



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Penny Young
Deputy Chair of the UK Statistics Authority
Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

28th April 2026

Dear Penny Young,

I am writing to alert you to the use of statistics on NHS Scotland waiting times as related to the NHS in England by Labour Ministers which may be erroneous or misleading.

I understand that UK Government Ministers have already been informed by the UK Statistics Authority of the potential risks to public trust on the use of incorrect or misleading data and statistics both on social media and in statements to the House of Commons.

Now I am concerned with two mentions of a statistic on waiting times for care in Scotland that have been relayed in the past week. They are as follows:

1. MP Sharon Hodgson, Parliamentary Under Secretary for Health and Social Care – in Health Questions in the Chamber on 14th April – “*Patients are 30 times more likely to wait two years for care in Scotland than in England*” -
<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2026-04-14/debates/C13087C7-0FA3-4234-95A3-22E8B213960D/CancerTreatment - contribution-7844BB00-341E-461D-9EB4-EC953D431EB0>
2. MP Dr Zubir Ahmed, Parliamentary Under Secretary for Health and Social Care – in a debate on the Federated Data Platform in Westminster Hall on 16th April 2026 the Minister relayed the claim that - “*my patients and my constituents under NHS Scotland are 30 times more likely to wait over two years for treatment*” -
<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2026-04-16/debates/2FDCA71C-D0C1-4738-BEE8-A4BDA311DB99/NHSFederatedDataPlatform - contribution-CA951292-07E3-4E43-B03F-572CD6FD58BF>

I believe the issue with these numbers lies in the two aspects that you highlighted to MP Michael Shanks in your letter to him in January 2026:

"We know that many users want to be able to compare NHS performance across the UK and that it is frustrating for them when they are unable to do so. We therefore support and encourage efforts to produce more comparable data where possible. In this case, however, producers have explained that for planned care, different healthcare policies, commissioning processes and patient data systems make it particularly challenging."

And

"Waiting times are of high public interest across the UK and it is vital that statistics about them are used appropriately to support public debate. We accept that the public and users will be frustrated about the limitations in comparability. But to uphold public confidence in statistics, we encourage you to ensure statements containing statistics are presented clearly and with sufficient context to avoid the potential for people to be misled."

I am concerned that a similar issue has arisen here in the statements on "30 x" in comparing waiting times for care between Scotland and England. I would be most grateful if you could get back to me with your thoughts on this important matter.

I look forward to hearing from you.

With kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'SL', written in a cursive style.

Seamus Logan MP
Member of Parliament for Aberdeenshire North and Moray East

Parliamentary Office: House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA
Constituency Office: Unit 21 Fraserburgh Business Centre, South Harbour Road, Fraserburgh,
Aberdeenshire AB43 9TN
telephone: 01346 487013 *e-mail:* seamus.logan.mp@parliament.uk