

INFORMATION
ANALYSIS
DIRECTORATE



Northern Ireland Waiting Time Statistics: Inpatient and Day Case Waiting Times Quarter Ending June 2021

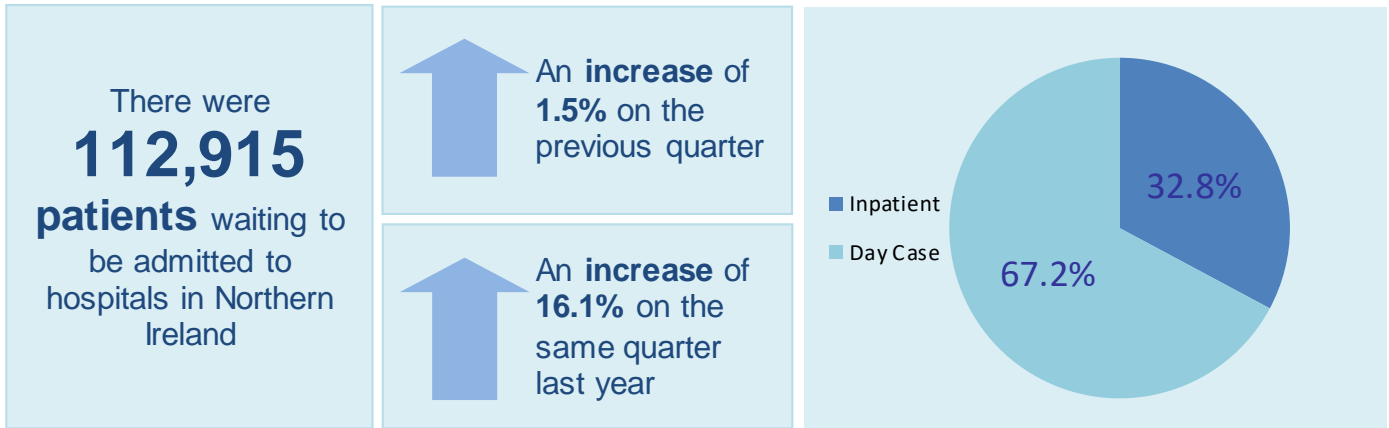
Reader Information

- Purpose:** This statistical release presents information on waiting times for admission for either inpatient or day case treatment in Northern Ireland and reports on the performance of the Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts against the 2021/22 ministerial waiting time target which states that:
- “By March 2022, 55% of patients should wait no longer than 13 weeks for inpatient/day case treatment, 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 inpatient and day case admissions in HSC Trusts at 30th June 2021. Data are presented by HSC Trust, specialty and time band. It also includes inpatient and day case activity commissioned by the Health Service during the quarter ending June 2021.
- Statistical Quality:** The *‘Inpatient and Day Case 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/inpatient-and-day-case-waiting-times-supporting-documentation>
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Contents

Total number of patients waiting for Inpatient and Day Case Admissions	4
Patients waiting longer than 13 weeks for Inpatient and Day Case Admissions.....	5
Patients waiting longer than 52 weeks for Inpatient and Day Case Admissions.....	6
Completed waits for Inpatient and Day Case Activity commissioned by the Health Service...	7
Patients waiting at a Day Case Procedure Centre.....	8
Appendix 1: Tables.....	9
Appendix 2: Explanatory Notes.....	13
Appendix 3: National Statistics.....	16

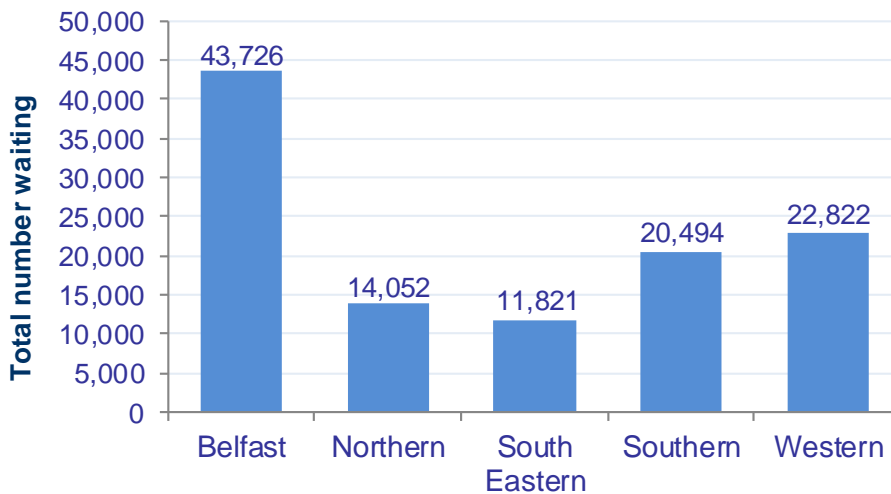
Total number of patients waiting at 30th June 2021



