Message from Kate Eisenstein, Deputy Secretary to the Inquiry and Director of Policy, Research and Legal

Welcome to the June newsletter. Today is the first day of hearings for our Module 6 investigation into the impact of the pandemic on the adult social care sector. Over the next five weeks the Inquiry will hear evidence in relation to the experiences of people who lost loved ones in social care settings, those who used social care during the pandemic, their families and care workers. It will also hear about the decisions made in relation to the care sector and measures to control the spread of Covid-19 in care settings during 2020-2022.

To support this investigation we have published our Every Story Matters: Adult Social Care Sector record. This is the fourth Every Story Matters record published by the Inquiry and will be referred to in hearings and used by Baroness Hallett as she writes her findings and recommendations. The record includes personal accounts from families, care workers, unpaid carers and people who drew on care and support across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland during the pandemic. We would like to thank everyone who shared their story with us. We know that for some, it was incredibly difficult and brought back painful memories. Some of the stories and themes in the record contain distressing content including descriptions of death, near-death experiences, and significant physical and psychological harm. For anyone who may be struggling when reviewing the record you can find access to emotional support services on our website.

This month we have also held the last of our roundtable discussions with organisations across multiple sectors to support our final investigation, which is looking at the impact of the pandemic on society (Module 10). Summary reports for each roundtable are now being prepared, which will be entered into the Module 10 investigation as evidence when hearings for this investigation begin in February 2026.

Thank you for your interest in the Inquiry.

Module 6 investigation into the Care Sector public hearings

The Inquiry is currently hearing evidence in relation to the care sector (Module 6). Hearings for this module will run from 30 June to 31 July 2025. Hearings are taking place at Dorland House, Paddington, London.

These hearings will investigate the following topics:

- The effects of the pandemic on people's experiences in the social care sector. This will focus on those receiving care, their families and staff in the social care sector.

- The organisation of the care sector across the UK at the beginning and during the pandemic.
- The major decisions made by the UK Government and the Devolved Administrations relating to the care sector.
- The management of the pandemic in adult care homes and residential facilities. This will include measures to stop the spread of Covid-19, including Covid-19 testing, the availability and quality of personal protective equipment (PPE) and visiting restrictions.
- The use of Do Not Attempt Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (DNACPR) notices and the extent to which care recipients and their families were informed about the recipient's health and treatment, including discussions about DNACPR decisions.
- The changes in the way the care sector was inspected and regulated.
- Deaths related to Covid-19, including those of people who drew on care and support and staff working in social care settings.
- Infection prevention and control measures for those providing care at home, including unpaid carers.

As with all Inquiry investigations, an impact film was played today at the start of public hearings. This featured a number of people, including those who lost loved ones in care settings and people working in adult social care, speaking about the impact of the pandemic. The films play an important role in setting the context for hearings by illustrating the human impact of the pandemic.

Hearings are open to the public to attend. There are 41 seats available in the public gallery in the hearing room, in addition to a number of seating options available throughout the Inquiry's London hearing centre. Information about how to reserve seats can be found on our website.

The Module 6 hearings timetable will be published on our website on each Thursday for the week ahead. Please note timings are provisional and subject to change.

Hearings will be livestreamed on the Inquiry's YouTube channel, subject to a three minute delay. All livestreams are available to watch later.

We send out weekly updates via email during our public hearings, summarising key topics and who appeared as witnesses. You can sign up for these from the newsletter page of the website if you have not already done so.

Every Story Matters Adult Social Care Sector record

The Inquiry has listened to thousands of people across the UK about their experiences of the social care sector during the pandemic through Every Story Matters. Today we have published our fourth Every Story Matters record. This details the experience of those who

shared their stories with us, including families, care workers, unpaid carers and people with care and support needs from across the UK.

At the time the Every Story Matters record on adult social care was produced, the Inquiry had received over 46,000 stories, including those submitted online, via post and at 38 events across the UK. We have also had the support of Carers UK, Carers Wales, Carers Scotland and Carers Northern Ireland, the Care Association Alliance, residents and staff at Priory nursing and care homes, Carer Support Carlisle & Eden in organising smaller listening events to hear about the pandemic experiences of unpaid carers, care home staff and residents. The Inquiry would like to thank all individuals and organisations who supported us as we gathered experiences from across the UK.

