

Seamus Logan MP
Member of Parliament for Aberdeenshire North and Moray East
House of Commons
(via email)

14 May 2026

Dear Mr Logan,

Thank you for your letter of 28 April regarding recent references to NHS planned care waiting times made in Parliament.

We are aware of the statements you have highlighted and recognise the concern you raise about comparisons of waiting times between Scotland and England, particularly where figures are presented without appropriate context.

As you note, OSR has previously considered similar claims and written publicly about the risks involved in using NHS waiting times statistics in this way. Building on this work, we published a statement¹ on 22 April 2026 setting out our guidance on the appropriate use and interpretation of planned care waiting times statistics across the UK. The statement focuses on two key issues: the limited comparability of NHS waiting times statistics between UK nations, and the potential for misleading claims where pathway-based waiting times are interpreted as numbers of individual patients.

The statements you reference were made prior to the publication of this guidance and raise issues that are substantively the same as those addressed in the statement, including claims explicitly referred to within it. We do not, therefore, plan to take further public action. However, we have drawn the statement to the attention of the ministerial and parliamentary figures to support responsible use of these statistics going forward.


Given the high public interest in NHS performance, particularly during an election period, we continue to stress the importance of presenting statistics clearly, transparently and with sufficient context, in line with the OSR's Standards for the Public Use of Statistics².

¹ [Understanding NHS planned care waiting times statistics across the UK](#), Office for Statistics Regulation, 22 April 2026

² [Standards for the Public Use of Statistics, Data and Wider Analysis](#), Office for Statistics Regulation, October 2025

Thank you again for raising this matter with us. I hope the published guidance is helpful and please do not hesitate to contact us if you would like to discuss it further.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Penny Young". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Penny Young
Interim Chair