Source: DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

At 30th June 2021, a total of 112,915 patients were waiting to be admitted to hospitals in Northern Ireland, 1.5% (1,706) more than at 31st March 2021 (111,209), and 16.1% (15,672) more than at 30th June 2020 (97,243) (Table 1).

Almost one third (32.8%, 37,055) of those waiting for admission at 30th June 2021 were waiting for an inpatient admission, with the remaining 67.2% (75,860) waiting for a day case admission (Table 1).



A number of inpatient and day case services may not be provided at a patient's local HSC Trust, and instead are provided at a single regional centre for Northern Ireland. As patients are reported against the HSC Trust responsible for the service that will be providing treatment, users should be cautious in how they use these data (see explanatory note 12).

Source: DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

Of patients waiting, almost two fifths (38.7%) were waiting to be admitted in the Belfast HSC Trust, with a further 20.2% waiting in the Western HSC Trust, 18.1% in the Southern HSC Trust, 12.4% in the Northern HSC Trust and 10.5% in the South Eastern HSC Trust (Table 2a).

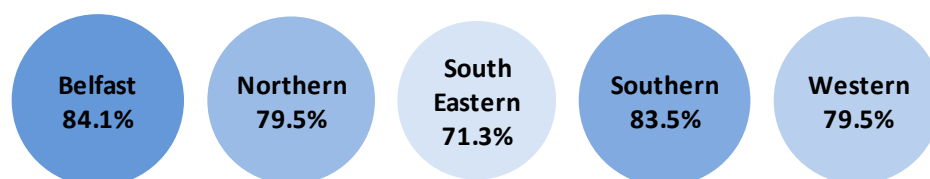
Of the 112,915 patients waiting for admission, around four fifths (81.4%, 91,873) were in one of the following specialties: General Surgery (24,958); T & O Surgery (22,148); ENT (12,323); Urology (10,093); Gastroenterology (7,869); General Medicine (7,533) and Ophthalmology (6,949) (Table 3a).

Patients waiting more than 13 weeks at 30th June 2021

By March 2022, 55% of patients should wait no longer than 13 weeks for inpatient/day case treatment

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

81.1%
of patients were waiting longer than 13 weeks



Percentage waiting over 13 weeks

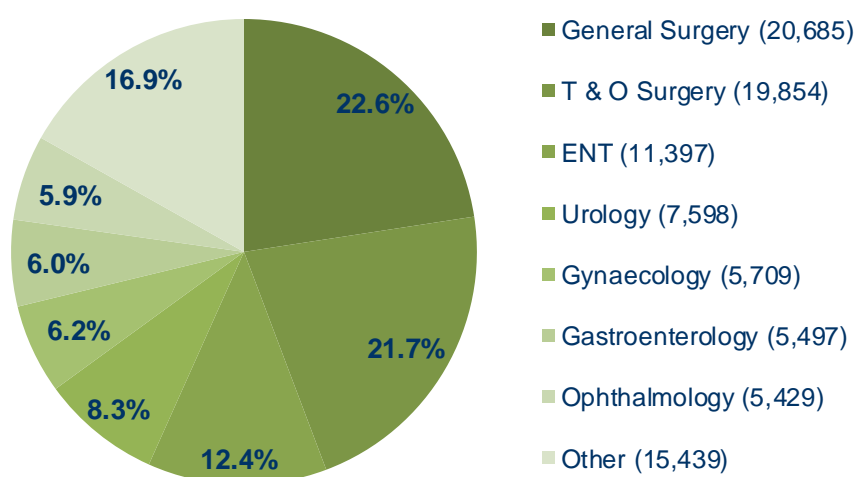
Source: DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

Achievement of the 13 week target requires that less than 45% of patients should be waiting over 13 weeks for inpatient or day case admission. At 30th June 2021, 81.1% (91,608) of patients were waiting more than 13 weeks to be admitted for treatment, compared with 83.3% (92,690) at 31st March 2021 and 88.8% (86,337) at 30th June 2020 (Table 1).

