



Daisy Cooper MP

Member of Parliament for St Albans

House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA
daisy.cooper.mp@parliament.uk

Sir Robert Chote
UK Statistics Authority
Fry Building
1st Floor, 2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Case Ref: DC28127

13 January 2023

Dear Sir Robert,

I am writing to raise concerns about the dismissal of official excess death statistics by the Secretary of State for Health and Social care, the Rt Hon Steve Barclay MP.

The statistics, produced by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), show that the UK saw 50,000 excess deaths in 2022, making it the worst year since 1951, excluding the Covid pandemic.

In an interview by Nick Ferrari of LBC News on the 11th January 2023, the Health Secretary said he did not accept those figures, stating: "Well, what I am saying is we don't accept those figures"

This appears to be in direct conflict with the findings of the ONS, which show:

"The number of deaths from all causes was above the five-year average in the week ending 30 December 2022 (Week 52)."

It is irresponsible for a member of the Government, let alone the Secretary of State for Health, to reject the findings of official health statistics. It undermines the credibility of the ONS and casts dispersions on the validity and impartiality of the statistics produced by the ONS.

Misuse, or in this case rejection of statistics by politicians, can lead to pressure for policies that are not supported by the data, or an excuse for inaction in the face of crises.

I therefore ask that you investigate the Secretary for Health and Social Care's comments and offer your guidance on whether or not it is appropriate for government ministers to refuse to accept statistics on registered deaths published by the Office for National Statistics.

I look forward to your response on this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Daisy Cooper MP
Member of Parliament for St Albans
Liberal Democrat Health and Social Care Spokesperson