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**Ed Humpherson, Director General for Regulation**

William Wragg MP

Chair, Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee

(by email)

20 January 2021

Dear Mr Wragg,

Thank you for your letter of 12<sup>th</sup> January. Your letter is a timely reminder of the continued importance of ensuring statistics continue to be presented clearly and impartially in the public domain.

I agree with the recommendations raised in your letter to the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and my team will be closely monitoring all of the concerns you have raised regarding vaccination data.

We have this week [written](#) to each of the devolved nations to welcome the publication of daily vaccine statistics on the COVID-19 dashboard. We also identified a number of areas where we would like to see improvements, including calling on producers to outline plans for increasing the granularity of the data and providing accessible metadata.

With regards to other areas of focus, we recently published a statement regarding data on [hospital capacity and occupancy](#), this is an important issue which we hope to see further progress on. It is important that all data continue to be presented in a way that supports public understanding. This means data which can be easily found and understood. Published data need to be supported by clear and coherent narratives which offer insights for users. Where multiple sources cover similar information, it is important the purposes of the different sources and any differences between them are clearly explained.

Thank you again for your correspondence, and I look forward to continuing to engage with the Committee going forward into 2021.

Yours sincerely



Ed Humpherson

Director General for Regulation



# PACAC (Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee)

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Ed Humpherson  
Director General, Regulation  
UK Statistics Authority  
By email

12<sup>th</sup> January 2021

*Dear Mr Humpherson,*

**Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Select Committee, Covid 19 data  
inquiry: vaccination statistics**

Please find attached a letter to the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. This letter asks some basic questions about the vaccination statistics. I would be very grateful if you could alert my Committee if you have any concerns or questions about vaccination statistics now, or in the coming weeks and months.

I would also be interested in any views you have about the production of other statistics in recent months and in particular, any areas where the Committee should be asking questions of Government or other bodies.

Thank you for your ongoing support to my Committee and particularly in relation to our inquiries on Covid 19 data.

*Yours sincerely,*

**William Wragg MP**

**Chair, Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee**



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Rt Hon. Michael Gove MP  
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office  
By email

12<sup>th</sup> January 2021

*Dear Michael,*

**Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Select Committee, Covid data inquiry:  
vaccination statistics**

As you are aware, my Committee is conducting an inquiry on Covid 19 data. We welcome the addition of vaccination statistics to the Covid 19 Government dashboard, and to the NHS England website. I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate all those involved on administering the first 2 million vaccinations.

Our inquiries so far have highlighted how important it is that statistics are clearly and impartially presented, that they include adequate explanatory notes (including on limitations or uncertainties in the data), and are aligned to any stated targets (so that progress can be monitored and scrutinised). I am, therefore, writing to clarify some points on the vaccination statistics so that the sort of confusion that ensued over the testing data can be avoided. Any confusion over this data could be a distraction from the vital progress the Government are making on the vaccination effort.

1. **Please update and clarify the explanatory notes on the dashboard's vaccination statistics:** The section titled "People who have received vaccinations, by report date (daily)", contains explanatory notes that appear to relate to the (more accurate) weekly statistical releases. NHS England explains that daily data is "announced vaccinations" and is "provisional", whereas weekly releases "provides more accurate and detailed data". This sort of small inconsistency can lead to confusion later. Can the website be updated so that it explains whether the data is collected daily or weekly, whether it is provisional or final, and whether it is "announced" vaccinations, and what "announced" means.
2. **Please include breakdowns of data by targeted group:** The NHS England weekly data tells us whether those vaccinated are over or under 80, but contains no further

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breakdowns. This information is not included on the Government dashboard. Can you publish the data breakdowns for all 9 of the "high priority" groups, which we assume you are already collecting to track progress. This will be more important as some areas start to move down the priority list more quickly than others.

3. **Please provide local breakdowns to at least region:** you produce breakdowns of cases and other data to local area level. Vaccination statistics should be produced to this level of local granularity and should be explorable through the drop-down menus on the dashboard.
4. **Please include progress against targets on the website:** currently the dashboard and NHS England websites contain raw numbers, but these numbers are not meaningful unless we can see how this relates to overall numbers to Government. Can you publish your target numbers for each "priority group", or best estimates of the number of people in each "priority group", alongside numbers vaccinated so we can monitor progress.

I realise that Health is a devolved matter but it is vitally important that the public can see information across the UK. And it has been very helpful that data sets are already being published together to include Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. I would be grateful if you could update the Committee on the work that Cabinet Office is doing in its coordinating role to bring together data from all the nations and whether granular data for the other nations can be published alongside that for England.

I am copying this letter to Ed Humpherson, the statistics regulator, asking him to alert the Committee if he has any concerns about the vaccination data in the coming weeks and months.

*Yours ever*



**William Wragg MP**  
**Chair, Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee**