

INFORMATION
ANALYSIS
DIRECTORATE



Northern Ireland Waiting Time Statistics: Outpatient Waiting Times Quarter Ending March 2022



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Reader Information

This will be the final release of this publication in pdf format. A new interactive HTML format will be used going forward. This is also available this quarter at the following link:

<https://datavis.nisra.gov.uk/health/ni-outpatient-waiting-times-mar-22.html>

Purpose: This statistical release presents information on waiting times for a first consultant-led outpatient appointment in Northern Ireland and reports on the performance of the Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts against the 2021/22 Draft Ministerial waiting time target, which states that:

“By March 2022, 50% of patients should wait no longer than 9 weeks for a first outpatient appointment; with no patient waiting longer than 52 weeks.”

This statistical release details information on the number of patients waiting, and length of time waiting, for a first consultant-led outpatient appointment in HSC Trusts at 31st March 2022 (including patients waiting to be seen at a Day Case Procedure Centre (DPC)). It also includes activity for a first consultant-led outpatient appointment commissioned by the Health Service during the quarter ending March 2022. Data are presented by HSC Trust, specialty and time band. Information on Integrated Clinical Assessment and Treatment Services (ICATS) waiting times are available in the accompanying CSV file.

Statistical Quality: The ‘*Outpatient Waiting Times Publication – Supporting Documentation*’ booklet details the technical guidance and definitions used, as well as notes on how to use the data contained within this statistical release. This booklet is available to view or download from:

<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/outpatient-waiting-times-supporting-documentation>.

Due to the redeployment of resources during the COVID-19 pandemic, the data contained within this publication has not been subject to the usual level of quality assurance; data related to the Southern HSC Trust for quarter ending December 2020 is provisional and will be amended as necessary in future publications.

Internet: <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/articles/outpatient-waiting-times>

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Publication Date: Thursday 26th May 2022

Reporting Period: 1st January – 31st March 2022

Issued by: Hospital Information Branch
Information & Analysis Directorate
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Target audience: Department of Health (DoH), Chief Executives of the HSC Trusts in Northern Ireland, health care professionals, Health & Social Care stakeholders, academics, the media and the general public.

Price: Free

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By March 2022, 50% of patients should wait no longer than 9 weeks for a first outpatient appointment, and no patient should wait longer than 52 weeks.

There were
358,807 patients
waiting for a first outpatient
appointment in Northern
Ireland



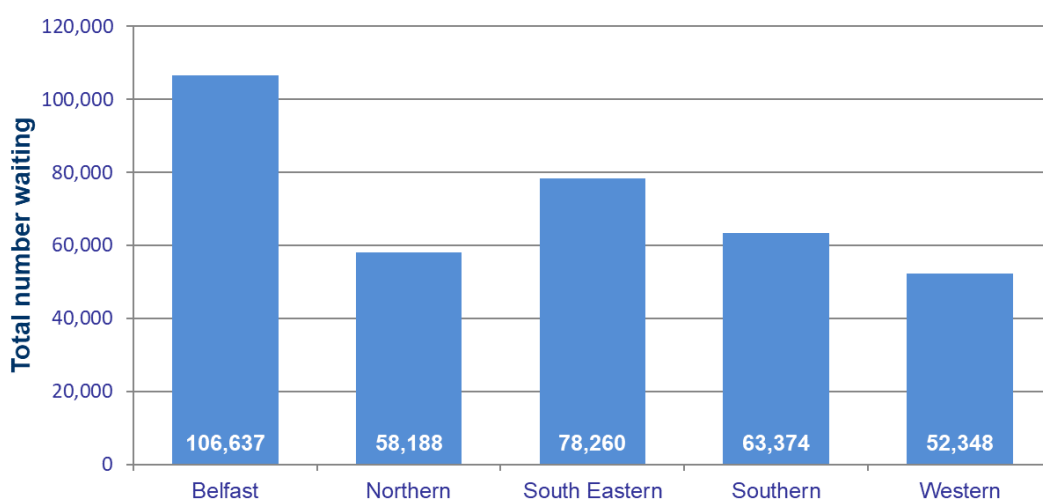
An **increase of 1.1%** on
the previous quarter



An **increase of 7.1%** on
the same quarter last year

Source: DoH Outpatient Waiting Times Dataset

At 31st March 2022, 358,807 patients were waiting for a first consultant-led outpatient appointment, 1.1% (4,051) more than at 31st December 2021 (354,756) and 7.1% (23,765) more than at 31st March 2021 (335,042) (Table 1). This does not include patients waiting to be seen at a Day Case Procedure Centre.



