

FOI Case Reference: 202200270029 - Information Requested

9 September 2021

From: [Redacted] **On Behalf Of** COVID-19 Public Inquiry Set-Up Team

Sent: 09 September 2021 16:31

To: chrscotland@gmail.com

Subject: Care Home Relatives Scotland and Covid Public Inquiry

Dear [Redacted],

On 24 August, Scottish Ministers announced that a Scottish public inquiry will be established to consider Scotland's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic.

An Aims and Principles paper has been published which forms the basis of stakeholder engagement on the Terms of Reference for the inquiry. It is available online here: www.gov.scot/publications/covid-19-inquiry.

We are keen to hear a wide range of views on the Aims and Principles paper. To do this your organisation and any of its members can send an email to COVID-19publicinquirysetupteam@gov.scot. There is no requirement for emails to be in any particular format.

Please note that the Scottish Government, including this mailbox, is not taking evidence on behalf of the inquiry. Instead we are seeking views on the Government's approach to setting up the inquiry. When sending in views, you may wish to comment on the following questions:

- What do you think the Inquiry should cover?
- What do you think the Inquiry should not cover?
- Is there any type of evidence that you think is essential for the Inquiry to obtain?
- What should happen to ensure the Inquiry is completed as quickly as reasonable thoroughness permits?
- How should the Inquiry report its progress?
- Should there be interim reports? If so, what should the Inquiry deal with in interim reports?
- Should the Inquiry be required to make recommendations?
- What should be done to ensure everyone learns from the Inquiry?
- How should the Inquiry be designed so that it takes a person-centred, human rights-based approach to its work? For example, do you have views on inclusiveness and accessibility of venues and information?
- What help and support could be made available for those participating in the Inquiry?
- Do you have views on whether there should be a panel of members and/or assessors, in addition to the Inquiry Chair?
- Do you have any other comments about the design of the COVID-19 Public Inquiry?

The deadline for sending comments is midnight on 30 September 2021.

Additionally, we are setting up a number of discussions for those who would like to participate in this way to talk to Scottish Government officials who are collecting views on the establishment of the Inquiry. The discussions will take around 1-2 hours and focus on the same questions as those listed above.

We would be very keen to hold a discussion with CHRS. Therefore, if you could let us know dates and times in September that work for CHRS, we will look to set up a meeting. So that there is enough time for people to contribute, we would be like to host around 10 participants from your organisation at the meeting. However as we mention below, please be assured that comments given in writing will be given exactly the same weight as those made in the group discussions.

If you or the individuals you represent have support needs, we will be pleased to reimburse any expenses incurred in securing preferred support like Personal Assistants or BSL interpreters. Please let us know when booking.

In October, analytical colleagues from the Scottish Government will develop an external report in order to capture input from across the three different forms of engagement. The analysis will be conducted by analysts in line with the Government Social Research Code and its core values of integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality.

We hope this is helpful and look forward to hearing from you.

Organisational Readiness Directorate

Scottish Government
St Andrew's House
Regent Road
Edinburgh EH1 3DG

2 November 2021

From: [Redacted] <[Redacted]@gov.scot> On Behalf Of COVID-19 Public Inquiry Set-Up Team
Sent: 02 November 2021 11:37
To: COVID-19 Public Inquiry Set-Up Team <COVID-19publicinquirysetupteam@gov.scot>; [Redacted] <[Redacted]@kmlawyers.co.uk>
Subject: RE:

Dear [Redacted],

I am writing to follow-up on the below, and ask if I can be of help in facilitating a reply?

Thanks,

[Redacted]
Organisational Readiness Directorate

Scottish Government
St Andrew's House
Regent Road
Edinburgh EH1 3DG

From: [Redacted] <[Redacted]@gov.scot> On Behalf Of COVID-19 Public Inquiry Set-Up Team
Sent: 21 October 2021 14:47
To: COVID-19 Public Inquiry Set-Up Team <COVID-19publicinquirysetupteam@gov.scot>; [Redacted] <[Redacted]@kmlawyers.co.uk>
Subject: RE:

Dear [Redacted],

I am writing to follow-up on the below, and ask if I can be of help in facilitating a reply?

