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**Chair of the UK Statistics Authority, Sir David Norgrove**

Donald Cameron MSP  
Conservative Shadow Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport  
(via email)

22 March 2021

Dear Mr Cameron,

Further to my letter of 10 March, the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) has looked into the question you raised about the National Clinical Director's use of COVID-19 death statistics. Having reviewed the briefing in question, we consider that Professor Leitch made it appropriately clear in his remarks that he was referring to the commonly used measure of deaths occurring within 28 days of a positive COVID-19 test.

OSR has previously published a comparison of data sources<sup>1</sup> on COVID-19 deaths which you may find helpful. There are several different measures and each have their uses. However the most reliable source for understanding where COVID-19 was the cause of death is, as you suggest, data drawn from the death registrations.

Yours sincerely,



**Sir David Norgrove**

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<sup>1</sup> Office for Statistics Regulation - Which COVID-19 deaths figures should I be looking at? 22 January 2021

<https://osr.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/which-covid-19-deaths-figures-should-i-be-looking-at/>