Almost a third (29.7%) of those waiting were in the Belfast HSC Trust, with a further 21.8% in the South Eastern HSC Trust, 17.7% in the Southern HSC Trust, 16.2% in the Northern HSC Trust and 14.6% in the Western HSC Trust (Table 2a).

Source: DoH Outpatient Waiting Times Dataset

A number of outpatient services may not be provided at a patient's local HSC Trust, and instead are provided as centralised services for Northern Ireland. As patients are reported against the HSC Trust responsible for the service to which they have been referred, users should be cautious in how they use these data (see explanatory note 9).

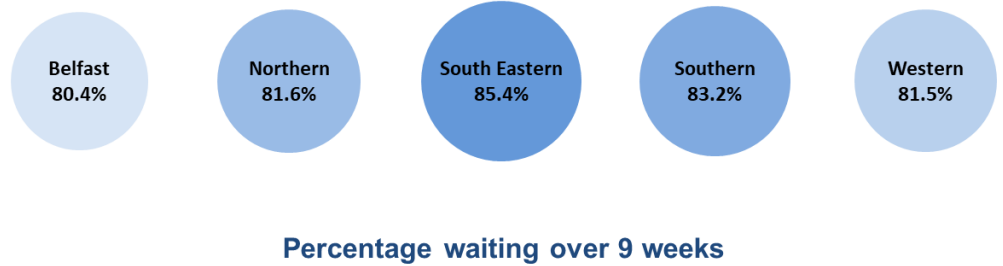
Of the 358,807 patients waiting, 60.3% (216,213) were waiting in one of the following specialties: General Surgery (47,946); Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) (42,382); Gynaecology (30,574); Dermatology (29,399); Ophthalmology (22,659); Trauma and Orthopaedic (T&O) Surgery (22,576); or Neurology (20,677) (Table 3a).

Patients waiting more than 9 weeks at 31st March 2022

By March 2022, 50% of patients should wait no longer than 9 weeks for a first outpatient appointment

This element was **not achieved** by any HSC Trust

82.4%
of patients
were waiting longer
than 9 weeks

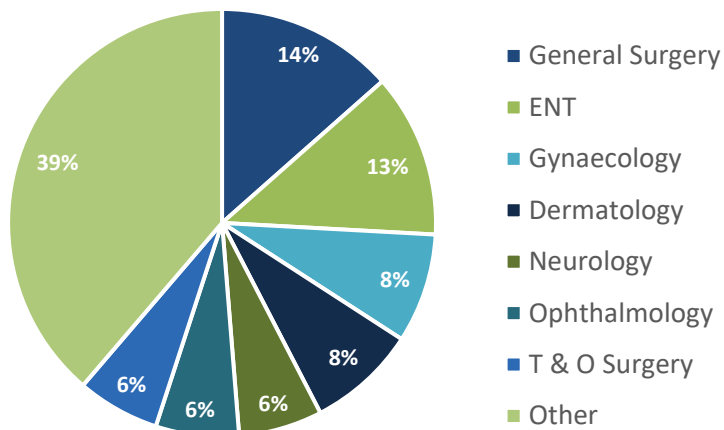


Over four fifths (82.4%, 295,501) of patients were waiting more than 9 weeks for a first consultant-led outpatient appointment at 31st March 2022, compared with 84.6% (300,050) at 31st December 2021 and 83.9% (281,140) at 31st March 2021 (Table 1).

The 9 week element of the target was not achieved by Northern Ireland as a whole or by any individual HSC Trust (Table 2b). Data users should be aware that not all outpatient services are provided at every HSC Trust (see explanatory note 9).

