
Director General for Regulation

Chris Roebuck
NHS Digital
Trevelyan House
1 Trevelyan Square
Boar Lane
Leeds
LS1 6AE

8 August 2016

Dear Chris

ASSESSMENT OF PATIENT OUTCOME STATISTICS: SUMMARY HOSPITAL-LEVEL MORTALITY INDICATOR: DEATHS ASSOCIATED WITH HOSPITALISATION; ENGLAND

Thank you for the correspondence outlining the actions that have been taken to address the requirements in Assessment Report number 308 on Patient Outcome Statistics: Summary Hospital-Level Mortality Indicator: Deaths Associated with Hospitalisation; England.

On behalf of the Board of the Statistics Authority, I have reviewed these on the advice of the Assessment team and I am pleased to confirm the designation of Patient Outcome Statistics: Summary Hospital-Level Mortality Indicator: Deaths Associated with Hospitalisation; England as new National Statistics. I would like to acknowledge the efforts of the team involved in the assessment process to introduce a range of improvements to its statistical report and supporting documentation. I also welcome the proactive approach taken by the statistical team, and NHS Digital more generally, to strengthening its user engagement.

You will be aware from the recent Health and Care Statistics Summit that you actively supported, that the Statistics Authority shares with the key stakeholders a compelling vision for an information eco-system that provides the highest standards of public value. The SHMI statistics embrace these features in the way that the statistics complement the latest snapshot data with interesting insight. While the most-immediate use of the SHMI statistics is for individual trusts to understand factors that may be affecting their hospital mortality rates, SHMI complements other data with interesting insight that could add value to a wider range of users.

I am particularly impressed with the efforts to construct 140 different logistic regression models, where each model adjusts for the patient's diagnostic condition for which he or she is in hospital, age, sex, comorbidities and method of admission to hospital, which alone is an extraordinary achievement. In addition, the statisticians have taken steps to counteract some well-known biases in these types of statistics through publishing contextual indicators such as those for palliative care coding, admission method, and deprivation. These developments speak very positively for the capability that NHS Digital has created.

National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and value and is something to be celebrated. We invite you to include a statement alongside the statistics which reflects this status. You may wish to base your statement on the boilerplate text included in the assessment report.

Please feel free to discuss any aspect of this with us at any time. I am copying this letter to Noel Gordon, the chair of NHS Digital and to John Pullinger, the National Statistician.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ed Humpherson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail.

Ed Humpherson