of several documents that will detail the impact of the pandemic on people's lives, following submissions to [Every Story Matters](#). Each record will focus on a different topic and will be entered into the relevant investigation of the Inquiry as evidence. You may have seen



that it was directly referred to by Jac Carey KC, Lead Counsel to the Inquiry for Module 3, when she opened the [hearing on 9 September](#).

The Inquiry's first Every Story Matters record brings together people's healthcare experiences. It has been entered as evidence into the Inquiry's Module 3 investigation into healthcare systems and it covers the experiences of healthcare professionals and patients across both primary care and hospital, as well as emergency and urgent care, end-of-life care, maternity care, shielding, Long Covid and more. It is the largest public engagement exercise ever undertaken by a UK public inquiry, with over 32,500 contributions to the document.

The Inquiry would like to thank all individuals and organisations who supported us as we gathered experiences from all corners of the UK.

You can [read more about the Every Story Matters: Healthcare record on our website](#).

A 2x2 grid of quote cards. Each card has a dark blue background with white text. The top-left card features a quote from a bereaved family member. The top-right card features a quote from a young person living with Long Covid. The bottom-left card features a quote from a paramedic. The bottom-right card features a quote from a healthcare worker. Each card includes the 'Every Story Matters' logo and the 'UK Covid-19 Inquiry' logo at the bottom.

“
I lost my father in November 2021 from Covid-19. He was 65 years old. He had six children, five grandchildren, with a further two joining our family since he left us. He died within six days of a hospital admission. I am still haunted by the thought of hospitals and the fear and pain he must have felt.
Bereaved family member

“
It's a big identity crisis; my mum and I were fit, active people, I was meant to be beginning pro-ballet as a career. To go from that to being in bed all the time is massive, at a young age difficult as you are finding out who you are. I'm 18 and still don't know who I am, four years later. It's an identity I don't want.
Young person living with Long Covid

“
I don't think I've come back to 100% of how I normally was. It takes its toll. But it's almost like having this piece of paper that's nice, and flat, and straight, and then you've crumpled it and then you try and straighten out that piece of paper again. It's still creased up, no matter how much you try and straighten it out.
Paramedic

“
In the lockdown, people were still poorly. Someone was diagnosed with cancer and couldn't get an appointment. Don't neglect people with other treatment needs. The chemo[therapy] treatment was cancelled, the cancer progressed, and they died.
Healthcare worker

Above: quotes from contributors to the Every Story Matters: Healthcare record (a bereaved family member, young person living with Long Covid, paramedic and healthcare worker)



About Every Story Matters

What is Every Story Matters?

Every Story Matters is an opportunity for anyone in the UK aged over 18 to contribute to the UK Covid-19 Inquiry.

The pandemic affected every single person in the UK and, in many cases, continues to have a lasting impact on lives. Every experience is unique and this is an opportunity for people to share the personal impact it had on them, their life and their loved ones. Every story shared will be valuable in shaping the Inquiry's recommendations and help us to learn lessons for the future.

How can I take part?

We want Every Story Matters to be accessible to everyone. Most people have shared their story online [through the Inquiry's website](#). For those who cannot use the website to share their story, there are also paper forms and a range of other accessible versions. The Inquiry team have also been travelling across the UK so individuals can share their experiences in person at events, most recently visiting Inverness and Oban in Scotland. [More events are scheduled for later this year to hear people's stories](#) in Coventry, Southampton, Nottingham and Leicester.

Have I missed my chance to share my story now that this record has been published?

You can still share your story about what happened to you during the pandemic. Upcoming Every Story Matters records will cover the topics being investigated by future modules, such as the economy and the impact on children and young people.

Ahead of the Inquiry's final investigation (Module 10 - the impact of the pandemic on society), we especially want to hear from those who feel they didn't have a voice in the pandemic, including the most vulnerable in our society (more information on this investigation is in the next section of this newsletter).

How will the experiences shared be used by the Inquiry?

All experiences shared will form the basis of our records, which are themed reports about different aspects of the pandemic. These records will be used as evidence within the Inquiry's relevant investigations.

Why is Every Story Matters anonymous?

We want Every Story Matters to be a place for honest and open feedback on personal experiences of the pandemic. To acquire the broadest range of responses from as many people as possible and because we cannot focus on individual cases, we publish these



anonymously. This also helps us to hear people's experiences without the formality of giving evidence or attending a public hearing.

What's the point in Every Story Matters - everything was reported or covered in social media at the time?

Much has been reported in social media and the media about people's experiences of the Covid-19 pandemic. The value of this Every Story Matters record is that it's based on thousands of responses which have been collected and are analysed consistently and clearly; it represents the experiences of the wide range of people who have chosen to share with us; and that it will form part of the Inquiry's formal record - to support recommendations and as a historical reference point for future generations.

Baroness Hallett is acutely aware of the sometimes life-changing impact that the pandemic had and she wants to make sure that her findings and her recommendations are informed by the experience of people and communities right across the country - not only those who are active on social media.

