SHAREABLE PDF

Correlation and causality: a COVID-19 conundrum

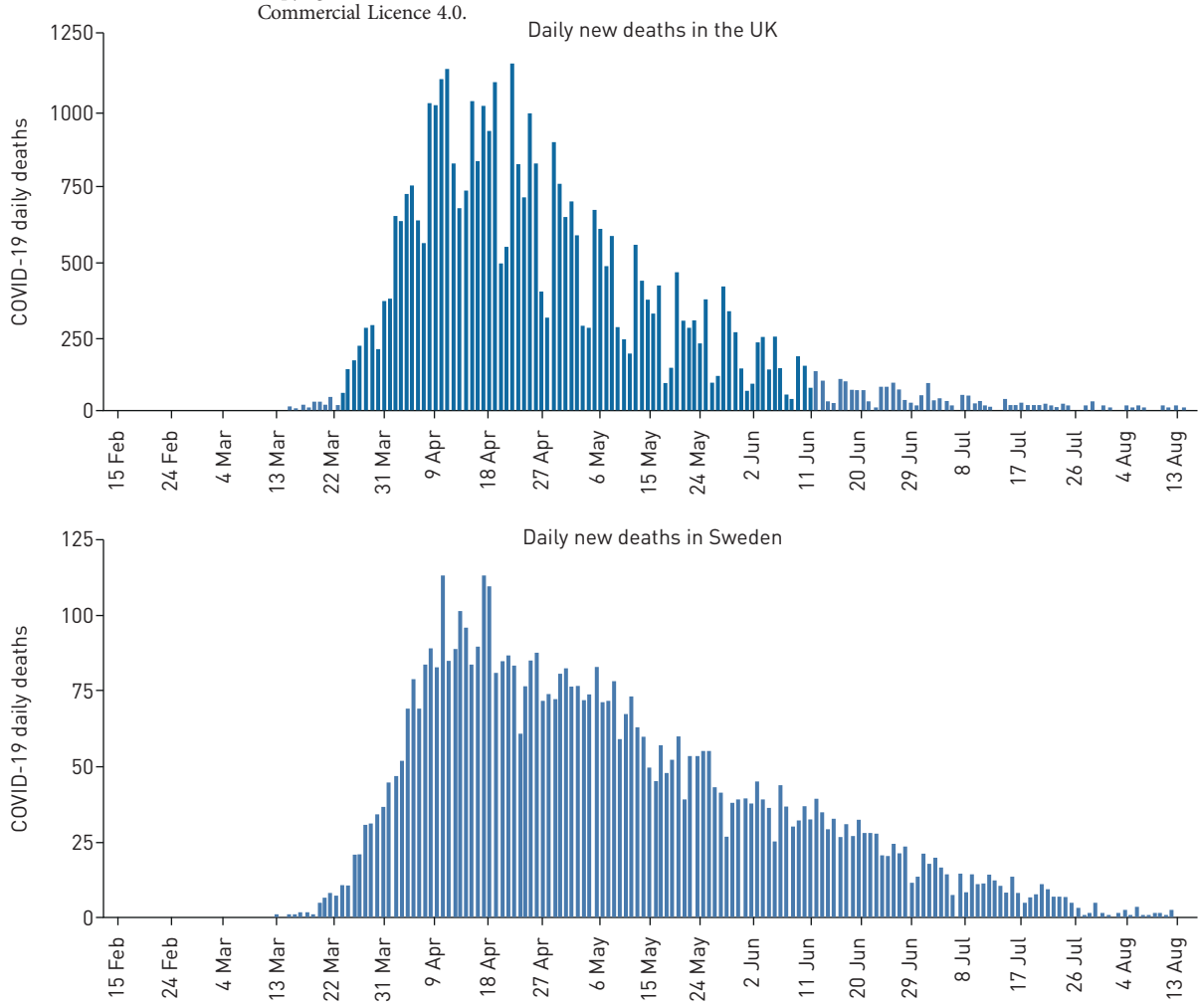
Alyn H. Morice

Affiliation: Hull York Medical School, University of Hull, Hull, UK.

Correspondence: Alyn H. Morice, Castle Hill Hospital, Cottingham, HU16 5JQ, UK. E-mail: a.h.morice@hull.ac.uk

@ERSpublications
Predictive models depend heavily on the assumptions made in their construction https://bit.ly/2Eex05F

Cite this article as: Morice AH. Correlation and causality: a COVID-19 conundrum. *Eur Respir J* 2020; 56:



2003174 [https://doi.org/10.1183/13993003.03174-2020].

To the Editor:

I read with interest the two contributions by J.D. Chalmers and co-workers to the July issue of the *European Respiratory Journal*. In a reply to correspondence concerning the inhaled corticosteroid withdrawal controversy in COPD [1], they suggest that A. Agusti succumbs to the fallacy of *post hoc, ergo, propter hoc* [2], *i.e.* A occurred, then B occurred: therefore, A caused B. However, as we know, correlation is not causality.

Link to published version: https://doi.org/10.1183/13993003.03174-2020