

Mr E Humpherson  
Director General for Regulation  
Office for Statistics Regulation  
1 Drummond Gate  
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20 June 2018

Dear Ed

We are continuing to develop our statistical outputs in line with user need and we have recently undertaken a consultation on our prescribing and medicine statistics. As part of this we have identified and gained user feedback for two National Statistics series that cover similar subject matter and can be combined, freeing analyst capacity to work on new data sources.

The Prescriptions Dispensed in the Community is a National Statistics series that mainly repeats and expands the information made available earlier in the year as part of the Prescription Cost Analysis National Statistics series. Following a user consultation and through analysis of usage information and discussion with users, we have identified the user base would have its needs well met by the extra information being released earlier as tables of data, together with information around quality, rather than waiting for a second report to become available with more in depth commentary that repeats previously released figures.

Plans are in place to publish the tables of data for the Prescriptions Dispensed in the Community on 28 June without the broader report. A statement will inform users that this is the last in the series and will detail how the Prescription Cost Analysis series will be expanded in March 2019.

This rationalisation of the two data series provides the opportunity to make improvements in the timely release of other data series. Plans are now in place to move the General Pharmaceutical Services publication, which is also a National Statistics series, from November to August 2018, further benefitting users.

A formal response to the consultation will be made available publicly in the near future.

As a result, we would like to invite you to agree to the cessation of the Prescription Dispensed in the Community publication series and the expansion of the data to be made available in the Prescription Cost Analysis National Statistics series.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'CJ Roebuck', written in a cursive style.

Chris Roebuck  
Chief Statistician