
Ed Humpherson, Director General for Regulation

To: Producers of health-related statistics across the UK

1 December 2020

Statistics to monitor the UK's COVID-19 Vaccination Programme

Following the pleasing announcement of a potential vaccine for COVID-19, we anticipate that statistics on the rollout of the vaccination programme will soon need to be developed. We expect statisticians in your organisations to play a key role in the development of the statistics.

The statistics will be essential to inform and manage the programme and there will undoubtedly be a strong public interest in progress. Measuring government programmes in a robust and transparent way is important and the statistics underpinning any measurement should uphold the principles of being trustworthy, of high quality and offer public value. You have already demonstrated an ability to react quickly to meet new data needs, and there are valuable lessons that can be learnt from development of statistics on testing and tracing. Given the national importance of the vaccination programme, I would like to set out our expectations in the development of vaccination statistics across the UK:

- Any publications of statistics should be clear on the extent to which they can provide insight into the efficacy of the vaccinations, or whether they are solely focused on operational aspects of programme delivery.
- Data definitions must be clear at the start to ensure public confidence in the data is maintained.
- Where statistics are reported in relation to any target, the definition of the target and any related statistics should be clear.
- The statistics should be released in a transparent and orderly way, under the guidance of the Chief Statistician/Head of Profession for Statistics.
- Some thought needs to be applied as to the timeliness, for example, daily or weekly data, to meet the needs of various users.

I would be grateful for assurance that your offices are working together to develop these statistics and that they will be comparable across the administrations of the UK.

My team would be happy to perform a rapid review against the Code of Practice for these statistics and I look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ed Humpherson', with a stylized, cursive script.

Ed Humpherson

Director General for Regulation