At 30th June 2021, the 13 week element of the target was not achieved by Northern Ireland as a whole (Table 2a), nor by any of the HSC Trusts. Data users should be aware that not all inpatient and day case services are provided at every HSC Trust (see explanatory note 12).

Of patients waiting for an inpatient admission, almost nine tenths (88.5%, 32,784) were waiting over 13 weeks. This is compared with 77.5% (58,824) waiting over 13 weeks for a day case admission (Table 1).

Patients waiting over 13 weeks by speciality



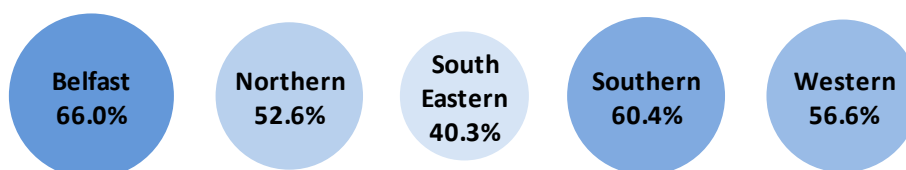
Over four fifths (83.1%, 76,169) of the 91,608 patients waiting more than 13 weeks at the end of June 2021 were in one of the following specialties: General Surgery (20,685); T & O Surgery (19,854); ENT (11,397); Urology (7,598); Gynaecology (5,709); Gastroenterology (5,497) and Ophthalmology (5,429) (Table 3a).

Patients waiting more than 52 weeks at 30th June 2021

By March 2022, no patient should wait longer than 52 weeks for inpatient/day case treatment

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

66,287
patients were waiting longer than 52 weeks



Percentage waiting over 52 weeks

Source: DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

Achievement of the 52 week target requires that no patient should be waiting over 52 weeks for inpatient or day case admission.

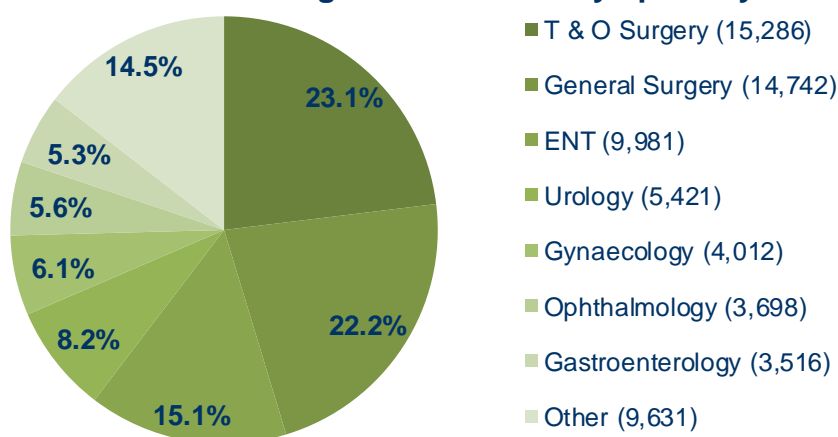
At 30th June 2021, 58.7% (66,287) of patients were waiting more than 52 weeks for either an inpatient or day case admission, compared with 61.4% (68,309) at 31st March 2021, and 39.4% (38,354) at 30th June 2020 (Table 1).

At 30th June 2021, the 52 week element of the target was not achieved by Northern Ireland as a whole nor by any individual HSC Trust (Table 2a). Data users should be aware that not all inpatient and day case services are provided at every HSC Trust (see explanatory note 12).

Around two thirds (66.0%, 28,840) of patients in the Belfast HSC Trust were waiting longer than 52 weeks at 30th June 2021, around three fifths in both the Southern (60.4%, 12,374) and Western (56.6%, 12,913) HSC Trusts, more than half (52.6%, 7,397) in the Northern HSC Trust and two fifths (40.3%, 4,763) in the South Eastern HSC Trust (Table 2a).

