

*From the Director of Information & Analysis  
Dr Eugene Mooney*



**BY EMAIL:** [regulation@statistics.gov.uk](mailto:regulation@statistics.gov.uk)

Department of Health  
Castle Buildings  
Stormont Estate  
Belfast BT4 3SQ  
Tel: 028 9052 0726  
Email:  
[Eugene.Mooney@health-ni.gov.uk](mailto:Eugene.Mooney@health-ni.gov.uk)

Date: 17 May 2022

Dear Ed,

**RE: Northern Ireland (NI) Outpatient Waiting Time Statistics**

Thank you for your recent review of the quarterly Northern Ireland Outpatient Waiting Time Statistics and for confirming the publication's ongoing compliance with the Code of Practice for Statistics.

We strive to maintain and improve the standards of our National Statistics publications and are very grateful for the work of your team in identifying improvements to increase the value and quality of these statistics. We are committed to addressing these recommendations and as we discussed when we met with OSR colleagues in April, we have already taken steps to implement them in some areas, including:

- We have implemented a Reproducible Analytical Pipeline (RAP) to streamline the production of the publication and offer a range of interactive data visualisation tools. Feedback from users suggests that these are a welcome addition to the publication.
- Reviewing the content and accessibility of the published Background Quality Report document - an updated version will be published shortly.
- Improved presentation and communication of provisional outpatient activity statistics.
- Our work programme for the coming year includes a QAAD assessment to accompany this publication.

During the review process we also had some discussions with your Assessment Team about extending the National Statistics designation to cover the waiting times statistics for Day Case Procedure Centres (DPCs). When DPCs were introduced in 2019, we did not request an extension of National Statistics status to cover this data. This was in order to allow new administrative processes within Health and Social Care Trusts to bed in and protect against any potential data quality issues arising from the new processes. These processes are now well settled and administration takes place on the same Patient Administration System from which we source the main Outpatients waiting list data. We collect the DPC data using exactly the same method and quality assure it using the same processes and techniques. On this basis, I would be grateful if you could consider extending the National Statistics designation to cover these statistics.

Once again, I would like to thank you and your team for the valuable assurance provided, and look forward to working with you in the future to enhance the statistics that we produce. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further detail with regards to this letter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E. Mooney', is written over a light blue rectangular background.

**Dr Eugene Mooney**  
Director, Information & Analysis Directorate