



Baroness Berridge of the Vale of Catmose

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22 May 2020

Dear Mike,

I am writing to correct a point I made in a recent answer to your Private Notice Question relating to the publication of scientific evidence and the re-opening of schools on 20 May 2020.

In my response to your question, I noted that the R rate is not broken down regionally and is not published in that form. I also stated that it is an average value that can vary across communities, but it is not published on a regional basis. Unfortunately, what I meant to say is that R rate is not published regionally by SAGE.

Whilst there are some examples of regional estimations of R published online by individual academic groups, the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE) does not currently publish the R value on a regional level. R is an average value that can vary in different parts of the country, communities, and subsections of the population. It cannot be measured directly so there is always some uncertainty around its exact value. SAGE does not rely therefore on one model but builds consensus and presents R as a range.

SAGE publish the UK-wide R range on a weekly basis and this is available by following the link below: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-publishes-latest-r-number>.

Thank you so much for contacting me about this matter. I hope this letter has been useful and I will place a copy in the House Libraries.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "ER Berridge". The "ER" is written in a stylized, blocky font, while "Berridge" is in a cursive script. A long, thin horizontal line extends from the bottom of the signature.

ELIZABETH BERRIDGE

PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE