

Press release on behalf of Keep Our NHS Public -

**** Embargoed until 11am on Wednesday 1st December 2021 ****

The People's Covid Inquiry report is launched:

Key Finding: Misconduct in a Public Office "A theme of behaviour amounting to gross negligence by the Government"

Tomorrow at an in-person and virtual press conference [1] the People's Covid Inquiry [2] organised by campaigning group Keep Our NHS Public [3] will present their finished report. [4 - link below] The report contains a damning assessment of the government's pandemic handling from a world-renowned barrister, including the finding of 'misconduct in a public office' by government ministers. The report will be submitted to government in the hope that it's contents may help inform future policy.

In the absence of a formal public inquiry into the pandemic, The People's Covid Inquiry began in February 2021 and concluded it's hearings in the summer. It covered all aspects of the government's handling of the pandemic and heard testimony from a wide range of people and organisations. These included previous government advisors and key academics, as well as frontline workers and bereaved family members. The Inquiry was chaired by world renowned human rights barrister Michael Mansfield QC who, together with a panel of experts, have now delivered their findings and recommendations on all main aspects of the pandemic to date.

People's Covid Inquiry chair Michael Mansfield QC, said:

"This People's Covid Inquiry report is unequivocal – dismal failure in the face of manifestly obvious risks... This Inquiry performed a much-needed and urgent public service when the nation was hit by a catastrophic pandemic coincident with an unprecedented period of democratic deficiency. It afforded an opportunity for the beleaguered citizen to be heard; for the victims to be addressed; for the frontline workers to be recognised; and for independent experts to be respected. When it mattered most and when lives could have been saved, the various postures adopted by government could not sustain scrutiny."

"It was plain to Keep Our NHS Public (the organisers of the People's Covid Inquiry) that Government words were bloated hot air, hoping to delay and obfuscate. Within this narrative lies a theme of behaviour amounting to gross negligence by the Government, whether examined singularly or collectively. There were lives lost and lives devastated, which was foreseeable and preventable. From lack of preparation and coherent policy, unconscionable delay, through to preferred and wasteful procurement, to ministers themselves breaking the rules, the misconduct is earth-shattering."

Dr Tony O'Sullivan, Co-Chair of Keep Our NHS Public and retired Consultant Paediatrician, said:

"We are proud that our Inquiry filled the deafening silence from Government and set out to learn the lessons that could save lives in this and future pandemics. We are shocked at the avoidable loss of tens of thousands of lives through the neglect of pandemic planning, the run down of the NHS, and the intense inequality in this

country. We heard the pride of NHS, care and other frontline staff and we heard about their pain, exhaustion and moral injury. The level of government cronyism and resultant profiteering has been blatant and in plain sight. Our overall conclusion is that there has been misconduct in public office. This has to be addressed. If we ignore it, the country cannot learn the lessons from today to face the challenge of tomorrow."

Jo Goodman, Co-Founder of Covid-19 Bereaved Families for Justice (who contributed to the Inquiry) said:

"It's vital that bereaved families are at the heart of the forthcoming inquiry and listened to at every turn, and this report evidences exactly why. The loss of our loved ones should be used to learn lessons and save lives - something the Government should be entirely focused on and dedicated to."

[ends]

Spokespeople are available for interview. Contact Samantha Wathen, Press Officer for Keep Our NHS Public press@keepournhspublic.com or Call/WhatsApp: 0777 6047472

Notes to editors

- 1. The in-person press conference will take place on Wednesday 1st December 10 - 11am at The Rennie Room, One Great George Street, Westminster, London SW1P 3AA.** Seating at the venue will be socially distanced and we politely ask you to please wear a face covering. **Also virtually, please do register to join the online event here:** https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZckd-iurz8uGNI_0X-LKGTzNMhiJlb_UNA3
- 2. www.peoplescovidinquiry.com**
- 3. Keep Our NHS Public is a national independent organisation campaigning for a well-funded, publicly owned and provided NHS www.keepournhspublic.com**
- 4. The executive summary of the People's Covid Inquiry Report:** https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=https%3A%2F%2F36085122-5b58-481e-afa4-a0eb0aaf80ca.usfiles.com%2Fugd%2F360851_1539e5b668e64174ad5fa872f98f14ef.pdf%3Ffbclid%3DIwAR1g1dsm83fokjOiUi76StgNRXxqMWEev_d3Pk6Ca3RztlnT0TbiaMYEk0&h=AT3rbUfwMvMam90mdFSfO_1NoMMqctrCDe k34G_cIEkk-k4pm6082le8Vs7RUGE71hhM9ZaPtBaCpSQwN2BlqrRGinonsfELagGNVxb3qZANhBPTxNRXUJB3Jlx6IMJgrHg