Dear Researcher,

Over the last six months eDRIS resources have been increasingly diverted to support the Public Health Scotland and Scottish Government response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In line with direction from Public Health Scotland, requests are being prioritised in accordance with HSC-PBPP triage process (https://www.informationgovernance.scot.nhs.uk/pbpphsc/). This situation has inevitably led to concerns being expressed about delays to non-COVID work.

The additional demand is considerable with Researcher Coordinators and Analysts now supporting between 30 and 50 studies each, with over 400 active studies at varying stages across eDRIS. To address this additional Research Coordinators are being recruited; these should be in place later this year. In order to focus on your studies, we have also taken the following steps:

- Reduced the support we provide to new customers for assessing feasibility of proposals and providing cost estimates
- Placed new study requests in a queue until there is research coordinator capacity

We might also need to limit the number of data releases per study in any one month and limit releases to set days of the week. If these measures are needed, you will be provided with more details well in advance.

In order to assist us during this time, we ask that:

- When requesting a release of files from the National Safe Haven, please complete a Statistical Disclosure Control (SDC) request form to enable more rapid sign-out and release of your files. We ask that you provide us with advance notice so we can ensure time is set aside to review it.
- Monitor our website for updates and read any published guidance
- Monitor the PBPP website for information on amendments and prioritisation

We fully appreciate your frustration and rest assured it is felt within our team. As such, I thank you for your continued forbearance and patience.

Issued on behalf of:

Carole Morris, Head of Service for eDRIS
Phil Couser, Director of the Data Driven Innovation Directorate in Public Health Scotland