Over four fifths of patients in each HSC Trust were waiting longer than 9 weeks; 85.4% (66,827) in the South Eastern HSC Trust; 83.2% (52,751), in the Southern HSC Trust, 81.6% (47,510) in the Northern HSC Trust, 81.5% (42,651) in the Western HSC Trust and 80.4% (85,762) in the Belfast HSC Trust (Table 2a).

Patients waiting more than 9 weeks by speciality



More than three-fifths (61.3%, 181,058) of the 295,501 patients waiting more than 9 weeks were waiting for one of the following specialties: General Surgery; Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT); Gynaecology; Dermatology; Neurology; Ophthalmology or T & O Surgery (Table 3a).

Source: DoH Outpatient Waiting Times Dataset

Patients waiting more than 52 weeks at 31st March 2022

By March 2022, no patient should wait longer than 52 weeks for a first outpatient appointment

This element was **not achieved** by any HSC Trust

186,645
patients
were waiting longer
than 52 weeks

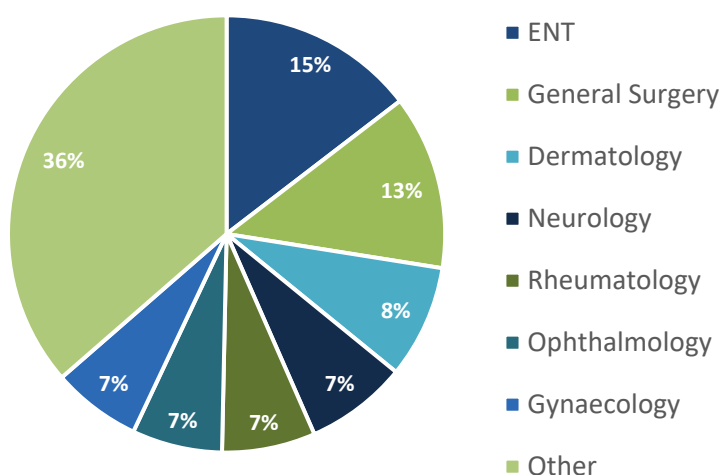


At 31st March 2022, 52.0% (186,645) of patients were waiting more than 52 weeks for a first consultant-led outpatient appointment, compared with 52.6% (186,745) at 31st December 2021, and 56.6% (189,753) at 31st March 2021 (Table 1).

The 52 week element of the target was not achieved by Northern Ireland as a whole or by any individual HSC Trust (Table 2a). Data users should be aware that not all outpatient services are provided at every HSC Trust (see explanatory note 9).

Almost three fifths (59.9%, 46,887) of patients in the South Eastern HSC Trust were waiting longer than 52 weeks, 52.9% (33,538) in the Southern HSC Trust, 51.0% (26,723) in the Western HSC Trust, 50.8% (29,541) in the Northern HSC Trust and 46.8% (49,956) in the Belfast HSC Trust (Table 2a).

Patients waiting more than 52 weeks by specialty



Almost two thirds (63.6%, 118,708) of the 186,645 patients waiting more than 52 weeks were in one of the following specialties: Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT); General Surgery; Dermatology; Neurology; Rheumatology; Ophthalmology or Gynaecology (Table 3a).

Source: DoH Outpatient Waiting Times Dataset

Patients waiting for a first consultant-led outpatient appointment at a Day Case Procedure Centre

In October 2016 the then Health Minister launched 'Health and Wellbeing 2026: Delivering Together,' a strategy which underpins the Northern Ireland Executive's draft Programme for Government ambition to support people to lead long, healthy and active lives.

As part of this strategy, the Elective Care Plan was published in February 2017 which stated that 'Regional Elective Care Assessment and Treatment Centres will be established to deliver large volumes of assessments and non-complex routine surgery across a broad range of specialties.' In June 2018, prototype 'Day Case Procedure Centres' (DPCs) became operational for the surgical treatment of Cataracts and Varicose Veins for outpatients and day cases. Patients waiting for either of these procedures can now be referred to a DPC for treatment rather than attend the hospital site they may have been referred to previously.

