

# NEWSLETTER

## Issue 3 - August 2021



### Foreword from Lord Brodie

In preparation for the first of the Inquiry's oral hearings which is due to begin on 20 September, I have been reflecting on their content and format. We will hear from witnesses who have experience of the hospitals with which the Inquiry is concerned. These witnesses will all be patients or family members of patients. Future hearings will hear from other witnesses in order to build a complete picture of the public concerns that caused the Inquiry to be set up.

Every public inquiry has terms of reference which define what it is that the Inquiry must do and ours are on our website. It is my responsibility, as Chair of the Inquiry, to see that it fulfils its terms of reference, in other words that the Inquiry does what the terms of reference instruct it to do.

I consider it essential to begin by setting out to understand the experience of patients and their families and what the impact of that experience has been. This is for the simple reason that the Inquiry's terms of reference require us to investigate matters adversely impacting on patient safety and care – we therefore need to find out from patients and families what their perception of these impacts have been.

The first hearing is for patients and families to tell us their stories. We appreciate that they have gone through difficult times and indeed may still be doing so. We have no intention of adding to the stresses that they have already suffered. September will be about listening in order to guide us in fulfilling the Inquiry's terms of reference. We believe that the evidence of patients and families will do that.

**Lord Brodie**  
**Chair**

## How witnesses are supported during hearings

We understand that giving evidence at hearings may be emotional and difficult for anyone, especially patients and families. We will work hard to make the process of appearing at a hearing as smooth as possible. Our Witness Engagement and Support Team are on hand to help those who give evidence.

Members of the Witness Engagement and Support Team have been speaking with individual patients and their families. Each patient or family has a named team member specifically for them. The team supports witnesses who engage with the Inquiry, ensuring they understand what is involved in providing evidence, giving statements and attending hearings.

Witness citations will be sent to patients and families in August. Those giving evidence at a hearing will be contacted by their named team member in advance of the hearing to provide all the necessary information and help them prepare.

## New directions and guidelines published

More protocols and directions have been published setting out how the hearings will be conducted. These are on our [website](#) and can be downloaded via the links:

- [Protocol on witness expenses](#)
- [Protocol on leave to appear at hearings of the Inquiry](#)
- [Direction on opening statements](#)
- [Direction on opening statements at hearings commencing 20 September 2021](#)
- [Direction on standard of proof](#)

## Hearings

Hearings will be held at 20 West Register Street, Edinburgh, EH2 2AA. Just off St Andrew Square, the venue is close to the Edinburgh bus station, tram stops and Waverley train station. No car parking is available at the venue.

The venue is being prepared for the hearings with ongoing Covid-19 restrictions and safety measures in mind.

## Viewing the hearings

Hearings will be streamed live on our [YouTube channel](#) for anyone wishing to follow them. A recording of each session will also be available to watch on YouTube soon after sessions have ended. Different arrangements will be in place where a Restriction Order is in place. Details of these will be made available in advance.

See [Practical arrangements for September hearings](#) for more information.

## INQUIRY NEWS

### Procedural hearing

Lord Brodie held the Inquiry's first procedural hearing on 22 June, where he set out the arrangements for the hearings starting in September.

The focus, as relayed by Counsel to the Inquiry, Alastair Duncan QC, will be to hear the experiences of patients and families and their perception of how events unfolded. It has been made clear that the Inquiry does not intend to challenge their version of events. The intention is to understand the human impact of the issues that arose.

You can read more about the focus of the upcoming hearings [here](#) or view a recording on our [YouTube channel](#).

### Visit to QEUH

The Inquiry visited the Queen Elizabeth University Hospital, Glasgow, in June as part of its ongoing investigations into the issues there. The visit included a tour of several wards that have been affected by ventilation and water contamination issues. This has provided Lord Brodie with a clearer understanding of the experiences of patients and families, some of which we will be hearing from in September. For more information on the visit, see [here](#).

### Focus of May 2022 hearings

Lord Brodie has issued [guidance](#) to Core Participants that the Inquiry will focus primarily on ventilation with regards to the Royal Hospital for Children and Young People in Edinburgh. This guidance is aimed at ensuring those with relevant information to the inquiry can provide it. Other issues may be considered as the investigation progresses.

### Key date for 2021

**20 September** – hearings for affected patients and families start. A timetable will be available nearer the time on the Inquiry website.

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#### Contact us

Email: [public@hospitalsinquiry.scot](mailto:public@hospitalsinquiry.scot)

Phone: 0808 196 5000

Website: [www.hospitalsinquiry.scot](http://www.hospitalsinquiry.scot)

Post: Scottish Hospitals Inquiry, PO Box 27126, Glasgow G2 9NB