Of those waiting more than 52 weeks, 26,058 were waiting for an inpatient admission and 40,229 were waiting for a day case admission (Table 1).

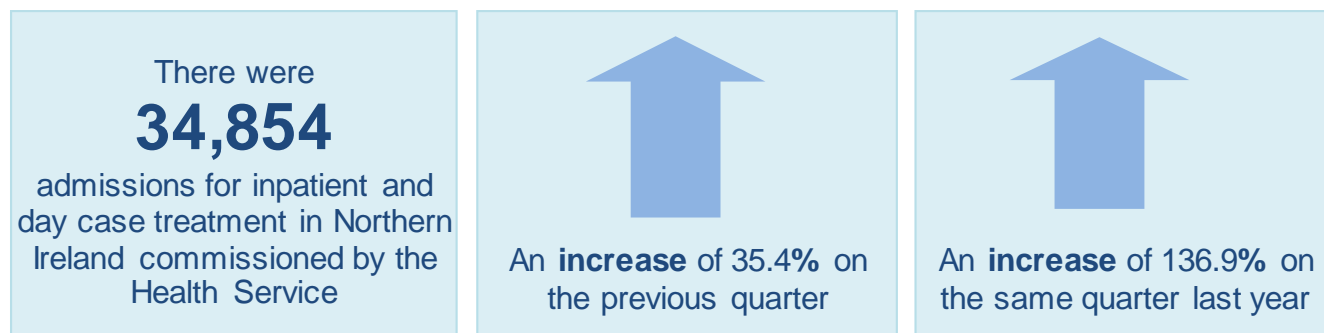
Patients waiting over 52 weeks by specialty



Over four fifths (85.5%, 56,656) of the 66,287 patients waiting more than 52 weeks on the 30th June 2021 were in one of the following specialties: T & O Surgery; General Surgery; ENT; Urology; Gynaecology; Ophthalmology and Gastroenterology (Table 3a).

Source: DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

Completed waits for inpatient and day case activity during quarter ending 30th June 2021



Source: Hospital Inpatient System & IS1 Part 2 Return

A total of 30,879 patients were admitted to Health Service hospitals in Northern Ireland during the quarter ending 30th June 2021, 45.5.% (9,661) more than during the quarter ending 31st March 2021 (21,218) and 126.6% (17,250) more than during the quarter ending 30th June 2020 (13,629) (Table 4). Users should exercise caution when using these provisional data given that hospital records may not be fully updated at this time.

During the quarter ending 30th June 2021, 3,975 patients received inpatient or day case treatment commissioned by the Health Service within the Independent Sector, 12.1% (547) fewer than the number seen during the quarter ending 31st March 2021 (4,522), and approximately four times more than that seen during quarter ending June 2020 (1,086).

When the number of completed inpatient and day case waits within the Independent Sector during the quarter ending 30th June 2021 (3,975) is combined with those treated in Health Service hospitals during the same period (30,879), provisional figures indicate that 34,854 inpatients and day cases received treatment in Northern Ireland commissioned by the Health Service. This was a 35.4% (9,114) increase in the number of completed waits commissioned by the Health Service compared to the quarter ending March 2021 (25,740) and an increase of almost 2.5 times the number commissioned compared to the quarter ending June 2020 (14,715) (Table 4).

Patients waiting at a Day Case Procedure Centre (DPC) at 30th June 2021



Source: DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

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 December 2018, prototype 'Day Case Procedure Centres' (DPC) became operational for the surgical treatment of Cataracts and Varicose Veins. 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) Down Hospital (South Eastern HSC Trust) South Tyrone Hospital (Southern HSC Trust)
Varicose Veins	Lagan Valley Hospital (South Eastern HSC Trust) Omagh Urgent Care and Treatment Centre (Western HSC Trust)

At 30th June 2021, 917 patients were waiting to be admitted to a Varicose Veins DPC, with a further 3,032 patients waiting to be admitted to a Cataracts DPC (Table 5).

