



## Public Administration Select Committee (PASC)

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UK Statistics Authority  
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14 February 2014

*Dear Andrew*

Lest there be any doubt, I welcome any initiative which will reduce patient mortality in NHS hospitals. However, I am concerned about the statistical basis upon which the government announced which hospitals appear to be of the most concern. PASC has authorised me to write to you about this.

Following the Prime Minister's statement to the House of Commons on the Francis report into the Mid-Staffordshire Hospital NHS Trust, the Government has asked the NHS Medical Director, Professor Sir Bruce Keogh, to conduct an investigation into five hospitals with the highest mortality rates according to the SHMI index, a new and relatively unproven indicator. The five hospitals were named. The hospitals concerned received next to no notice of this announcement.

The mortality index chosen to identify these five hospitals for investigation is but one such indicator. Since that announcement, fourteen more hospitals have been named using a more established but single indicator, HSMI. Is it statistically sound that such public judgements be made on the basis of just one indicator?

I would be grateful if you could advise how the Government can best make use of the various measures of hospital patient mortality, without causing undue alarm in the media, and amongst patients, staff and the wider public.

I should make clear, for transparency, that one of the hospitals included in the first five is Colchester Hospital University NHS Foundation Trust, which serves many of my constituents. On the basis of HSMI, there would be no cause for concern and there are many (but not all) who believe that the public concern raised by the government's announcement is unwarranted.

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I have also spoken to other MPs representing areas served by the other four hospitals named. None objects to the government's initiative, though we would welcome greater clarity about what the figures mean, when they are used by the government in public announcements.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State for Health, Jeremy Hunt MP and the Chairman of the Health Select Committee, Rt Hon Stephen Dorrell. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours ever



**Mr Bernard Jenkin MP**  
**Committee Chairman**

