



Mr Ed Humpherson
Director General for Regulation
Office for Statistics Regulation
Fry Building, 1st Floor
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4D

Our Ref: ST10950

15 June 2026

Dear Mr Humpherson,

I am writing to ask the Office for Statistics Regulation to review the transparency and presentation of NHS elective waiting list statistics.

Since last autumn, Members across the House have repeatedly asked Ministers, through Written Parliamentary Questions and in the Commons, about waiting-list validation, removals without treatment, referral management and what happens to patients who leave the headline figures.

I enclose an annex setting out relevant Written Parliamentary Questions and Commons exchanges from Members across the House since autumn 2025. It shows a repeated pattern of incomplete, unavailable or non-substantive answers, including instances where the Department has said that information is not held centrally, has provided only aggregate figures, or has not answered before Prorogation. Ministers have still not provided a clear breakdown of why patients are removed without treatment, what happens to them afterwards, or how many are subsequently added back onto waiting lists.

This matters because Ministers regularly cite reductions in the waiting list as evidence of progress. Patients and the public need to know whether reductions reflect people receiving treatment, or whether they are being driven in part by administrative removals, validation exercises or changes in how patients are managed before joining the list.

I am not asking the Authority to make a political judgement about NHS performance. I am asking whether the current statistics give Parliament, patients and the public a sufficiently clear picture of what is happening.

I would be grateful if the OSR could consider whether published waiting list statistics clearly distinguish between patients treated and patients removed without treatment; whether patients added back onto waiting lists are clearly reported; and whether changes in referral pathways affect comparability over time.

Patients need shorter waits, not less transparent statistics. The public must be able to understand whether changes in waiting lists reflect genuine improvements in access to care.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Stuart Andrew'.

The Rt. Hon. Stuart Andrew MP
Shadow Secretary of State for Health and Social Care

Member of Parliament for the Daventry Constituency

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