DPCs have been set up in the following locations:

DPC	Location(s) of Centre
Cataracts	Mid Ulster Hospital (Northern HSC Trust) Downe Hospital (South Eastern HSC Trust) South Tyrone Hospital (Southern HSC Trust)
Varicose Veins	Lagan Valley Hospital (South Eastern HSC Trust) Omagh Hospital and Primary Care Complex (Western HSC Trust)

Due to these changes in operational service delivery and concomitant changes in how Outpatient waiting times are recorded, the following data and information about DPC Waiting Lists is provisional and subject to revision.

At 31st March 2022, 15,247 patients were waiting to be seen for a first consultant-led outpatient appointment at a Cataracts DPC (Table 5). There were no patients waiting for an appointment at a varicose veins DPC.

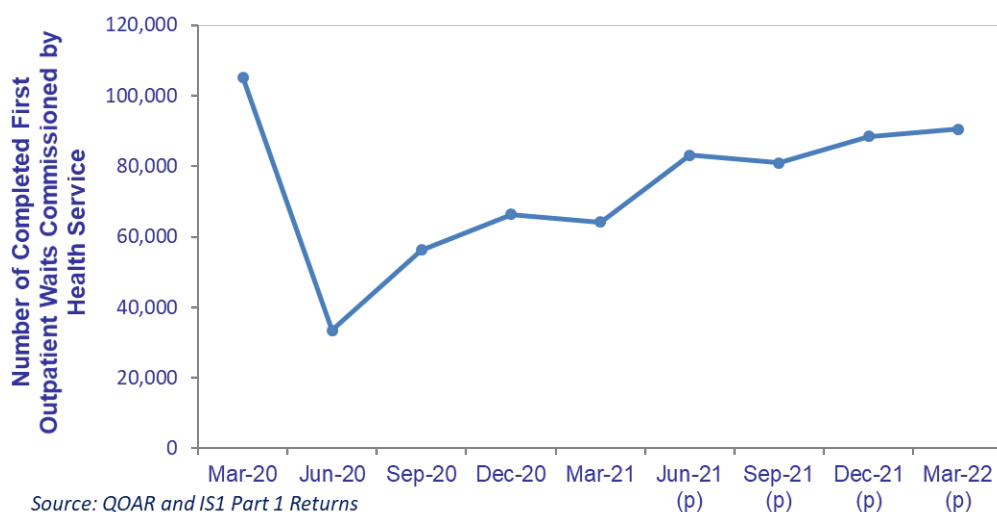
Note that DPC data have not been assessed as National Statistics, but have been quality assured with HSC Trusts.

Completed waits for a first outpatient appointment commissioned by the Health Service during quarter ending March 2022

<p>There were 90,466 first outpatient attendances commissioned by the Health Service</p>	<p style="font-size: 2em; color: #4F81BD;">↑</p> <p>An increase of 2.2% on the previous quarter</p>	<p style="font-size: 2em; color: #4F81BD;">↑</p> <p>An increase of 40.8% on the same quarter last year</p>
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Source: QOAR, R-QOAR and IS1 Part 1 Returns

There were 84,547 attendances for a first consultant-led outpatient appointment in Health Service hospitals in Northern Ireland, 0.2% (167) less than the number of attendances during the previous quarter (84,714), and 42.1% (25,038) more than the number of attendances during the quarter ending March 2021 (59,509). During the quarter ending March 2022, 212 patients attended their appointment at a Day Case Procedure Centre (DPC) (Table 4).



Source: QOAR and IS1 Part 1 Returns
Note: Data for the latest 4 quarters are provisional

Within the Independent Sector, 5,707 Health Service patients attended a first outpatient appointment, 58.7% (2,112) more than during the quarter ending December 2021 (3,595), and 25.4% (1,124) more as in the same quarter last year (4,583) (Table 4).

When the number of attendances commissioned by the Health Service within the Independent Sector (5,707) is combined with that for outpatients attending a first outpatient appointment in Health Service hospitals (84,547), and those attending a DPC (212), provisional figures indicate that 90,466 patients attended a first appointment in Northern Ireland commissioned by the Health Service. This is an increase of 2.2% (1,951) on the number seen during the quarter ending December 2021 (88,515) and 40.8% (26,219) more than during the quarter ending March 2021 (64,247) (Table 4).

