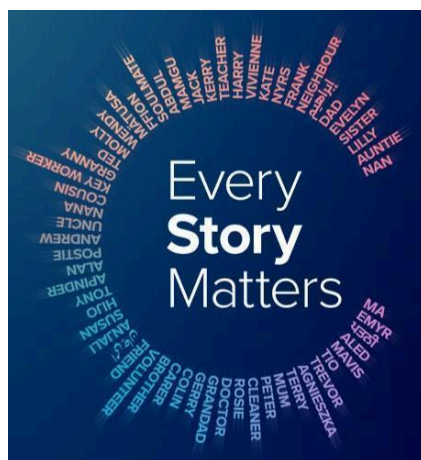




UK Covid-19 Inquiry



Every Story Matters Bereavement



About the Inquiry

The UK Covid-19 Inquiry is

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

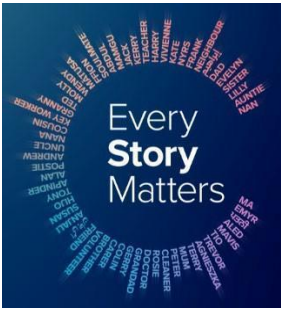


The Inquiry is divided up into **modules**. Each module is about a different subject. Each module has:

- public hearings: events where people talk about their experiences
- A UK Covid-19 Inquiry report



Every Story Matters



Every Story Matters is one way that the Inquiry learns about people's experiences of the pandemic.



Anyone in the UK could share their stories with us, at events and by using our website.



The stories helped us to learn about what happened, then decide how to do things differently in future.



You might feel upset when you read people's stories. Here is a link to information about getting support:

<https://covid19.public-inquiry.uk/support-whilest-engaging-with-the-inquiry/>

Records



Every module uses evidence from
Every Story Matters records.



Each **record** is a summary of the things people told us.



This document is the Easy Read version
of one of the records for **Module 10**.



All the Every Story Matters records
are on our website:

<https://www.covid19.public-inquiry.uk/every-story-matters/records/>

Bereavement

About **230,000** people died of Covid-19 during the pandemic.



Many more people were **bereaved**.

Bereaved means that someone close to you has died.

People who are bereaved have lots of difficult feelings. For example, feeling sad, lonely, guilty or angry.



Many people are still suffering from the effects of losing friends or family in the pandemic.

When people died



During the Covid-19 pandemic, some hospitals and care homes did not allow visits from friends and family when their loved ones were dying.



Some people were able to see their loved ones, but only through a window. Some others could visit, but only if they were wearing **PPE**: masks, aprons and gloves. This was also very upsetting.



Bereaved people said they felt angry, sad and guilty that they could not say goodbye. The dying person may have felt abandoned, when they needed family and friends.



Some people found it hard to get a **death certificate**.

A **death certificate** is a very important piece of paper that says the person has died.



You cannot have a funeral or sort out the person's money without a death certificate.



Some of the things politicians did made them feel even more pain.



For example, when people in government had gatherings in Downing Street, when this was breaking the rules.

Funerals



It was difficult to arrange funerals and other ceremonies.



Family and friends were unsure about how many people could go to a funeral or ceremony because lockdown rules changed a lot.



The restrictions about how many people could attend funerals or ceremonies sometimes caused problems between family and friends.



People had to wait a long time for funerals. This was very upsetting, especially for people from some cultures and religions who need funerals to happen very quickly.

Funerals and other ceremonies are often planned around:



- what the person who died wanted
- what their family wants
- their religion or culture



But during the pandemic, people often could not choose what the ceremonies were like.



Many funerals and other ceremonies were **live-streamed**. This means people watched them online. It did not feel the same as being there.

Support



Many people did not get information about bereavement support.



Some people who did get support said:

- they had to wait a long time to get help
- sessions were online and some people found this difficult

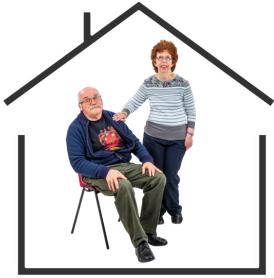


- some counsellors did not have the skills they needed to support people in a pandemic





Some bereaved people met to support each other. This helped them to feel better.



Support from family and friends was also very important.



People who were running bereavement support services told us:

- lots of people needed support
- services struggled to help everyone
- staff had to work extremely hard to keep up



Lasting effects

Some people found it harder to cope with bereavement if they were isolated.



Some people found it easier, because they did not have to talk to anyone about their loss.



Some families did not have enough money to live on after the person who earned money for their family died. This made them feel stressed and worried.



If a carer died, the cared for person was suddenly left with little support.

Ideas for the future



People who shared their stories with us told us about things that could be done better in the future:



- Offer families a meeting with a doctor or nurse who looked after the person before they died.

This will help people to understand more about what happened.

- Change the rules about isolation so that people can go to funerals and other ceremonies.



- Give people information about where to get support when someone dies



- Make sure there are enough support services to help people who are bereaved.

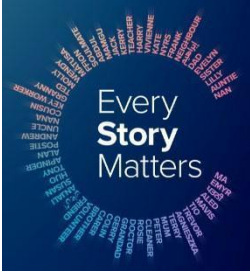


- Days of remembrance, and other ways of remembering are helpful. They are important to people who are bereaved.



- If people in government make bad decisions they should be held responsible for what they do.

More information



Download a full version of this record here:

<https://covid19.public-inquiry.uk/every-story-matters/records/>



You can find a short version of the record in other formats:



- English

- Welsh



- British Sign Language (video)