

Written Ministerial Statement

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The Executive Office

COVID INQUIRY – MODULE 5: PUBLICATION AND WRITTEN MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Published at 1PM on Friday 12 August 2026

Mrs O'Neill (The First Minister) and Mrs Little-Pengelly (The deputy First Minister): Baroness Hallett, Chair of the UK Covid-19 Inquiry, has recently published the Module 5 Report, which examines the procurement, supply and distribution of personal protective equipment (PPE), medical equipment and associated goods and identifies lessons to strengthen preparedness and resilience for future civil emergencies.

Publication of this report represents another significant milestone for the families of those who lost loved ones during the pandemic, and for all those who continue to live with its lasting effects. Our thoughts remain with them.

We are grateful to all those who contributed evidence to the Inquiry and to those who worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic to protect the public and maintain vital services under exceptionally challenging circumstances.

The report considers procurement arrangements and experiences across the United Kingdom and identifies a range of recommendations aimed at strengthening preparedness, resilience and emergency response arrangements in the future.

As with the Module 1, 2, 3 and 4 reports, The Executive Office will continue to coordinate Northern Ireland Civil Service consideration of the Inquiry's findings and recommendations through the established cross-departmental steering group. This group will continue to oversee and coordinate consideration of the recommendations arising from Module 5.

We will now consider the report and its recommendations in detail, working closely with all Departments and relevant public bodies. The lessons identified by the Inquiry will inform ongoing work to strengthen resilience, preparedness and emergency planning arrangements for the future.

We would like to thank Baroness Hallett and the Inquiry team for their continued work. It is important that we now take the time to carefully consider the findings and recommendations of Module 5 before making further comment.