

INFORMATION
ANALYSIS
DIRECTORATE



Northern Ireland Waiting Time Statistics: Inpatient and Day Case Waiting Times Quarter Ending March 2017

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 2016/17 Ministerial waiting time target which states that:

“By March 2017, 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 31st March 2017. 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 March 2017.

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

<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/northern-ireland-waiting-time-statistics-inpatient-waiting-times-march-2017>

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

Authors: Jennifer Finlay, Jennifer McCrea, Siobhán Morgan

Publication Date: Thursday 25th May 2017

Reporting Period: 1st January 2017 – 31st March 2017

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

Contact Information and further copies: statistics@health-ni.gov.uk

Target audience: Department of Health (DoH), Chief Executives of the HSC Board and Trusts in Northern Ireland, health care professionals, Health & Social Care stakeholders, academics, the media and the general public.

Price: Free

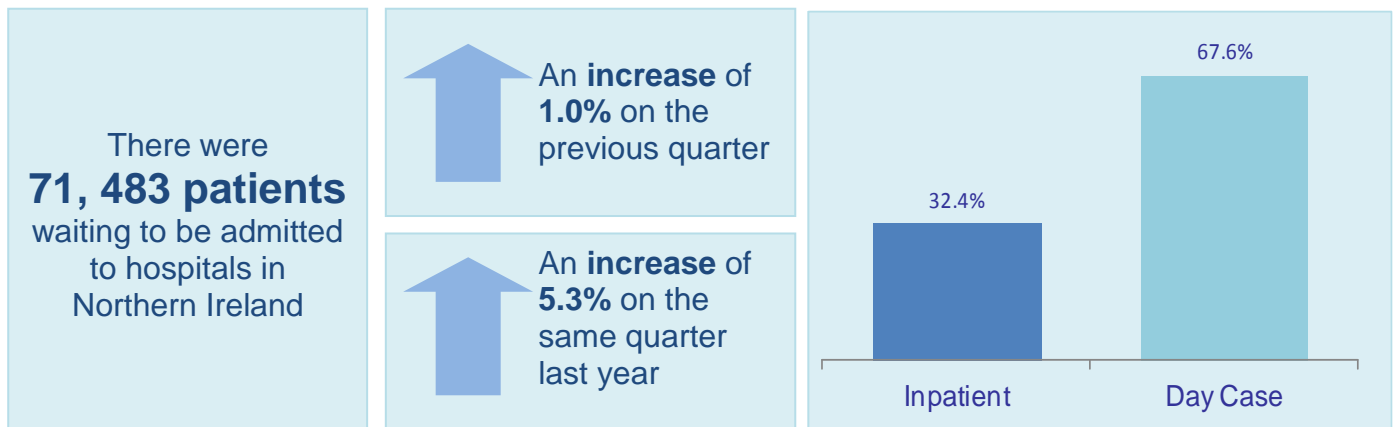
Copyright: This publication is Crown copyright and may be reproduced free of charge in any format or medium. Any material used must be acknowledged, and the title of the publication specified.

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
Appendix 1: Tables.....	8
Appendix 2: Explanatory Notes.....	12

By March 2017, 55% of patients should wait no longer than 13 weeks for inpatient/day case treatment, with no patient waiting longer than 52 weeks.

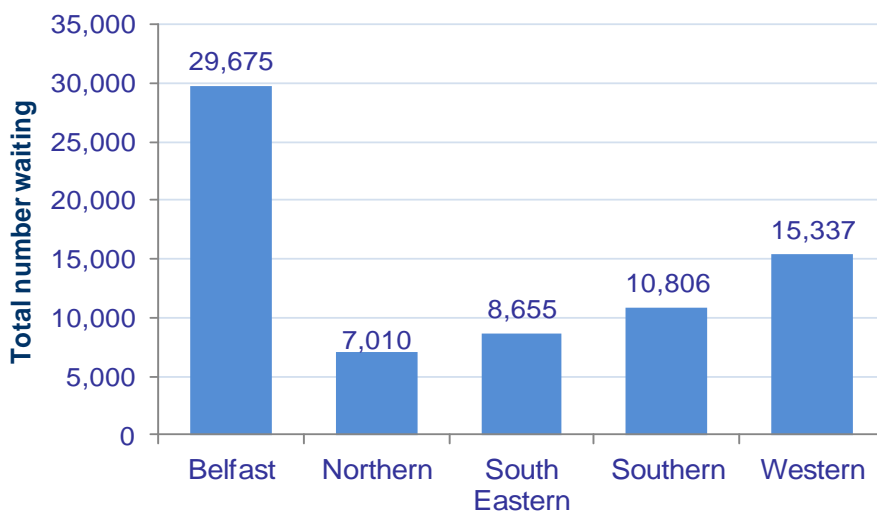
Total number of patients waiting at 31st March 2017



Source: DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

At 31st March 2017, a total of 71,483 patients were waiting to be admitted to hospitals, 1.0% (701) more than at 31st December 2016 (70,782), and 5.3% (3,585) more than at 31st March 2016 (67,898) (Table 1).

Almost one third (32.4%, 23,168) of those waiting for admission at 31st March 2017 were waiting for an inpatient admission, with the remaining 67.6% (48,315) 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 11).

Source: DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

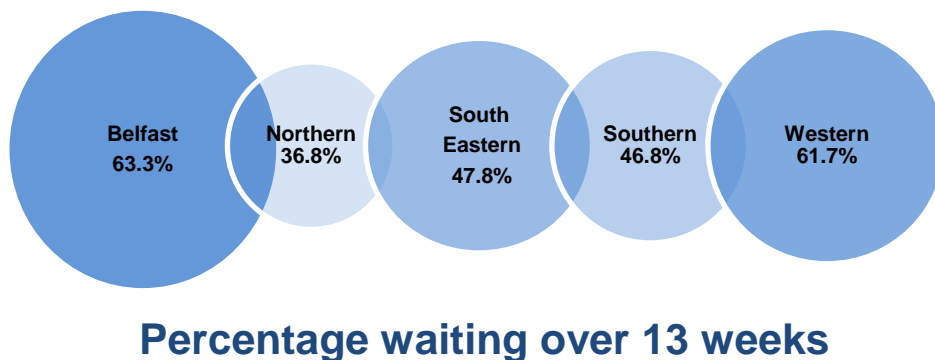
Over two fifths (41.5%) were waiting to be admitted in the Belfast HSC Trust, with a further 21.5% waiting in the Western HSC Trust, 15.1% in the Southern HSC Trust, 12.1% in the South Eastern HSC Trust and 9.8% in the Northern HSC Trust (Table 2a).

Over three quarters (78.1%, 55,793) of the 71,483 patients were waiting for admission in one of the following specialties: General Surgery (13,533); Trauma and Orthopaedic (T&O) Surgery (13,299); Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) (6,839); Ophthalmology (6,511); Urology (6,469) Gynaecology (5,483) and Gastroenterology (3,659) (Table 3a).

Patients waiting more than 13 weeks at 31st March 2017

This element was **not achieved** by Northern Ireland as a whole

56.0%
of patients
were waiting longer
than 13 weeks



Percentage waiting over 13 weeks

Source: DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

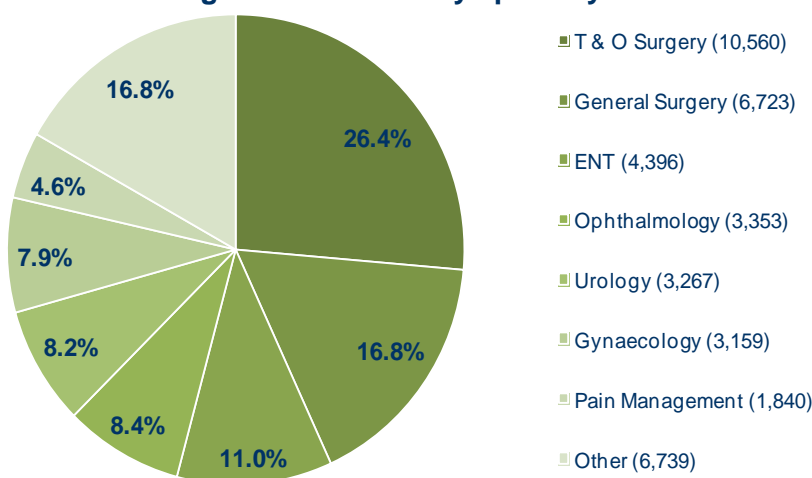
Achievement of the 13 week target requires that less than 45% of patients should be waiting over 13 weeks for inpatient or day case admission.