Outpatient and DPC attendance data are fully validated once per year and, as such, provisional figures presented in this section do not hold National Statistics status. Independent Sector data are provided by the Strategic Planning and Performance Group in the Department of Health and are also not National Statistics.

Appendix 1: Tables

Table 1: Quarterly outpatient waiting lists – 31st March 2022¹

First Consultant-Led Outpatient Appointment	Current Quarter (31st Mar 2021)	Previous Quarter (31st Sept 2021)	Same Quarter Last Year (31st Mar 2020)
Total Patients Waiting	358,807	354,756	335,042
Number waiting over 9 weeks	295,501	300,050	281,140
<i>Percentage waiting over 9 weeks</i>	<i>82.4%</i>	<i>84.6%</i>	<i>83.9%</i>
Number waiting over 52 weeks	186,645	186,745	189,753

Source: DoH Outpatient Waiting Times Dataset

¹Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–10 & 13

Table 2a: Number of patients waiting for a first consultant-led outpatient appointment by HSC Trust and weeks waiting – 31st March 2022¹

HSC Trust	Patients waiting for a first consultant-led outpatient appointment, by weeks waiting							Total Waiting
	0 - 6	>6 - 9	>9 - 12	>12 - 15	>15 - 18	>18 - 52	>52	
Belfast	15,580	5,295	4,110	2,146	3,014	26,536	49,956	106,637
Northern	7,860	2,818	2,298	1,089	1,505	13,077	29,541	58,188
South Eastern	8,862	2,571	2,109	1,361	1,910	14,560	46,887	78,260
Southern	8,108	2,515	2,025	1,121	1,606	14,461	33,538	63,374
Western	7,381	2,316	1,847	922	1,421	11,738	26,723	52,348
Total	47,791	15,515	12,389	6,639	9,456	80,372	186,645	358,807

Source: DoH Outpatient Waiting Times Dataset

¹Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–10 & 13

Table 2b: Percentage of patients waiting for a first consultant-led outpatient appointment by HSC Trust and weeks waiting – 31st March 2022¹

HSC Trust	Patients waiting for a first consultant-led outpatient appointment, by weeks waiting							Total Waiting
	0 - 6	>6 - 9	>9 - 12	>12 - 15	>15 - 18	>18 - 52	>52	
Belfast	14.6%	5.0%	3.9%	2.0%	2.8%	24.9%	46.8%	
Northern	13.5%	4.8%	3.9%	1.9%	2.6%	22.5%	50.8%	
South Eastern	11.3%	3.3%	2.7%	1.7%	2.4%	18.6%	59.9%	
Southern	12.8%	4.0%	3.2%	1.8%	2.5%	22.8%	52.9%	
Western	14.1%	4.4%	3.5%	1.8%	2.7%	22.4%	51.0%	
Total	13.3%	4.3%	3.5%	1.9%	2.6%	22.4%	52.0%	

Source: DoH Outpatient Waiting Times Dataset

¹Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–10 & 13

Table 3a: Number of patients waiting for a first consultant-led outpatient appointment by weeks waiting and specialty – 31st March 2022¹

Specialty	Patients waiting for a first consultant-led outpatient appointment, by weeks waiting							Total Waiting
	0 - 6	>6 - 9	>9 - 12	>12 - 15	>15 - 18	>18 - 52	>52	
ENT	4,370	1,418	1,110	515	692	7,047	27,230	42,382
General Surgery	6,174	1,923	1,643	834	1,280	11,980	24,112	47,946
Dermatology	3,825	1,179	941	409	673	6,749	15,623	29,399
Neurology	1,428	563	487	295	372	3,451	14,081	20,677
Rheumatology	1,378	425	442	362	608	3,765	12,903	19,883
Ophthalmology	3,008	1,046	805	422	564	4,345	12,469	22,659
Gynaecology	4,519	1,610	1,423	715	1,012	9,005	12,290	30,574
T & O Surgery	3,181	911	714	404	573	6,035	10,758	22,576
Gastroenterology	2,108	692	496	321	493	4,010	10,069	18,189
Oral Surgery	946	242	201	119	191	1,683	8,641	12,023
Thoracic Medicine	1,460	528	421	234	320	2,554	6,411	11,928
General Medicine	1,679	488	456	205	289	2,502	6,141	11,760
Paediatrics	3,786	1,421	1,095	662	803	5,234	5,767	18,768
Urology	1,842	551	336	208	243	1,747	5,734	10,661
Plastic Surgery	686	228	176	98	125	1,489	3,784	6,586
Pain Management	718	252	199	105	171	1,677	3,684	6,806
Cardiology	2,362	707	601	304	381	2,990	3,520	10,865
Haematology (Clinical)	471	154	114	56	105	373	777	2,050
Restorative Dentistry	205	41	33	25	36	262	528	1,130
Other*	3,645	1,136	696	346	525	3,474	2,123	11,945
All Specialties	47,791	15,515	12,389	6,639	9,456	80,372	186,645	358,807

