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Dear Ed

UK Statistics Authority Assessment of Patient Safety Statistics

NHS Improvement has had very useful feedback and discussions with the UK Statistics Authority's Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) as part of the assessment of two of the patient safety team's outputs (Organisation Patient Safety Incident Reports and National Patient Safety Incident Reports) against the Code of Practice for Statistics. The assessment started three years ago but a formal response was delayed due to the patient safety team and associated statistics moving from NHS England to NHS Improvement. Work to formally address the issues raised started in April 2017, although from the point of assessment improvements started to happen. These are detailed below, along with areas for further improvement.

Achievements since the assessment:

- Published new and enhanced documentation on: revisions and corrections policy; pre-release compliance; roles and responsibilities of those responsible for and producing the outputs; name and contact details of the responsible statistician; forthcoming publication dates;
- New data quality statement detailing known data quality issues, biases and limitations of the data and our assurance processes in data collation and statistic production;
- New commentaries and guidance documents discussing comparability with other data sources and fuller detail on our users and uses of the data;
- Refined pre-release access list to the minimum required number roles;
- Improved publication processes to reduce the risk of statistics not being released on time;
- Addressed user need with time-series visualisations of patient safety data via our monthly data outputs which are being developed to release as experimental statistics;
- Improved accessibility and presentation of the statistics and associated documentation on the patient safety webpages.

Areas for further work:

- User engagement: we have documented initial engagement and now request feedback alongside our statistics. However further targeted work focussing on our statistics needs to be undertaken;
- Further interpretation of the data to be developed in the commentaries;
- Improved visibility of the statistics: we are in discussion with the NHS Improvement digital team to develop a central statistics webpage.

The current implementation of a new patient safety incident data collection system, replacing the extant system and associated serious incident data collection system, will change some data items collected. This will interrupt the time series and limit the utility of:

- immediate efforts to develop our outputs
- immediate development of complex analysis to better quantify coverage

Because of these developments, we believe it would not be beneficial for OSR to actively follow up our statistics at this stage.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the UK Statistics Authority for their assessment which has prompted us to make a number of important improvements to our outputs which we welcome above and beyond the need to improve our compliance. We are confident that following assessment our compliance as Official Statistics against the Code of Practice has improved.

Yours sincerely



Paul Stroner

Deputy Director of Information and Analytics and Lead Official for Statistics