Appendix 1: Tables

Table 1: Quarterly inpatient and day case waiting lists – 30th June 2021¹

Type of Admission		Current Quarter (Jun 21)	Previous Quarter (Mar 21)	Same Quarter Last Year (Jun 20)
Inpatient	Total Patients Waiting	37,055	36,661	32,472
	Number waiting over 13 weeks	32,784	33,114	30,450
	<i>Percentage waiting over 13 weeks</i>	88.5%	90.3%	93.8%
	Number waiting over 52 weeks	26,058	26,560	17,800
Day Case	Total Patients Waiting	75,860	74,548	64,771
	Number waiting over 13 weeks	58,824	59,576	55,887
	<i>Percentage waiting over 13 weeks</i>	77.5%	79.9%	86.3%
	Number waiting over 52 weeks	40,229	41,749	20,554
All Admissions	Total Patients Waiting	112,915	111,209	97,243
	Number waiting over 13 weeks	91,608	92,690	86,337
	<i>Percentage waiting over 13 weeks</i>	81.1%	83.3%	88.8%
	Number waiting over 52 weeks	66,287	68,309	38,354

Source: DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

¹Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–14

Table 2a: Number of patients waiting for inpatient and day case admissions by HSC Trust and weeks waiting – 30th June 2021¹

HSC Trust	Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting						Total Waiting for Admission
	0 - 6	>6 - 13	>13 - 21	>21 - 26	>26-52	>52	
Belfast	4,141	2,824	2,018	1,077	4,826	28,840	43,726
Northern	1,876	998	984	493	2,304	7,397	14,052
South Eastern	2,158	1,238	1,032	425	2,205	4,763	11,821
Southern	1,981	1,403	1,114	504	3,118	12,374	20,494
Western	2,940	1,748	1,369	671	3,181	12,913	22,822
Total	13,096	8,211	6,517	3,170	15,634	66,287	112,915

Source: DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

¹Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–14

Table 2b: Percentage of patients waiting for inpatient and day case admissions by HSC Trust and weeks waiting – 30th June 2021¹

HSC Trust	Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting					
	0 - 6	>6 - 13	>13 - 21	>21 - 26	>26-52	>52
Belfast	9.5%	6.5%	4.6%	2.5%	11.0%	66.0%
Northern	13.4%	7.1%	7.0%	3.5%	16.4%	52.6%
South Eastern	18.3%	10.5%	8.7%	3.6%	18.7%	40.3%
Southern	9.7%	6.8%	5.4%	2.5%	15.2%	60.4%
Western	12.9%	7.7%	6.0%	2.9%	13.9%	56.6%
Total	11.6%	7.3%	5.8%	2.8%	13.8%	58.7%

Source: DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

¹Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–14

Table 3a: Number of patients waiting for inpatient and day case admissions by weeks waiting and specialty – 30th June 2021¹

Specialty	Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting						Total Waiting for Admission
	0 - 6	>6 - 13	>13 - 21	>21 - 26	>26-52	>52	
General Surgery	2,587	1,686	1,554	675	3,714	14,742	24,958
T & O Surgery	1,155	1,139	1,060	577	2,931	15,286	22,148
ENT	519	407	277	143	996	9,981	12,323
Urology	1,617	878	634	240	1,303	5,421	10,093
Gastroenterology	1,623	749	531	260	1,190	3,516	7,869
General Medicine	1,608	687	516	315	1,434	2,973	7,533
Ophthalmology	887	633	427	234	1,070	3,698	6,949
Gynaecology	695	459	363	186	1,148	4,012	6,863
Plastic Surgery	227	137	113	34	186	2,111	2,808
Cardiology	583	392	285	150	385	674	2,469
Pain Management	204	137	129	72	280	1,175	1,997
Oral Surgery	220	187	97	44	192	390	1,130
GP Other	173	168	137	64	174	232	948
Paediatric Surgery	87	73	88	48	135	433	864
Dermatology	329	133	46	18	81	214	821
Paediatrics	43	51	29	17	56	294	490
Rheumatology	88	59	62	16	81	152	458
Neurology	54	34	19	5	69	177	358
Neurosurgery	44	22	16	20	75	174	351
Other	353	180	134	52	134	632	1,485
All Specialties	13,096	8,211	6,517	3,170	15,634	66,287	112,915

