
Siobhan Tuohy-Smith, Assessment Programme Lead

Scott Heald
Head of Profession for Statistics
Public Health Scotland
(by email)

28 May 2026

Dear Scott,

Compliance review of inpatient, day case and outpatient stage of treatment waiting times statistics

Thank you for your letter outlining the recent work undertaken by Public Health Scotland (PHS) in response to the recommendations contained in our [compliance review](#) of PHS's statistics on [inpatient, day case and outpatient stage of treatment waiting times](#).

The actions you have taken to improve guidance to users on exercising caution when adding together the number of ongoing waits are welcomed. Your commitment to proactively engage with users who misuse the statistics is a good demonstration of our expectations of producers in accordance with the [Standards for the Public Use of Statistics, Data and Wider Analysis](#). The inclusion of an extended PHS Impact Assessment in the April monthly publication appropriately supports users to distinguish between the changes observed in key waiting times performance indicators over time, and is communicated clearly.

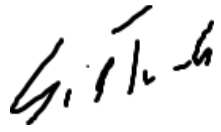
The inclusion of key messages on cross-UK health statistics' comparability also provides helpful guidance on the appropriate use of the available statistics. The public interest in this topic was highlighted in a [public statement by OSR last month](#). PHS's commitment to ongoing engagement with other UK producers to provide more support to users will further strengthen the value of these statistics.

These actions are in addition to work you [informed us of in February](#) to improve the recording, robustness and transparency of pre-release access procedures. We note that work to extend this good practice to all PHS statistics publications is ongoing.

Taken together, this work represents a strong and constructive response to the recommendations from our compliance review. I would like to thank you and your team again for your ongoing commitment to improving these important statistics and supporting their appropriate use.

I am copying this letter to Mairi Watson, Information Consultant for Planned Care
Waiting Times Analytical Team.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Siobhan Tuohy-Smith', written in a cursive style.

Siobhan Tuohy-Smith
Assessment Programme Lead
Office for Statistics Regulation