
Interim Chair of the UK Statistics Authority, Sian Jones

Andrew Gwynne MP
Shadow Minister for Public Health
House of Commons
(by email)

6 May 2022

Dear Mr Gwynne,

Thank you for your letter about figures on adverse reactions to COVID-19 vaccinations used by Sir Christopher Chope MP in a Parliamentary debate.

There is no basis in the official statistics on the COVID-19 vaccine programme to support the claim that vaccines have caused such a high number of severe adverse reactions or deaths. The available evidence suggests that severe side effects are very rare, and indeed much rarer than serious complications from COVID-19 itself. We have asked Sir Christopher's office for information on the source that he was using. In the meantime, you may find some of the sources below helpful.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) publishes monthly data on deaths in England and Wales¹. Table 12 records 27 deaths between March 2020 and March 2022 where "COVID-19 vaccines causing adverse effects in therapeutic use, unspecified" was the underlying cause of death, and a further six deaths where this cause was mentioned at all.

The Medicines & Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) publishes a weekly summary of 'Yellow Card' reports², which is the scheme by which any member of the public or health professional can notify suspected side effects from around the time a COVID-19 vaccine was given. As you say, MHRA makes clear in its report that the number of Yellow Cards is not an estimate of the prevalence of vaccine side effects. MHRA has a strategy for monitoring the safety of COVID-19 vaccines³, one strand of which involves using data from Yellow Cards to identify possible side effects for further investigation. This work is described further in the report, which concludes that the expected benefits of the vaccines in preventing COVID-19 and serious complications associated with COVID-19 far outweigh any currently known side effects in the majority of patients.

I am copying this letter to Sir Christopher.

Yours sincerely,



Sian Jones
Interim Chair of the UK Statistics Authority

¹ [Monthly mortality analysis, England and Wales](#), ONS, 27 April 2022

² [Coronavirus vaccine - weekly summary of Yellow Card reporting](#), MHRA, 28 April 2022

³ [Report of the Commission on Human Medicines Expert Working Group on COVID-19 vaccine safety surveillance](#), MHRA, 5 February 2021