Source: DoH Outpatient Waiting Times Dataset

¹Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–10 & 13

*The 'Other' category includes the following specialties: Geriatric Medicine, Old Age Psychiatry, Restorative Dentistry, Paediatric Surgery, Orthodontics, Neurosurgery, Dental Medicine Specialties, Nephrology, Clinical Oncology, Paediatric Dentistry, Clinical Genetics, Chemical Pathology, Paediatric Neurology, Infectious Diseases, Cardiac Surgery, Rehabilitation, Learning Disability, Thoracic Surgery, Medical Oncology, Radiology, Palliative Medicine, Genito-Urinary Medicine, Joint Consultant Clinics

Table 3b: Percentage of patients waiting for a first consultant-led outpatient appointment by weeks waiting and specialty – 31st March 2022¹

Specialty	Patients waiting for a first consultant-led outpatient appointment, by weeks waiting						
	0 - 6	>6 - 9	>9 - 12	>12 - 15	>15 - 18	>18 - 52	>52
ENT	10.3%	3.3%	2.6%	1.2%	1.6%	16.6%	64.2%
General Surgery	12.9%	4.0%	3.4%	1.7%	2.7%	25.0%	50.3%
Dermatology	13.0%	4.0%	3.2%	1.4%	2.3%	23.0%	53.1%
Neurology	6.9%	2.7%	2.4%	1.4%	1.8%	16.7%	68.1%
Rheumatology	6.9%	2.1%	2.2%	1.8%	3.1%	18.9%	64.9%
Ophthalmology	13.3%	4.6%	3.6%	1.9%	2.5%	19.2%	55.0%
Gynaecology	14.8%	5.3%	4.7%	2.3%	3.3%	29.5%	40.2%
T & O Surgery	14.1%	4.0%	3.2%	1.8%	2.5%	26.7%	47.7%
Gastroenterology	11.6%	3.8%	2.7%	1.8%	2.7%	22.0%	55.4%
Oral Surgery	7.9%	2.0%	1.7%	1.0%	1.6%	14.0%	71.9%
Thoracic Medicine	12.2%	4.4%	3.5%	2.0%	2.7%	21.4%	53.7%
General Medicine	14.3%	4.1%	3.9%	1.7%	2.5%	21.3%	52.2%
Paediatrics	20.2%	7.6%	5.8%	3.5%	4.3%	27.9%	30.7%
Urology	17.3%	5.2%	3.2%	2.0%	2.3%	16.4%	53.8%
Plastic Surgery	10.4%	3.5%	2.7%	1.5%	1.9%	22.6%	57.5%
Pain Management	10.5%	3.7%	2.9%	1.5%	2.5%	24.6%	54.1%
Cardiology	21.7%	6.5%	5.5%	2.8%	3.5%	27.5%	32.4%
Haematology (Clinical)	23.0%	7.5%	5.6%	2.7%	5.1%	18.2%	37.9%
Restorative Dentistry	18.1%	3.6%	2.9%	2.2%	3.2%	23.2%	46.7%
Other*	30.5%	9.5%	5.8%	2.9%	4.4%	29.1%	17.8%
All Specialties	13.3%	4.3%	3.5%	1.9%	2.6%	22.4%	52.0%

