



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Jackie Baillie MSP  
M1.13  
The Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
EH99 1SP  
Jackie.baillie.msp@parliament.scot

Sir David Norgrove  
Chair of the UK Statistics Authority  
UK Statistics Authority  
1 Drummond Gate  
London  
SW1V 2QQ  
david.norgrove@statistics.gov.uk

6 January 2022

Dear Sir David,

**Misleading use of statistics from Deputy First Minister of Scotland on BBC Radio Scotland – Good Morning Scotland, 4 January 2022**

I write to you regarding the above matter.

I am deeply concerned to hear John Swinney MSP, Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Covid Recovery, wrongly use statistics from before the festive period to suggest that restrictions across Scotland, introduced by the Scottish Government, resulted in only 1 in 40 Scots contracting Covid-19, as compared to 1 in 25 in England.

The Deputy First Minister cited a Covid-19 Infection Survey, published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) on 31 December 2021, in making this erroneous claim. The data corresponded to the week ending 23 December 2021 when restrictions were not in place and the rules in Scotland and England were largely the same. In reality, the latest infection survey from ONS, to the week ending 31 December 2021, shows that 1 in 20 Scots have contracted Covid-19. These statistics contrast sharply with the narrative presented by Mr Swinney on *BBC Radio Scotland – Good Morning Scotland* on Tuesday morning.

The correct use of statistics and data is vital to encourage public confidence, rather than the deliberate spin deployed by the Deputy First Minister.

Furthermore, I am alarmed by the Scottish Government's apparent reluctance to provide a detailed breakdown of those patients who are in hospital with Covid-19, as compared to those who have been admitted because of Covid-19, and the corresponding figures for ICU admissions. The data is available in England and I understand has been collected by Public Health Scotland. Despite repeated promises of publication, this data has yet to be shared. The public rightly expect and demand transparency.

It is imperative that the public have faith in the accuracy and truthfulness of statistics that are cited by Government ministers. As such, I would be grateful if you could investigate this matter and take appropriate action.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JMBaillie', written in a cursive style.

Jackie Baillie MSP