



Rt Hon Meg Hillier MP
Chair of Public Accounts Committee
House of Commons
London
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Sent via email to:
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Dear Chair,

PAC's Fourteenth Report of Session 2019-21: Readyng the NHS and social care for the COVID-19 peak

This letter is in response to recommendation 2a.

The Social Care Working Group prepared a paper for SAGE on 23rd September (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/scwg-covid-19-and-care-homes-update-paper-23-september-2020>) reviewing the relative risk of each of the four routes of ingress of infection to the care home (hospital discharge, staff, visitor (professional or domestic) and community admissions).

The paper concludes that “weak evidence on hospital discharge and modelling the impact of visitors does not suggest a dominant causal link to outbreaks from these sources”. This provides the evidence that the committee requested.

In addition, Public Health Wales has shown there is no link between hospital discharges and care home outbreaks, after adjusting for other causal variables (<https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2020.08.24.20168955v1.full.pdf>).

Finally, it is worth noting that the proportion of national Covid-19 deaths occurring in care homes in England is reportedly comparable or lower than those occurred in Canada, Australia, Spain, Scotland, France or Sweden.

Yours sincerely,

**Professor Stephen Powis
National Medical Director
NHS England and NHS Improvement**

