
Ed Humpherson, Director General for Regulation

Roger Halliday
Chief Statistician and Data Officer
Scottish Government
(via email)

11 June 2021

Dear Roger,

As you are already aware, we have been contacted around the use of unpublished hospital admission data by the Scottish Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care, Humza Yousaf, on 2 June. Concerns were also raised about the figure being used in a misleading way.

Thank you for liaising with us and for your prompt action in response. This quick response meant that you addressed the issues and resolved the concerns that we and others had.

By way of background, the figure used was not available publicly at the time the statement was made, and it was inaccurately presented. We were pleased to see that the figure used by the Scottish Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care was [published as part of an ad-hoc release](#) which included an explanatory note to support any future interpretation. It is also encouraging to hear that Public Health Scotland is now working to publish data on the age ranges of those hospitalised on a more routine basis to meet public interest in these data. We would encourage as part of this work, if possible, to include if the admissions were because of COVID-19 or if the primary reason for admission to hospital was for something else. We highlighted this as a data gap in [a statement](#) we published in December 2020.

Whilst we understand that on this occasion, it was a genuine mistake, which was quickly corrected, I would like to re-iterate the importance of ensuring ministers are appropriately briefed and any figures referred to publicly must be made available.

We will continue to liaise with your team and Public Health Scotland as you develop the reporting of hospital admission data further.

Yours sincerely



Ed Humpherson
Director General for Regulation