Inquiry launches final investigation into the impact of the pandemic on society

The Inquiry has opened its final investigation, Module 10: Impact on society. The scope includes:

- Adult mental health and wellbeing
- Key workers, including teachers, public facing retail and funeral workers
- Vulnerable people, including those who faced homelessness, domestic abuse, were within the immigration and asylum system, were in prison or other places of detention and those who were affected by the operation of the justice system
- The impact of the pandemic on people who lost a loved one including restrictions on arrangements for funerals and burials and bereavement support

You can [read more about this investigation in the announcement on our website](#).

The Inquiry wants to hear from young people, parents, teachers and others who worked with children during the pandemic

Ahead of the Inquiry's [Module 8 hearings into the impact of the pandemic on children and young people](#), we are encouraging 18-25 year olds, parents and carers, teachers and other adults who worked with children during the pandemic to share their experiences via Every Story Matters. Stories shared by 10 December will directly contribute to the Every Story Matters record for Module 8.

To help raise awareness of this opportunity, we have created a toolkit containing content that you can share on your social media channels, website or blog. [This can be accessed on our](#)



[website](#). If you have links to any of these groups we would greatly appreciate any support you can provide in sharing the opportunity to take part.

Hearings update

Current and upcoming hearing dates are as follows:

Hearing type	Investigation	Date(s)
Public	Module 3 (Healthcare)	Monday 9 September – Thursday 28 November Break: Monday 14 October – Friday 25 October 2024 Monday 28 October – Thursday 28 November 2024 NB: hearings usually run Monday to Thursday.
Preliminary	Module 9 (Economic response to the pandemic)	Wednesday 23 October 2024

A full outline of currently scheduled public hearing dates across the Inquiry's investigations is shown in the following graphic:

Public hearings for 2024 - 2026

- **9 Sep - 28 Nov**
Module 3: Impact of Covid-19 pandemic on healthcare systems across the UK

----- **2025** -----

- **14 Jan - 30 Jan**
Module 4: Vaccines and therapeutics
- **3 Mar - 27 Mar**
Module 5: Procurement
- **12 May - 30 May**
Module 7: Test, Trace and Isolate
- **30 Jun - 21 Jul**
Module 6: The care sector
- **29 Sep - 23 Oct**
Module 8: Children and young people
- **Winter 2025**
Module 9: Economic response
- **Early 2026**
Module 10: Impact on society

----- **2026** -----

We send out weekly updates via email during our public hearings, summarising key topics and who appeared as witnesses. To sign up to these please visit the [newsletter page of the website](#).

Every Story Matters public events

In September the Inquiry team visited Inverness and Oban in the Scottish Highlands, where we spoke to over 1,000 people.



We also spoke with students and staff at the University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI) Inverness and parents of children with special needs and staff at the Craighalbert Centre and East Park school in Glasgow.

We are very grateful for the support from these organisations and all those who took the time to speak with us at our events.



Above, left to right: outside our Every Story Matters event at the Spectrum Centre, Inverness; speaking to members of the public at our pop-up stand at the Rockfield Centre, Oban; listening to members of the public at our recent events

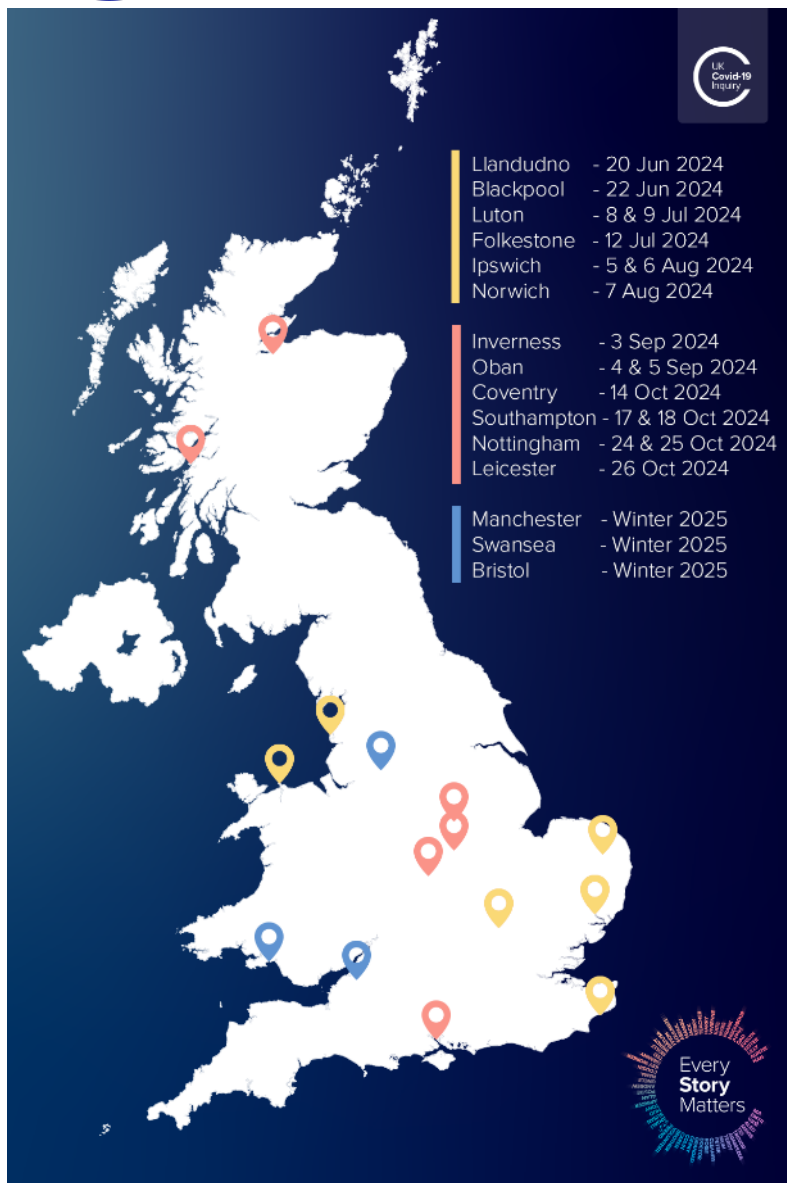
Below: sharing information about Every Story Matters with local people in Oban





