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**Ed Humpherson, Director General for Regulation**

Emma Rourke  
Deputy National Statistician  
Health, Population and Methods  
Office for National Statistics  
(by email)

28 October 2022

Dear Emma

**Assessment of Deaths in the Care Sector statistics**

We have completed our assessment of your Deaths in the Care Sector statistics against the Code of Practice for Statistics. I am grateful for the positive engagement from your team throughout the assessment process.

Worthy of note is the innovation and collaboration, both within and outside ONS, that the statistics team undertook for the speedy development of these statistics during the COVID-19 pandemic. The statistics support the management and public understanding of the main causes of deaths of people who were living in registered care homes.

The development of these statistics as an experimental output is innovative, but the annual release has not reached its full potential for providing granular data or for describing deaths in the whole of the care sector. We have identified improvements that could strengthen the statistics, to ensure they meet the highest standards of the Code of Practice for Statistics. Our recommendations focus on ensuring that ONS continues to develop and review the methodology underpinning the estimates of age-specific mortality rates and continues to widen its stakeholder engagement to support the development of the statistics.

We have agreed that the team will introduce the improvements and increase the breadth of stakeholder engagement prior to the release of the statistics in 2023, and my team will continue to liaise and review progress with the recommendations in the report.

Please feel free to discuss any aspect of this with me or my team. I am copying this letter to Rachel Skentelbery, Deputy Head of Profession for Statistics, and Sophie John, Head of Social Care Statistics, both at ONS.

Yours sincerely



Ed Humpherson  
Director General for Regulation