Source: DoH Outpatient Waiting Times Dataset

¹Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–10 & 13

*The 'Other' category includes the following specialties: Geriatric Medicine, Old Age Psychiatry, Restorative Dentistry, Paediatric Surgery, Orthodontics, Neurosurgery, Dental Medicine Specialties, Nephrology, Clinical Oncology, Paediatric Dentistry, Clinical Genetics, Chemical Pathology, Paediatric Neurology, Infectious Diseases, Cardiac Surgery, Rehabilitation, Learning Disability, Thoracic Surgery, Medical Oncology, Radiology, Palliative Medicine, Genito-Urinary Medicine, Joint Consultant Clinics

Table 4: Number of completed waits for a first consultant-led outpatient appointment commissioned by the Health Service: QE March 2020 - QE March 2022²

Quarter Ending	Number of Completed First Outpatient Waits			
	Within Health Service Hospitals	Within Day Case Procedure Centres	Independent Sector	Total Commissioned by Health Service
Mar-20	102,572	181	2,515	105,268
Jun-20	33,256	0	297	33,553
Sep-20	55,646	61	614	56,321
Dec-20	64,873	161	1,365	66,399
Mar-21	59,509	155	4,583	64,247
Jun-21 (p)	81,057	182	1,865	83,104
Sep-21 (p)	77,266	176	3,579	81,021
Dec-21 (p)	84,714	206	3,595	88,515
Mar-22 (p)	84,547	212	5,707	90,466

Source: QOAR, R-QOAR and IS1 Part 1 Returns

(p) Data are currently provisional

* Not National Statistics

²Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-2, 4 & 11-13

Table 5: Number of patients waiting for a first consultant-led outpatient appointment at a Cataracts Day Case Procedure Centre, by weeks waiting, 31st March 2022

Specialty	Patients waiting for a first consultant-led outpatient appointment, by weeks waiting							Total Waiting
	0 - 6	>6 - 9	>9 - 12	>12 - 15	>15 - 18	>18 - 52	>52	
Ophthalmology	1,048	535	443	188	424	4,609	8,000	15,247

Source: DoH Outpatient Waiting Times Dataset

* Not National Statistics

Appendix 2: Explanatory Notes

1. The sources for the data contained in this release are the DoH CH3, QOAR, R-QOAR and IS1 Part 1 Returns and the DoH Outpatient Waiting Times Dataset. These returns collect information from Health and Social Care Trusts on a quarterly basis.
2. The '*Outpatient Waiting Times Publication – Supporting Documentation*' booklet details the technical guidance and definitions used, as well as notes on how to use the data contained within this statistical release. This booklet is available to view or download from: <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/articles/outpatient-waiting-times>.
3. All of the data contained in the tables are available on a quarterly basis and can be supplied by individual specialty or Provider HSC Trust if this level of detail is required. In addition, quarterly data relating to waiting times for a first consultant-led outpatient appointment have been published in spreadsheet format (CSV), split by HSC Trust, Specialty and Programme of Care, in order to aid secondary analysis. These data are available at <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/northern-ireland-waiting-time-statistics-outpatient-waiting-times-September-2021>.
4. Information includes patients living outside Northern Ireland and privately funded patients waiting for treatment in Health Service hospitals in Northern Ireland.
5. Outpatient waiters are defined as patients still waiting for their first outpatient appointment at the end of the quarter, including those who have cancelled or missed a previous appointment. An outpatient appointment is to enable a patient to see a consultant, a member of their team or locum for such a member, in respect of one referral. Waiting time for a first outpatient appointment begins on the date the HSC Trust receives a referral for a first outpatient appointment and ends on the date a patient attends a first outpatient appointment. Patients who cannot attend (CNA) have their waiting time adjusted to commence on the date they informed the HSC Trust they could not attend, while patients who do not attend (DNA) have their waiting time adjusted to commence on the date of their DNA.
6. From 1st April 2014, Oral Surgery services undertaken by consultants contracted to the South Eastern HSC Trust were centralised, meaning that records for patients waiting for this service in both the Northern and Southern HSC Trusts are now held and managed in the South Eastern HSC Trust.
7. Each outpatient waiting time band relates to the number of completed weeks a patient has been waiting for outpatient assessment. For example, a patient waiting exactly 6 weeks would be

included in the 0-6 week time band and a patient waiting 6 weeks and 1 day would be included in the >6-9 (greater than 6 weeks but waiting no longer than 9 weeks) time band. The Ministerial target, for outpatient waiting times, as set out in the Health and Social Care (Commissioning Plan) Direction states that by March 2022, 50% of patients should wait no longer than nine weeks for a first outpatient appointment, with no patient waiting longer than 52 weeks.

