

Ed Humpherson | Director General for Regulation

William Wragg MP
Chair, Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

02 October 2020

Dear Mr Wragg,

I have today written to Baroness Dido Harding, Head of NHS Test and Trace, regarding the publication of statistics relating to the COVID-19 survey of regional and local testing sites. This letter is attached for the Committee's information.

As you know, we set out our expectation in a statement on 18 May that when management information is used publicly by ministers or officials to inform Parliament, the media and the public, it should be available to all in an accessible form, with appropriate explanations of context and sources. I also wrote to the Committee to confirm that I would raise any instances of the use of unpublished information in public by the Government.

By publishing these statistics, NHS Test and Trace have ensured that data referred to in public debate is equally available to all and enhances transparency.

Yours sincerely



Ed Humpherson

Ed Humpherson, Director General for Regulation

Baroness Dido Harding
Head of NHS Test and Trace
(by email)

2 October 2020

Dear Dido

Reasons for getting a COVID-19 test: Survey of regional and local testing sites

I am writing to welcome the publication yesterday of the Covid-19 survey of regional and local testing sites. The survey is available at the following website location:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/survey-reasons-for-getting-a-coronavirus-covid-19-test/reasons-for-getting-a-covid-19-test-survey-of-regional-and-local-testing-sites-between-1-and-4-september>

Publication of this information, following discussion with the Office for Statistics Regulation, ensures that data referred to in public debate is equally available to all and enhances transparency.

The background is that on 9 September, you referred to the results of a survey undertaken by NHS Test and Trace as part of oral evidence you provided to the House of Commons Science and Technology Committee. The survey results included the percentage of people who, having booked a test, do not appear to be eligible for one because they have no symptoms. As part of your evidence, you said that the underlying evidence would be published, which has now been done.

Thank you for arranging publication of this information.

I am copying this letter to Stephen Balchin, Head of Profession for Statistics at the Department for Health and Social Care, and William Wragg MP, Chair of the House of Commons Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Select Committee.

Yours sincerely



Ed Humpherson

Director General for Regulation