

21 September 2023

**Open letter from Chair of the Essex Mental Health Independent Inquiry,
Baroness Kate Lampard CBE**

I am honoured to have been asked by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, Steve Barclay MP, to take on the role of Chair of the Essex Mental Health Independent Inquiry and to continue the important work undertaken by the previous Chair, Dr Geraldine Strathdee.

I am conscious that there has been a period of uncertainty while the Inquiry was being converted to statutory status. I am committed to chairing the Inquiry, to carrying out thorough investigations and to ensuring that the Inquiry is concluded as swiftly as possible.

I will officially start in my capacity as Chair on 9 October 2023.

Today I have met with the Secretary of State, and I have informed him that I will be reviewing the current Terms of Reference to ensure that the Inquiry is working to the most appropriate scope. This will be done as part of a public consultation which will begin on 1 November 2023. The Inquiry website will be updated with further information about this, including how to participate, in due course.

Yours faithfully

Baroness Kate Lampard CBE

Chair to the Essex Mental Health Independent Inquiry