8. Some people will be waiting on more than one waiting list or be on the waiting list for more than one outpatient appointment/admission/diagnostic test at the same time due to having more than one condition.
9. A number of outpatient services may not be provided at a patient's local HSC Trust or at each of the five HSC Trusts, and instead are provided as centralised services for Northern Ireland. In such circumstances, patients from one HSC Trust area will be waiting to be seen at a service provided at another HSC Trust. In some cases a consultant from one HSC Trust may provide a 'visiting' service at another HSC Trust, and so the patient may not be reported at the HSC Trust at which they attend. Users should therefore be cautious in how they use these data. For example, they should not be used to calculate the total number of patients waiting per head of the population residing within each Trust area, as HSC Trusts that provide services for the whole of Northern Ireland will have a higher number of patients waiting per head of the population than those that provide more localised services. Neither should the actual number of patients waiting longer than the recommended waiting time be used as indicator of poor performance within an individual HSC Trust. Users who require an indication of the latter are advised to refer to the commentary section of the publication which provides an indication of the percentage of total waiters that have been waiting over the maximum recommended waiting times, within each HSC Trust
10. In February 2019, prototype 'Day Case Procedure Centres' (DPCs) became operational for the surgical outpatient treatment of Cataracts. Patients waiting for this procedure can now be referred to a DPC for treatment rather than attend the hospital site they may have been referred to previously.
11. The total number of completed outpatient waits each quarter, within HSC hospitals, is derived as the total number of attendances at a first outpatient appointment from the Departmental Quarterly Outpatient Activity Return (QOAR) and the Regional Quarterly Outpatient Activity Return (R-QOAR).
12. The number of patients who received an outpatient assessment, commissioned by the Health Service, in the Independent Sector is collected on the IS1 Part 1 Return. These figures are provided by Strategic Planning and Performance Group in the Department of Health. They are

published for each transferring Health and Social Care Trust (Trust responsible for the patient's waiting time). They are not National Statistics and they have not been validated by the Department; however, they have been included to provide users with a comprehensive view of completed outpatient waits during each quarter.

13. HIB surveyed data providers during 2011/12 to ascertain the cost of producing, validating and submitting the information required for this publication. This relates to the time taken to generate, validate and submit data, over and above what is already required by their organisation for internal performance management purposes. The cost to data providers of compliance within HIB's requirements for this publication, based on HSC salary costs at the time of the survey, was £3,110.
14. Due to the redeployment of resources during the COVID-19 pandemic, data related to the Southern HSC Trust for quarter ending December 2020 did not undergo the usual levels of quality assurance. The impact of this has been assessed as negligible, however the data remain provisional and will be amended as necessary in future publications.
15. Figures relating to outpatient waiting times for the quarter ending 30th June 2022 will be released on Thursday 25th August 2022.

Appendix 3: National Statistics

National Statistics status means that our statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value, and it is our responsibility to maintain compliance with these standards.

The statistics last underwent a full assessment against the Code of Practice in 2011 and designation was awarded in December 2013.

Since the assessment by the Office for Statistics Regulation, we have continued to comply with the Code of Practice for Statistics.

In November 2021, the Office for Statistics Regulation conducted a compliance check on these statistics and confirmed that they should continue to be designated as National Statistics. Further details can be found [here](#).

Further information on Outpatient Waiting Times in Northern Ireland is available from:

Hospital Information Branch
Information & Analysis Directorate
Department of Health
Stormont Estate
Belfast, BT4 3SQ

✉ Email: statistics@health-ni.gov.uk

This Statistical bulletin and others published by Hospital Information Branch are available to download from the DoH Internet site at:

<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/topics/doh-statistics-and-research>