Source: DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

¹Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–14

Table 3b: Percentage of patients waiting for inpatient and day case admissions by weeks waiting and specialty – 30th June 2021¹

Specialty	Percentage of Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting					
	0 - 6	>6 - 13	>13 - 21	>21 - 26	>26-52	>52
General Surgery	10.4%	6.8%	6.2%	2.7%	14.9%	59.1%
T & O Surgery	5.2%	5.1%	4.8%	2.6%	13.2%	69.0%
ENT	4.2%	3.3%	2.2%	1.2%	8.1%	81.0%
Urology	16.0%	8.7%	6.3%	2.4%	12.9%	53.7%
Gastroenterology	20.6%	9.5%	6.7%	3.3%	15.1%	44.7%
General Medicine	21.3%	9.1%	6.8%	4.2%	19.0%	39.5%
Ophthalmology	12.8%	9.1%	6.1%	3.4%	15.4%	53.2%
Gynaecology	10.1%	6.7%	5.3%	2.7%	16.7%	58.5%
Plastic Surgery	8.1%	4.9%	4.0%	1.2%	6.6%	75.2%
Cardiology	23.6%	15.9%	11.5%	6.1%	15.6%	27.3%
Pain Management	10.2%	6.9%	6.5%	3.6%	14.0%	58.8%
Oral Surgery	19.5%	16.5%	8.6%	3.9%	17.0%	34.5%
GP Other	18.2%	17.7%	14.5%	6.8%	18.4%	24.5%
Paediatric Surgery	10.1%	8.4%	10.2%	5.6%	15.6%	50.1%
Dermatology	40.1%	16.2%	5.6%	2.2%	9.9%	26.1%
Paediatrics	8.8%	10.4%	5.9%	3.5%	11.4%	60.0%
Rheumatology	19.2%	12.9%	13.5%	3.5%	17.7%	33.2%
Neurology	15.1%	9.5%	5.3%	1.4%	19.3%	49.4%
Neurosurgery	12.5%	6.3%	4.6%	5.7%	21.4%	49.6%
Other	23.8%	12.1%	9.0%	3.5%	9.0%	42.6%
All Specialties	11.6%	7.3%	5.8%	2.8%	13.8%	58.7%

Source: DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

¹Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–14

Table 4: Number of completed inpatient and day case waits commissioned by the Health Service: QE June 2018 - QE June 2021²

Quarter Ending	Number of Completed Inpatient and Day Case Waits		
	Within Health Service Hospitals	Independent Sector*	Total Commissioned by Health Service
QE Sept 2018	42,077	1,135	43,212
QE Dec 2018	45,499	2,514	48,013
QE Mar 2019	43,868	6,595	50,463
QE June 2019	42,926	2,262	45,188
QE September 2019	41,082	1,414	42,496
QE December 2019	40,785	2,135	42,920
QE March 2020	36,946	3,346	40,292
QE June 2020 ^{PR}	13,629	1,086	14,715
QE September 2020 ^{PR}	24,434	1,261	25,695
QE December 2020 ^{PR}	25,272	1,696	26,968
QE March 2021 ^{PR}	21,218	4,522	25,740
QE June 2021 ^P	30,879	3,975	34,854

Source: Hospital Inpatient System & IS1 Part 2 Return

^P Data are currently provisional

^R Data has been revised

* Not National Statistics

² Refer to Explanatory Notes 1, 4 & 15-17

Table 5: Number of patients waiting for admission to Day Case Procedure Centres (DPC), 30th June 2021

DPC	Number of patients waiting for DPC Admission by Weeks Waiting						Total Waiting
	0 - 6	>6 - 13	>13 - 21	>21 - 26	>26-52	>52	
Varicose Veins	38	56	19	9	86	709	917
Cataracts	473	364	191	122	723	1,159	3,032
Total	511	420	210	131	809	1,868	3,949

Source: DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

Appendix 2: Explanatory Notes

1. The sources for the data contained in this release are the DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset, Hospital Inpatient System and IS1 Part 2 Return. These returns collect information from Health and Social Care Trusts on a quarterly basis.

