
Director General for Regulation

Scott Heald
Head of Profession for Statistics
Public Health Scotland
(by email)

Roger Halliday
Chief Statistician & Joint Head of Covid Modelling and Analysis Team
Scottish Government
(by email)

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Dear Scott and Roger

The use of unpublished statistics in Scottish Government news release

On 23 June, a [news release](#) 'COVID-19 antibody testing' was published on the Scottish Government website detailing a letter written to NHS boards from the Chief Medical Officer Dr Gregor Smith about the use of serology testing for COVID-19 in Scotland. Within the news release, it reported that 'so far, 4,431 antibody tests, for surveillance purposes, have been completed'. There is no reference to the data source of the figure quoted in the news release.

To date, there has been no publication of routine serology (antibody) testing in Scotland. As such, this figure cannot be verified. This is unacceptable for a figure of such importance used in a government news release.

We understand that wider plans are underway around the data collection and publication of serology information in Scotland. Nevertheless, our expectation, as set out in our [public statement](#) of 18 May, is that any data used publicly by Government should be published in an accessible form, with appropriate explanations of context and sources. Antibody testing data are of particular interest to the public and to ensure public confidence and equality of access, we urge you to publish the data quoted in the Scottish Government news release.

Yours sincerely



Ed Humpherson
Director General for Regulation