



**NOTICE OF DETERMINATION  
CORE PARTICIPANT APPLICATION  
MODULE 10 - LONG COVID GROUPS**

**Introduction**

1. In my [Opening Statement](#) on 21 July 2022, I explained that modules would be announced and opened in sequence, with those wishing to take a formal role in the Inquiry invited to apply to become Core Participants for each module. On 17 September 2024, the Inquiry opened Module 10 and invited anyone who wished to be considered as a Core Participant to that Module to submit an application in writing to the Solicitor to the Inquiry by 15 October 2024.
2. On 15 October 2024, the Inquiry received an application from Long Covid Educators for Justice, Long Covid Kids, Long Covid Kids Scotland, Long Covid Physio, Long Covid SOS and Long Covid Support ('the Applicant') for Core Participant status in Module 10. This Notice sets out my determination of the application.
3. I made a provisional decision not to designate the Applicant as a Core Participant in Module 10, thereby declining the application, on 12 November 2024. The Applicant was provided with an opportunity to renew the application in writing by 4pm on 19 November 2024.
4. On 19 November 2024, Long Covid SOS, Long Covid Educators for Justice and Long Covid Support ('the renewal Applicant') submitted a renewed application for Core Participant status in Module 10. There is no application for renewal from Long Covid Kids, Long Covid Kids Scotland or Long Covid Physio. This notice sets out my final determination of the Applicant and the renewal Applicant's application for Core Participant status in Module 10.
5. The Inquiry has published the [Provisional Outline of Scope](#) for Module 10, which states that this Module will examine the impact of Covid-19 on the population of the United

Kingdom with a particular focus on key workers, the most vulnerable, the bereaved, mental health and wellbeing.

## **Application**

6. Applications for Core Participant status are considered in accordance with Rule 5 of the Inquiry Rules 2006, which provides:

*5.—(1) The chairman may designate a person as a core participant at any time during the course of the inquiry, provided that person consents to being so designated.*

*(2) In deciding whether to designate a person as a core participant, the chairman must in particular consider whether—*

- (a) the person played, or may have played, a direct and significant role in relation to the matters to which the inquiry relates;*
- (b) the person has a significant interest in an important aspect of the matters to which the inquiry relates; or*
- (c) the person may be subject to explicit or significant criticism during the inquiry proceedings or in the report, or in any interim report.*

*(3) A person ceases to be a core participant on—*

- (a) the date specified by the chairman in writing; or*
- (b) the end of the inquiry.*

7. In accordance with the approach set out in my Opening Statement and the Inquiry's [Core Participant Protocol](#), I have considered whether the application fulfils the requirements set out in Rule 5(2) in relation to the issues set out in the Provisional Outline of Scope for Module 10.

## **Summary of Application**

8. The original application was based on the criteria set out at Rule 5(2)(a) and Rule 5(2)(b) of the Inquiry Rules 2006. The original application stated that the Applicant organisations are all grassroots organisations who advocate for recognition of, and support for, the ongoing impact of Long Covid. It reminded the Inquiry that ONS figures estimate that there are just under two million adult sufferers and over fifty-five-thousand children suffering with Long Covid in England and Scotland.

9. In addition, the Applicant organisations have conducted surveys of their members to understand the impacts of Long Covid and they have shared their insights with government. On this basis, the original application stated that the Applicant had played a "direct and significant role" in advocating for the recognition of Long Covid and the severity of its impact on the UK population (Rule 5(2)(a)). The application further said that by representing the interest of sufferers with Long Covid – which includes key workers and some of the most vulnerable - it has a "significant interest" in matters likely to be under exploration in Module 10 (Rule 5(2)(b)).
  
10. In the renewed application, the renewal Applicant says that this is the only module in which Long Covid Educators for Justice apply for Core Participant status and that they would be able to bring the perspective of educators who have developed Long Covid as a result of being key workers. The renewed application says that schoolteachers were disproportionately impacted by Covid and, consequently, Long Covid.
  
11. With respect to Long Covid SOS and Long Covid Support, the renewed application states that it is not envisaged that their evidence or submissions to earlier modules will be duplicated in Module 10. In this regard, the renewed application states that Long Covid impacts on all aspects of the provisional outline of scope for Module 10 and says that the Inquiry has not yet considered the overwhelming impact that Long Covid has had on the UK's population as a whole. The renewed application states that the membership of Long Covid SOS and Long Covid Support comprises several key workers across a range of professions and that these experiences have not yet been considered by other Modules of the Inquiry.

