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Mr John Pullinger
President, Royal Statistical Society
12 Errol Street
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Dear John

Registration of deaths in England and Wales

Thank you for your letter of 4 February 2013 to Tim Straughan. Tim is presently on annual leave and has asked me to reply on his behalf. I understand that you wrote similarly to Glen Watson and Jil Matheson, and that Jil has replied on their behalf.

The HSCIC is aware of this issue, and that it impacts on the use of registration data and statistics based on them. We do endeavour to ensure that prospective customers of our Data Linkage Service are aware of the issue, and to discuss with them the potential impact it may have on their work. However, like you we are concerned to avoid misunderstanding, and are happy to accept your suggestion that we should develop some standard text which could be provided to customers and placed on our website. We have now agreed such text with ONS, and it can be found at <http://www.ic.nhs.uk/article/2184/Applications-and-Approvals> .

We will also ensure that, in future, we consider providing additional footnoting of figures on deaths where this would be helpful to users' understanding.

I am copying this letter to Tim Straughan, Jil Matheson and Glen Watson.

Yours sincerely



Andy Sutherland
Head of Profession for Statistics