During October we will visit Coventry, Southampton, Nottingham and Leicester. Details are as follows:

Date	Location	Venue(s)	Live Event Timings
Monday 14 October 2024	Coventry	<u>Belgrade Theatre, Belgrade Square, Corporation St, Coventry CV1 1GS</u>	10:00 - 16:30
Thursday 17 - Friday 18 October	Southampton	<u>Marlands Shopping Centre, Civic Centre Rd, Southampton SO14 7SJ</u>	11:30 - 19:00
Thursday 24 - Friday 25 October	Nottingham	<u>The Council House, Old Market Square, Nottingham, NG1 2DT</u>	10:00 - 16:30
Saturday 26 October	Leicester	<u>Highcross Shopping Centre, 5 Shires Lane, Leicester, LE1 4AN</u>	11:00 - 18:00



Map showing Every Story Matters event locations

Please see the [events page on our website](#) for updates and more information.

Response to questions about topics covered within the Inquiry

Last month we offered the opportunity for our readers to [submit questions about the Inquiry via our feedback form](#). A number of people asked why we were not considering certain issues.

The Inquiry's [Terms of Reference](#) detail what it will investigate. One of the aims of the Inquiry is to:

Listen to and consider carefully the experiences of bereaved families and others who have suffered hardship or loss as a result of the pandemic. Although the Inquiry will not consider



in detail individual cases of harm or death, listening to these accounts will inform its understanding of the impact of the pandemic and the response, and of the lessons to be learned.

The Inquiry has taken a number of steps to ensure that we are able to hear from bereaved families and those with Long Covid in recognition of the ongoing impact of the pandemic on these groups, including:

- To date, we have called 11 bereaved individuals as witnesses across our Module 1, Module 2 and Module 3 hearings from all four nations of the UK.
- We have set up a Bereaved Forum, which currently consists of 113 members, and Long Covid Advisory Group, to which 7 organisations representing people with Long Covid contribute. These provide an opportunity to advise the Inquiry on its approach to Every Story Matters and commemoration. We share more information about the Bereaved Forum and how to express an interest in joining in the next section of this newsletter.
- To date, we have filmed 56 bereaved individuals and 9 people with experiences related to Long Covid as part of the impact films that are played at the start of each set of public hearings. These help to ensure that the hearings are grounded in the impact that the pandemic has had on people's lives. All individuals who have been filmed will feature in an upcoming film if they have not been included in one of the six already released and we are continuing to film more people for future films. You can [watch the most recent film on our YouTube channel](#) but please be aware that it contains distressing material.
- We have set up multiple listening events across the four nations of the UK, including 4 with Baroness Hallett in which bereaved families spoke directly to the Chair about their experiences.

For details of the topics that fall within the scope of the Inquiry, we would encourage readers to check the Terms of Reference and the scopes of our investigations, which can be accessed from the [Structure of the Inquiry page of the website](#).

Bereaved forum

Did you lose a loved one during the pandemic? Do you want to get more involved in the Inquiry's work?

The Inquiry hosts a 'bereaved forum' - which is a group of people who lost loved ones during the pandemic, who are consulted on aspects of our work. Forum participants provide their advice based on their personal experiences to inform the Inquiry's approach to Every Story Matters and commemoration.

The bereaved forum is open to anyone who lost a loved one during the pandemic between 2020 and 2022.



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.

If you need to talk to someone about losing a loved one then you can contact our emotional support provider, Hestia, by calling 0800 2465617 or emailing covid19inquiry.support@hestia.org. More information is [available on our website](#).