
Director General for Regulation

Mark Svenson
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Dear Mark,

I note the recent use by the Secretary of State for Health of an unpublished estimate of excess deaths arising through weekend admission to hospitals in England. This was reported widely in the media, and has been the subject of correspondence with the Authority.

As you and I discussed, we welcome the approach taken by the Department to releasing ad hoc data and analysis where it is used publicly by Ministers. Your approach ensures that statistics and other data mentioned publicly by Ministers and others are available equally to all users. You explained in this case that the estimate concerned comes from medical research, which you expect to be published by the researchers in the British Medical Journal in due course. Given your general approach, however, I would like to invite you to consider how best to supplement the information currently available so that users can understand the source of this estimate and how it differs from previous estimates. I would welcome an update from you once you have reached your conclusions, including any lessons learned for the general approach taken by the Department. In the meantime, if you would value any support either from me or from the Authority more widely, please do let me know.

Yours sincerely,



Ed Humpherson