

Rt Hon Baroness Heather Hallett DBE
Chair
UK COVID-19 Inquiry

10 August 2022

Dear Baroness Hallett

UK COVID-19 Inquiry launch statement and initial modules

Further to the publication of the [UK COVID-19 Inquiry launch statement](#), I am writing on behalf of the Welsh Parliament Health and Social Care Committee to seek further clarity on the matters outlined below.

Many of the issues relating to the UK's preparedness and response to the COVID-19 pandemic are devolved. As you note in the launch statement, this means considering and reporting on the preparations and response to the pandemic across all four nations as well as the UK as a whole. In my letter of 1 April 2022, I outlined the Committee's view that achieving this will require the Inquiry to have among its members—or otherwise have access to—expertise and advice in respect of the specific legal, policy and governance arrangements and context in Wales. To this end, we welcome the indication in the launch statement that you intend to commission research and seek expert advice to supplement existing research and evidence where required. We also note that you are anticipating the appointment of two additional panel members to assist you in hearing evidence and making findings and recommendations.

We note that the three initial modules announced in the launch statement each reflect devolution in different ways: module one includes consideration of devolved structures and bodies within one of the points of its detailed terms of reference; module two includes dedicated sub-modules focusing on each of the devolved nations; and module three does not, as yet, indicate how it will take account of devolution and the different health systems and arrangements in place in each nation.

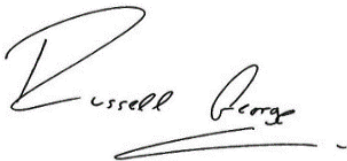
1. We would welcome further information about how Inquiry modules—whether or not they include nation-specific sub-modules—will include sufficient focus on the specific context and arrangements within each nation independently, as well as the broader picture across the UK.

We welcome your plans to conduct an informal listening exercise alongside formal evidence gathering, and your intention that this should include both online elements and conversations across the UK.

2. We would welcome confirmation that this will include opportunities for people and communities across different parts of Wales to engage with the inquiry in person or online as they prefer, and to contribute to its work, provide evidence and share their experiences in Welsh or English.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Russell George". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke underneath.

Russell George MS
Chair, Health and Social Care Committee

cc Rt Hon Mark Drakeford MS, First Minister, Welsh Government

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg. We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.