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**Mark Pont, Assessment Programme Lead**

Eugene Mooney  
Head of Profession for Statistics  
Department of Health (Northern Ireland)  
(by email)

21 November 2017

Dear Eugene

**STATISTICS ON EMERGENCY WAITING TIMES IN NORTHERN IRELAND**

Thank you very much for the positive engagement of your statistics team as we undertook our recent short review of these statistics. We reviewed the statistics against the three pillars – trustworthiness, quality and value – that are fundamental to supporting public confidence in statistics and form the basis of National Statistics status. On the whole, we conclude that the Statistics on Emergency Waiting Times in Northern Ireland are presented clearly.

I welcome your team's positive engagement with our work and the prompt response to the feedback we provided following the review. The new Technical Notes section in the quarterly release now helpfully includes:

- a link to enable interested readers to find information on the structures within the Health and Social Care system, the vision for the future health services and more information on the relevant targets and indicators
- an explanation of the comparability of the data across the UK nations

We commend you on publishing the statistics in a timely fashion, three weeks from the end of the data collection period. While the release is generally aimed at expert users, we are encouraged by the steps you have taken to visualise the data in innovative ways to appeal to the less-expert reader. You may wish to take the opportunity to include more insightful commentary in the annual release to explain what the statistics show about the quality and provision of health services in Northern Ireland to these less-expert readers.

We also welcome your reviewing and reducing the number of people on the pre-release access list to 19, which is an important step to maintaining and enhancing trustworthiness.

Finally, in addition to the quality assurance information already provided, I welcome your commitment to review your publication process drawing on our [Quality Assurance of Administrative Data](#) toolkit, to continue to ensure the quality of the published statistics.

Once again, thank you for engaging effectively with us during this short review. Please let me know if there is any aspect of this letter that you wish to discuss.

Yours sincerely



Mark Pont  
Assessment Programme Lead