

**WRITTEN SUBMISSION FROM THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT TO THE PUBLIC
AUDIT COMMITTEE, DATED 7 NOVEMBER 2014**

**AUDITOR GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND (AGS) REPORT “ACCIDENT AND
EMERGENCY – PERFORMANCE UPDATE”**

Thank you for your letter of 13 October about A&E data quality and reviewing the range of data collected on A&E.

The A&E data mart introduced by ISD in 2007 is a national data set used as a source to produce official statistics – although not all data fields are included in official statistics publications. Source of referral is one of those fields not included within official statistics and is not subject to the same level of data quality and scrutiny. Further analysis which compares ‘source of referral’ with ‘mode of arrival’ shows that some A&Es are having difficulty interpreting the definitions for source of referral. I have asked ISD to carry out additional work with NHS Boards to ensure the definitions of ‘self-referral’ and ‘999 emergency services referral’ within this data field can be interpreted consistently.

On the broader question of reviewing the range of data collected on A&E, ISD are currently facilitating a third review of the A&E data set with representatives from the Scottish Government, NHS Boards, and the College of Emergency Medicine. I have asked ISD to ensure that the review is carried out in light of the Audit Scotland report on A&E and that planned improvements in data quality of each field within the data mart are also considered to ensure the data is collected consistently.

Your sincerely

Paul Gray