The record has now been entered into Module 6 as evidence and will be referred to by Counsel to the Inquiry during hearings and will inform the findings and recommendations made by Baroness Hallett when she writes her report at the end of the hearings.

The record explores various themes including:

- The trauma felt by many bereaved families knowing their loved ones died alone
- The isolation felt by those with care and support needs and unpaid carers, who were left without access to friends and family
- The distress and and declining health of many, particularly those with dementia or learning disabilities who may have been unable to understand why they were not with their families and carers
- Concerns about the use of Do Not Attempt Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (DNACPR) notices
- The challenges faced by care workers in the midst of staff shortages, limited supplies of PPE and patients being discharged from hospitals into care settings, often without an accurate record of their Covid-19 status

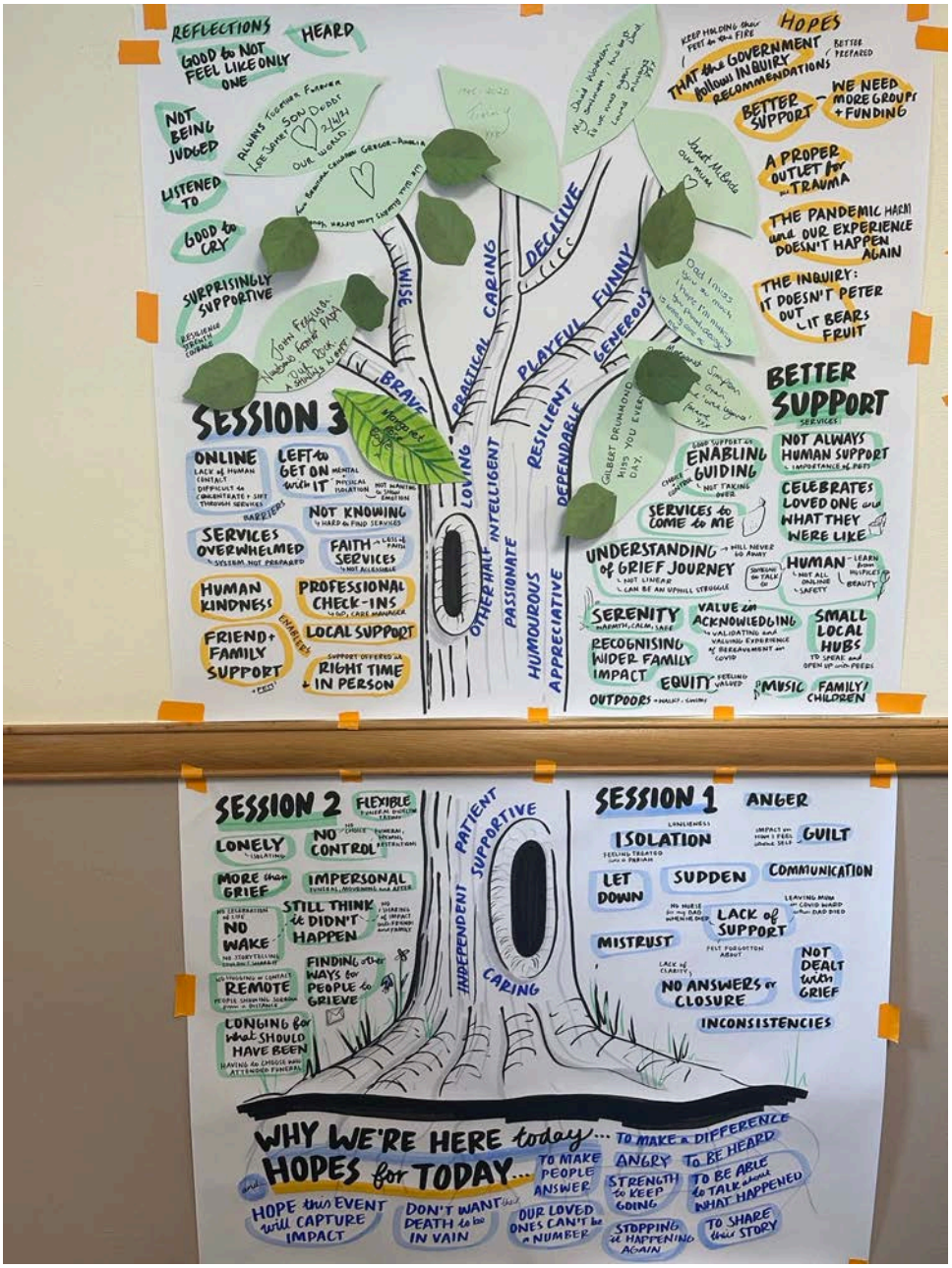
You can read more about the Every Story Matters: Adult Social Care Sector record in this news story on our website.