### **Decision for the Applicant and the renewal Applicant**

12. Module 10 of the Inquiry is focused on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on society with a particular focus on key workers, the most vulnerable, the bereaved and mental health and wellbeing. It will investigate the impact of the pandemic and the measures put in place to combat Covid-19.
  
13. I have considered with great care everything that is said in the Applicant's original application and in the renewed application. I have assessed the merits of the application for Core Participant status in its totality. I wish to extend my sympathy to

those who have suffered, and continue to suffer, from adverse health, illness and disability or financially as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

14. As set out in my provisional determination, I consider that for an applicant to satisfy the criteria of playing a "direct and significant role", they must be able to demonstrate not only that they themselves were impacted by the pandemic or decisions made in response to it, but that they played an active role, such as engaging with decision makers on behalf of individuals or specific groups to address the extent of the impact at the relevant time. In my provisional determination, I noted that the Applicant played an active role in engaging with decision makers on behalf of individuals or specific groups to address the extent of the impact of the pandemic and the measures put in place to respond to it. In light of its role in advocating for those with Long Covid and the specific impacts on them throughout the pandemic, I remain satisfied that the Applicant and the renewal Applicant did play a "direct and significant role" in relation to Module 10 matters for the purposes of Rule 5.
15. I am also required to consider whether the Applicant and the renewal Applicant have a "significant interest" in an important aspect of the matters to which the Inquiry relates. In exercising my discretion, I have in mind the broad scope of Module 10 and that a very large number of organisations and individuals could be said to be impacted in a way that would give rise to an interest in this investigation. Within my provisional determination, I recognised that it could be said that the Applicant and the renewal Applicant fall into this category.
16. However, while I am bound to consider the factors set out in Rule 5, it is also open to me to take into account other relevant factors. I am mindful of the need to run this Module effectively and efficiently in light of the number of organisations and individuals who could be said to have a "significant interest" in the Module. This requires me to consider contributions made by those designated as Core Participants for previous modules with a view to avoiding duplication and associated costs. Within my provisional determination, I stated that organisations which form a part of the Applicant group have already contributed to earlier and ongoing modules in which my investigation has and/or will explore the impact of Long Covid. Taking into account these contributions, I provisionally indicated that I was unlikely to be greatly assisted by also designating the Applicant as a Core Participant in Module 10.

17. In response, two of the groups which renewed their applications, Long Covid SOS and Long Covid Support state that the Inquiry has not yet considered the impact that Long Covid has had on the UK's population as a whole. However, I have carefully considered the evidence already provided to the Inquiry by the Long Covid Groups in earlier modules and, despite the different focus of earlier modules, I consider that the evidence provided has addressed the impact of Long Covid on the UK population. I also note that both of these groups are designated as Core Participants in Module 9 and so their contributions to my overall investigation as Core Participants will continue. For the avoidance of doubt, Module 10 will consider any evidence previously obtained by the Inquiry, in a manner which avoids duplication.
18. The final group which renewed its application is Long Covid Educators for Justice. Insofar as the renewed application relates to Long Covid Educators for Justice, the application rightly recognised that this is the first time that the organisation has applied for Core Participant status. However, the renewal application accepts that their membership consists solely of keyworkers in the education sector. In this context, I have considered whether there are other Core Participants that are better placed to assist me with relevant aspects of the provisional outline of scope. I have designated the Trade Unions Congress as a Core Participant in Module 10 and consider that they will be able to provide the perspective of educators, as well as a wider range of key workers.
19. Having assessed the merits of the application for Core Participant status in its totality, I have therefore decided not to designate the Applicant or the renewal Applicant as a Core Participant in Module 10.
20. However, as indicated in my provisional determination, the Inquiry remains committed to engaging with those who may have relevant evidence to contribute. I have instructed the Module 10 team to consider whether there are different ways in which the Applicant and the renewal Applicant could contribute to the Module's investigation.
21. I will keep the scope of Module 10 and the designation of Core Participants under review.

**Rt Hon Baroness Heather Hallett DBE**

**Chair of the UK Covid-19 Inquiry**

**04 December 2024**