Thanks,

[Redacted]
Organisational Readiness Directorate

Scottish Government
St Andrew's House
Regent Road
Edinburgh EH1 3DG

From: [Redacted] <[Redacted]@gov.scot> On Behalf Of COVID-19 Public Inquiry Set-Up Team
Sent: 05 October 2021 16:15
To: COVID-19 Public Inquiry Set-Up Team <COVID-19publicinquirysetupteam@gov.scot>; [Redacted] <[Redacted]@kmlawyers.co.uk>
Subject: RE:

Dear [Redacted],

Further to my acknowledgement of your message, I am conscious you represent a group of bereaved families. As you will note from the Aims and Principles paper, Ministers are especially keen to ensure their voices are heard. I am therefore writing to offer a meeting during the course of October between you, your clients and officials from our Division – the Covid Inquiry Establishment Division. This would be held over Microsoft Teams.

Please let me know if you would like to take up this offer, and dates/times that might be acceptable. We are very flexible in how this is arranged but I am conscious your clients will have work and other commitments, so perhaps at this stage we could say 90 minutes is the length of the meeting, just to help fix dates?

Many thanks,

[Redacted]
Organisational Readiness Directorate

Scottish Government
St Andrew's House
Regent Road
Edinburgh EH1 3DG

From: [Redacted] <[Redacted]@kmlawyers.co.uk>
Sent: 29 September 2021 23:56
To: COVID-19 Public Inquiry Set-Up Team <COVID-19publicinquirysetupteam@gov.scot>
Cc: Admin <admin@kmlawyers.co.uk>
Subject:

Dear Sirs,

We represent a number of families directly effected by the pandemic. All have lost relatives and some more than one.

Having consulted with them separately they would wish the following to be considered and included in the Inquiry:

Management of relatives attending hospitals to see patients, especially those receiving end of life care.

Cleanliness of hospitals and special measures adopted by them to stop the spread of the virus.

Screening of patients being admitted to hospitals and triage of same prior to being admitted to general wards.

The guidelines issued to, or the practices adopted by general practitioners regarding appointments of patients, again triage of same to include the systems adopted to grade the patients as to who should and should not be given a face to face consultations.

Thank you for your assistance.

[Redacted]
KM Law
18 London Road
Trongate
Glasgow
G1 5NB

9 December 2021

From: [redacted]@gov.scot>
Sent: 09 December 2021 12:27
To: chrscotland@gmail.com
Subject: Scottish COVID-19 public inquiry

Dear [redacted],

Thank you for the chat earlier. As discussed, we would welcome Care Home Relatives Scotland views on the scope of the draft terms of reference for the Scottish COVID-19 public inquiry. Whilst it is not possible to send the draft to you, due to the confidential nature of that document and Ministers' duty to ensure it is announced first to Parliament, we would like to meet with you to discuss. As I said earlier, we apologise for the short notice of this but would like to offer you a meeting with officials at 11.00 am tomorrow (Friday 10 December) at St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG. If a meeting in person is not possible, we would be happy to have a virtual meeting at that time through Teams where, although we could not share text on screen, we could discuss the planned scope of the inquiry remit. Please let me know your preference.

I hope you can appreciate the sensitivity of this stage of work to establish the inquiry, during which we are still in consultation with the proposed chair to agree the terms of reference. The Government is committed to a public inquiry into the handling of the pandemic in Scotland, recognising that this will be vital to ensure that lessons are learned for the future.

I look forward to hearing from you.

[redacted]

[redacted]
Covid Inquiry Establishment Division
Organisational Readiness
Scottish Government
[redacted]

9 December 2021

From: [redacted]
Sent: 09 December 2021 12:10
To: [redacted]
Subject: Scottish COVID-19 public inquiry

Dear [redacted],

Thank you for the chat earlier. As discussed, we would welcome COVID-19 Bereaved Families for Justice Scotland views on the scope of the draft terms of reference for the Scottish COVID-19 public inquiry. Whilst it is not possible to send the draft to you, due to the confidential nature of that document and Ministers' duty to ensure it is announced first to Parliament, we would like to meet with you to discuss. As I said earlier, we apologise for the short notice of this but would like to offer you a meeting with officials at 3.00 pm tomorrow (Friday 10 December) at St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG. If a meeting in person is not possible, we would be happy to have a virtual meeting at that time through Teams where, although we could not share text on screen, we could discuss the planned scope of the inquiry remit. Please let me know your preference.

I hope you can appreciate the sensitivity of this stage of work to establish the inquiry, during which we are still in consultation with the proposed chair to agree the terms of reference. The Government is committed to a public inquiry into the handling of the pandemic in Scotland, recognising that this will be vital to ensure that lessons are learned for the future.

I look forward to hearing from you.

[redacted]

[redacted]
Covid Inquiry Establishment Division
Organisational Readiness
Scottish Government
[redacted]