

Ed Humpherson
Director General for Regulation
Office for Statistics Regulation

Date 28th October 2025
Your ref
Our ref SH/EH/SC/280825
Enquiries to Scott Heald
Email scott.heald@phs.scot

Dear Ed,

PLANNED CHANGES TO THE CARE HOME CENSUS STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CARE ASSESSMENT AND CARE AT HOME SERVICES MANAGEMENT INFORMATION

To support the modernisation of Scotland's social care data landscape, we are making two changes to existing publications to release capacity for this work:

- **Pausing the 2025/26 Care Home Census**

The 2024/25 [Care Home Census](#), an official statistics publication, will be the released today for the last time in its current form. This pause will allow Public Health Scotland (PHS) to focus on defining a care home minimum dataset and progressing broader data transformation efforts. The contents and format of future publications will be determined by this transformation work.

- **Introducing monthly snapshot reporting for social care assessments and care at home**

From January 2026, monthly [management information](#) on people awaiting social care assessments or care at home will report data from the first week of each month only, rather than all weeks. This change maintains the current reporting frequency and does not change the insights that can be drawn from the data. This will ease the burden on data providers and PHS staff and release capacity to focus on wider data improvement work.

These decisions are informed by the Office for Statistics Regulation's 2020 systemic review of [Adult Social Care Statistics in Scotland](#) and the subsequent work being progressed by the Social Care Data Intelligence Programme Board (SCDIPB) to

ensure the social care data landscape delivers statistics that better meet user needs. As part of this work, the Scottish Government, Care Inspectorate and PHS worked in partnership to review the care home data landscape. The review considered improvements to the content, quality and frequency of current data collections, along with alternative methods of data collection, with the aims of ensuring a coherent suite of data collections, minimising the burden on data providers and meeting the existing and emerging needs of data users. To realise these ambitions PHS needs to release capacity so I have decided to pause the work to produce the 2025/26 Care Home Census due to be published in autumn 2026.

The capacity we are releasing will enable staff to concentrate resources on defining a care home minimum dataset and also focus on the wider programme of social care data transformation work. These decisions will also reduce the data submission burden on care homes while this work is underway, and on providers of care assessment and care at home data.

We recognise that this will mean a reduction in the provision of timely data about care homes and their residents until the transformation work is complete. However, I am confident this is a justifiable trade-off because the planned developments we are working on will benefit users in the longer-term by providing data that better meets their needs. This decision was informed by joint workshops held with input from PHS, Scottish Government, COSLA and the Care Inspectorate to identify options for releasing capacity to work on data developments. Without releasing this capacity within PHS and the wider sector, these improvements will take much longer to develop and implement.

We will also continue to publish the **Care Home Statistics for Scotland; Support and services funded by Health and Social Care Partnerships in Scotland** annual publication, which reports on residents in care homes anywhere in the UK, who are funded in part, or in full, by a Scottish Local Authority.

We are committed to working with users throughout this transformation. Anyone wishing to contribute can contact us at phs.carehomecensus@phs.scot.

I am copying this letter to Alastair McAlpine, Scottish Government Chief Statistician, Eddie Follan, Chief Officer for Health and Social Care COSLA, and Ingrid Gilray, Intelligence and Analysis Manager, Care Inspectorate.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Scott Heald', enclosed within a thin black rectangular border.

Scott Heald

Director, Data and Digital Innovation

Head of Profession for Statistics