Update following Every Story Matters listening events for bereaved people

At the start of the year we asked people who lost a loved one during the pandemic to help us design a dedicated process for listening to their stories. In response to feedback, we held six listening events across the UK for people who were bereaved during the pandemic. We would like to thank those of you who helped us to design the events and all of you who participated in a Bereaved Listening Event and shared your experience with the Inquiry.

Those experiences will be analysed by our team of researchers. They will also share those themes with bereaved people in workshops to check that we are not missing key themes. The themes will be included in an Every Story Matters record informed by all the

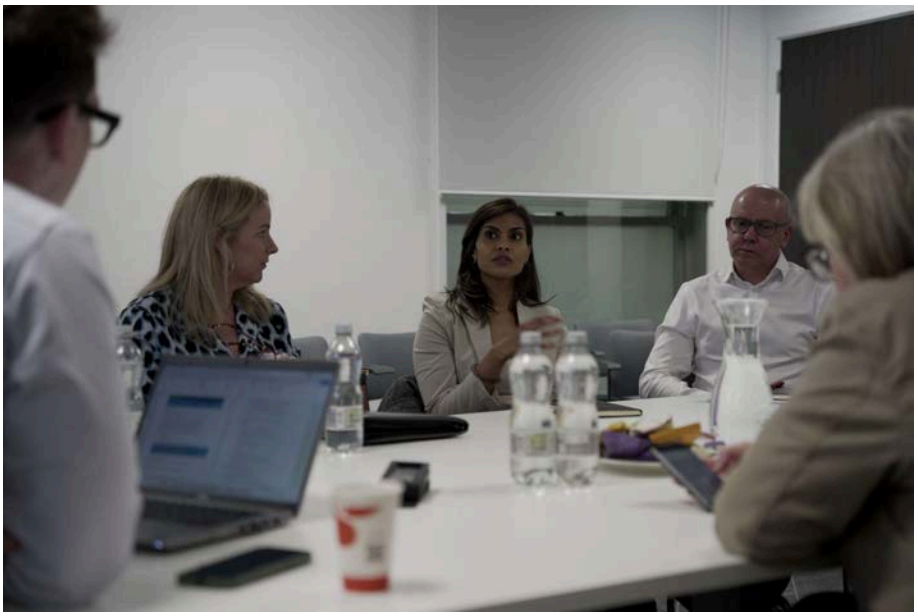
experiences relating to bereavement that we have heard, whether at these bereaved listening events, via our webform, post or at one of our earlier public events. The record on bereavement will be formally entered into evidence at Module 10 (impact of the pandemic on society) hearings in February 2026, at which point it will be published on the Inquiry's website.



Above: A picture of a visual aid in the form of a tree, that was used to capture discussions that took place during a Bereaved Listening Event.

Module 10 update

The Inquiry has now held the last of nine roundtable discussions with various sectors to support its Module 10 investigation into the impact of the pandemic on society. The final roundtable was with organisations in the housing and homelessness sector.



Above: our roundtable discussion with organisations from the housing and homelessness sector in progress

Each roundtable discussion will lead to a report that will be entered into the Module 10 investigation as evidence. They will also be published on the Inquiry website when Module 10 public hearings are in progress from 18 February 2026. The reports, alongside other evidence, will help to inform the Chair's findings and recommendations.

You can read more about our roundtable discussions and what is happening with the information shared with us in our news story.

Inquiry content available in British Sign Language

Did you know that we share our in-brief publications in BSL format on our website? We create a summary - called an in-brief - for each module report and Every Story Matters record we publish.

Our most recent BSL format to be published is the ESM record in-brief for Module 7 of the Inquiry. This record details people's experiences of the Test, Trace and Isolate system.

Find out more about our approach to accessible communications in our Policy.