



10 DOWNING STREET
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THE PRIME MINISTER

29 August 2020

Dear Ms Gookman and Mr Fowler,

I am writing to thank you and Bereaved Families for Justice for your recent letters, calling for a public inquiry into COVID-19 deaths and requesting a meeting with me.

I am acutely conscious that a letter will be of little comfort against the grief and heartbreak that families have suffered. However, I wanted to offer my sincere condolences to all the families who have lost loved ones to this terrible disease. I know from my own experience how debilitating its effects are and can only imagine the pain and despair of those families that have been bereaved.

As I work to manage the response to the pandemic, I will of course meet members of the public and key workers who have been bereaved as a result of COVID-19. Each story of loss motivates me to ensure that we beat this virus together. As much as I would wish to be able to offer my condolences in person to all those who have suffered loss, that is regrettably not possible and so I am unable to meet with you and members of Bereaved Families for Justice.

As for the issue of an independent inquiry, the Government has always been clear that there will be opportunities to look back, analyse and reflect on all aspects of COVID-19. As I have made clear previously, this will include an independent inquiry at the appropriate time. I understand that Bereaved Families for Justice have instructed solicitors who are currently engaged in pre-action correspondence in relation to this matter. All further correspondence relating to this issue should pass through the respective legal teams. I understand that the Government Legal Department will be responding to your most recent letter on this topic within the time frame you requested.

Please pass on my deepest sympathies to the families and thank you, once again, for writing.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ben". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, circular initial "B" and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Ms Jo Goodman and Mr Matt Fowler