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**Ed Humpherson, Director General for Office for Statistics Regulation**

Oonagh Smyth  
Chief Executive Officer  
Skills for Care  
(by email)

12 February 2025

Dear Oonagh

**Statistics about the workforce employed by adult social services departments in England:  
Confirmation of accredited official statistics status**

We have independently reviewed the actions that Skills for Care has taken to address the three requirements outlined in our [assessment report](#). On behalf of the Board of the UK Statistics Authority, I am pleased to confirm that they comply with the standards of Trustworthiness, Quality and Value in the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#) and should be labelled accredited official statistics. The detail supporting our judgement is included in the annex to this letter.

We are assured by the plans your team has in place over the next year to strengthen user engagement and improve the usability of the Skills for Care website. The publication of your statistical work programme and additional information about methods increases transparency and demonstrates your willingness to listen to and support users of the statistics. Your team has also gone beyond the expectations of the assessment requirements by implementing a range of other improvements, including embedding the Code of Practice for Statistics within the organisation and increasing awareness of the Code among both analytical and non-analytical colleagues. These efforts demonstrate your commitment to upholding the standards of the Code of Practice for Statistics and ensures that staff are well supported.

I would like to thank your team for its open and constructive engagement throughout our assessment and for your ongoing commitment to improving these statistics.

I am copying this letter to Will Fenton, Analytics Manager and Lead Official for Statistics at Skills for Care.

Yours sincerely



Ed Humpherson  
Director General for OSR

**Review of actions taken in response to [Assessment Report 392, Statistics about the workforce employed by adult social services departments in England](#), produced by Skills for Care produced by Skills for Care**

*Requirement 1:* To ensure that users remain at the centre of statistical production, Skills for Care should be clearer about how it considers user input, informing users openly about how their views will or will not be acted upon.

*Actions taken by Skills for Care:* The analytical team at Skills for Care has successfully gained agreement from the Skills for Care senior team to include a project on the 2025/26 business plan to carry out extensive user research on the workforce intelligence website. In the meantime, a [Contact us](#) section has been added to the website and a note requesting feedback and input from users has been added to the [report page](#). A feedback request has also been included in the 'Our values' of the latest annual report.

*OSR's evaluation of evidence:* We consider this requirement to be met. The inclusion of user research in Skills for Care's 2025/26 business plan is a significant step for the organisation. It demonstrates Skills for Care's commitment to continuing user engagement and improving the usability of the website. The addition of feedback requests to various sections of the website and the publication of Skills for Care's statistical work programme (Requirement 2) increases transparency and demonstrates a willingness to listen to users.

*Requirement 2:* To increase transparency around its processes, resources and stakeholder relationships to support its role as an official statistics producer, Skills for Care should: publish details of its statistical governance structures and processes; engage with stakeholders to develop its statistical work and plans for improvement; and publish its statistical work programme.

*Actions taken by Skills for Care:* Skills for Care has published several additions to its website and latest annual report:

- A section detailing Skills for Care's statistical governance structure has been added to the ['About us' page](#) of the website, providing information about the analytical team's statistical work programme and inviting feedback from users.
- Information about stakeholders has been included in the latest annual report in a new section called 'Users and uses of this report'.
- Information about the comparability of the statistics with other data sources has been added to the introduction of the report.

In addition to this work, the analytical team at Skills for Care has been delivering training across the organisation about the Code of Practice for Statistics and the new governance structures relating to official statistics and wider analysis which have been developed. For example, communications colleagues must involve analysts when planning to publish a press release that includes figures. The Lead Official within Skills for Care has been identified, and there are plans to formally include this responsibility within their job description. The Lead Official has established a good working relationship and attends regular meetings with the Head of Profession at the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC).

*OSR's evaluation of evidence:* We consider this requirement to be met. Skills for Care has published its statistical work programme and information about stakeholders and comparability with other related data sources. In addition, the analytical team has worked hard to embed the Code of Practice for Statistics within the organisation and to increase awareness among both

analytical and non-analytical colleagues. The establishment of the lead official role and the positive relationship which has been built with Skills for Care's sponsor department (DHSC) will ensure that staff are well supported as issues arise.

*Requirement 3:* To be open and reduce user confusion, Skills for Care should review its statistics and metadata to ensure that they are presented clearly and consistent terminology is used throughout.

*Actions taken by Skills for Care:* Skills for Care has added a section to its [Methods paper](#) explaining what it means by 'data coverage' and has ensured that it is consistent in using the term 'response rate' throughout its latest annual report. Skills for Care has also committed to carrying through this consistency to all the analytical team's reports. In the latest annual report, Skills for Care has also made clearer which variables are mandatory returns and which are estimates.

*OSR's evaluation of evidence:* We consider this requirement to be met. The consistent use of technical terminology and additional explanations of these terms will support user understanding and increase transparency.