2. The '*Inpatient and Day Case 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/inpatient-and-day-case-waiting-times-supporting-documentation>

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 inpatient and day case waiting times have been published in spreadsheet format (CSV), split by HSC Trust, Specialty, Programme of Care and Intended Management of the patient (i.e. Inpatient Admission or Day Case), in order to aid secondary analysis. These data are available at <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/articles/inpatient-waiting-times-June-2021>.

4. Information includes patients living outside Northern Ireland and privately funded patients waiting for treatment in Health Service hospitals in Northern Ireland.

5. Inpatient and day case waiting list data comprise the number of patients waiting for inpatient admission to hospital and the number of patients waiting for day case treatment.

6. Inpatient admissions can include both (a) patients admitted electively with the expectation that they will remain in hospital for at least one night, and (b) non-elective admissions (e.g. emergency admissions). A patient who is admitted with either of the above intentions, but who leaves hospital for any reason without staying overnight, is still counted as an inpatient admission.

7. Day Cases are patients admitted electively during the course of a day with the intention of receiving care who do not require the use of a hospital bed overnight and who return home as scheduled. If this original intention is not fulfilled and the patient stays overnight, such a patient is counted as an inpatient admission.

8. The inpatient and day case waiting list figures do not include:

- Patients admitted as emergency cases;
- Outpatients;
- Patients undergoing a planned programme of treatment e.g. a series of admissions for chemotherapy;

- Patients waiting for admission as a regular day or night attender
- Maternity (specialties 510 and 520);
- Patients currently receiving inpatient treatment in hospitals who are included on other waiting lists;
- Patients who are temporarily suspended from waiting lists.

9. Waiting time begins from the date the clinician decided to admit the patient. 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 the DNA.

10. 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.

11. The Ministerial target, for inpatient and day case waiting times, as set out in the Health and Social Care (Commissioning Plan) Direction states that, by March 2021, at least 55% of patients should wait no longer than 13 weeks for inpatient or day case treatment, with no patient waiting longer than 52 weeks.

12. A number of inpatient and day case services may not be provided at a patient's local HSC Trust or at each of the five HSC Trusts, and instead are provided at a single regional centre 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. 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.

13. For Tables 2a, 2b, 3a and 3b, each inpatient and day case waiting time band relates to the number of completed weeks a patient has been waiting for admission for treatment. 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 >6-13 (greater than 6 weeks but waiting no longer than 13 weeks) week time band. Patients waiting 'more than 13 weeks' includes all patients in the >13-21, >21-26,

>26-52 and >52 time bands. Patients waiting 'more than 52 weeks' includes all patients in the >52 time band.

14. Patients waiting for day case endoscopies are included within both inpatient and diagnostic waiting times; as such, figures should not be added together.

15. The total number of completed inpatient waits within HSC hospitals each quarter is sourced from the Hospital Inpatient System. During the financial year, data from the Hospital Inpatient System will be marked as provisional. This is because information on inpatient admissions continuously improves during the year before being finalised. Consequently, quarterly information from the Hospital Inpatient System, for the most recent financial year, will be revised on a quarterly basis.

16. The number of completed inpatient waits within HSC hospitals each quarter do not include:

- Elective planned patients
- Emergency patients
- Maternity (specialties 510 and 520)
- Private patients
- Amenity patients
- Mental Health and Learning Disability patients
- Others (including transfers)

17. The numbers of patients who received inpatient treatment, commissioned by the Health Service, in the Independent Sector, are provided by the HSC Board. 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 inpatient waits during each quarter.

18. 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 annual cost to data providers of compliance with HIB's requirements for this publication, based on HSC salary costs at the time of the survey, was £1,670.

19. Figures relating to inpatient and day case waiting times for the quarter ending 30th September 2021 will be released on Thursday 25th November 2021.

Appendix 3: National Statistics

Data contained within this publication are National Statistics except for information relating to DPC Waiting Lists and or completed inpatient and day case waits.

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:

https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/images-assessmentreport153statisticsonhospitalwaitingtimesinnorthernirelan_tcm97-41176.pdf

Designation was awarded in March 2013:

https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/images-letterofconfirmationasnationalstatisticsassessmentreport15_tcm97-42663.pdf

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

Further information on Inpatient and Day Case 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>