

Royal Statistical Society Award

A cross-organisation team, which included 2 actuaries from the Government Actuary's Department (GAD), has won a Royal Statistical Society Award.

The [2021 Florence Nightingale Award for Excellence in Healthcare Data Analytics](#) has gone to [The Covid-19 Population Risk Assessment, powered by QCovid](#). It is a predictive model used to estimate the risk of serious health outcomes due to COVID-19 for individuals.

The award, supported by the Health Foundation charity, celebrates data analysts in the UK health and care sector. It is for people whose work has demonstrably delivered better outcomes for patients and the healthcare system.

Cross organisational team

The team included GAD actuaries Nazmus Haq as a senior analyst, and Dhanisha Sanghrajka as a deputy director. The actuaries worked as part of the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC).

The rest of the team included experts from the NHS, NHS Digital, the Office for National Statistics, [NERVTAG](#), as well as Cambridge and Oxford Universities.

Predictive model

They produced a predictive model, QCovid. This combines information from several datasets to estimate a person's risk of catching and subsequently being hospitalised or dying from COVID-19. It did this by focusing on demographic factors such as age, ethnicity, gender, and body mass index. The model also examined economic factors such as deprivation, pre-existing medical conditions and ongoing treatments.

This technique meant at-risk adults in England could be identified, prioritised for vaccination, and added to the national shielded patients list.

Ingenuity and collaboration

Actuary Nazmus Haq says he is very proud to be part of this successful project: "The fact that our team has been given the top award in this category is a testament to the ingenuity, hard work and collaborative spirit of everyone involved. I am especially pleased too as it shows how our data analytics expertise has made a real difference to people's lives."

For more on his experiences working at DHSC on this project, read Nazmus Haq's blog. In [GAD and COVID-19](#) he reflected on his year of being part of the

team supporting the government in its ongoing fight against the pandemic.