

Ed Humpherson, Director General for Regulation

Roger Halliday
Chief Statistician & Head of Performance
Scottish Government
Room 2W.02
St Andrews House
Edinburgh EH1 3DG

16 March 2017

Dear Roger,

I've noted the recent publication of UK health care quality indicators¹, as a response to recommendations provided in the OECD Review of Healthcare Quality UK² published in early 2016. This publication is of particular interest to me, as the Office for Statistics Regulation currently has a strong focus on improving the public value of health and care statistics - where users often cite issues of coherence, comparability, and accessibility as areas of concern relating to public value.

As noted by Sir Andrew Dilnot in his 2012 review of the accessibility of official health statistics³, there is an exceptionally rich portfolio of health and care data. Yet it was, and still is, difficult for users to access relevant data and know where comparisons are possible across all 4 countries. The collaboration to produce this report very much responds to these points of concern and will hopefully help users understand, and access, a fuller (but not complete) insight into the quality of individual UK healthcare systems.

I would like to commend those who invested time and energy on what is an interesting and atypical release. From the Office for Statistics Regulation point of view this is a good example of how those producing health and care statistics have worked together across national and organisational boundaries to create a more coherent and accessible picture of health care quality in the UK. I am pleased to hear that the intention is to gather user feedback on this statistical product, adding in more evidence where appropriate, and permitting further development. Hopefully this will provide further insight into the quality of individual UK healthcare systems.

I'd appreciate you passing on my thoughts to the relevant teams in Scotland, as I think their work over the past year and what I have heard of their future plans is encouraging.

I am sending this letter to the Chief Statisticians of Wales and Northern Ireland, as well as the UK's National Statistician.

Kind regards,



Ed Humpherson

¹ www.isdscotland.org/health-topics/Public-Health/publications/2017-02-21/visualisation.asp

² www.oecd.org/unitedkingdom/oecd-reviews-of-health-care-quality-united-kingdom-2016-9789264239487-en.htm

³ www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/archive/assessment/monitoring/monitoring-reviews/monitoring-review-7-2012-accessibility-of-official-statistics-on-health.pdf