At 31st March 2017, 56.0% (40,037) of patients were waiting more than 13 weeks to be admitted for treatment, compared with 55.3% (39,123) at 31st December 2016 and 48.1% (32,676) at 31st March 2016 (Table 1).

At 31st March 2017, the 13 week element of the target was not achieved by Northern Ireland as a whole (Table 2a). The Northern HSC Trust did meet this element of the target, however, data users should be aware that many inpatient and day case services are not provided at every HSC Trust (see explanatory note 11).

Over two thirds (72.8%, 16,859) of those patients waiting for an inpatient admission, were waiting over 13 weeks. This is compared with 48.0% (23,178) waiting over 13 weeks for a day case admission (Table 1).

Patients waiting over 13 weeks by speciality



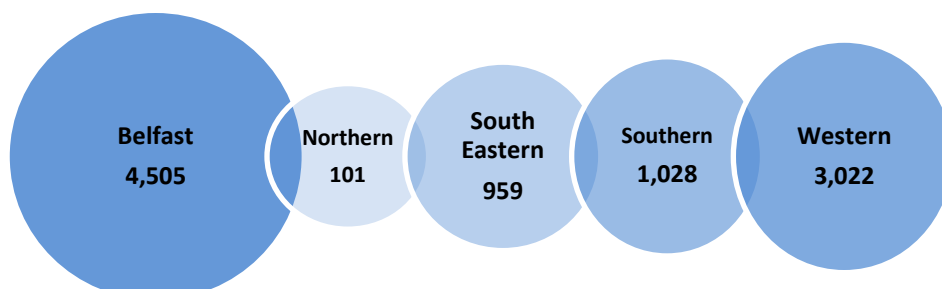
Source: DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

Just over four fifths (83.2%, 33,298) of the 40,037 patients waiting more than 13 weeks at 31st March 2017 were in one of the following specialties: Trauma and Orthopaedic (T&O) Surgery; General Surgery; Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT); Ophthalmology; Urology; Gynaecology; and Pain Management (Table 3a).

Patients waiting more than 52 weeks at 31st March 2017

This element was **not achieved** by Northern Ireland as a whole

9,615
patients
were waiting longer
than 52 weeks



Number waiting over 52 weeks

Source: DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

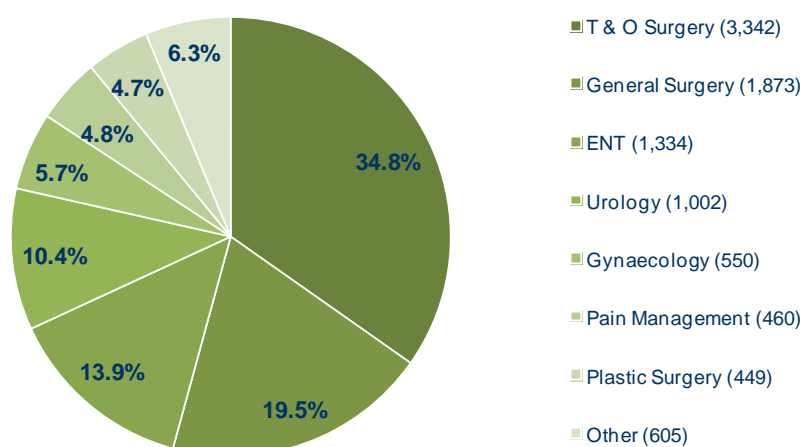
At 31st March 2017, 13.5% (9,615) of patients were waiting more than 52 weeks for either an inpatient or day case admission, compared with 12.0% (8,470) at 31st December 2016, and 8.8% (5,961) at 31st March 2016 (Table 1).

At 31st March 2017, 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 many inpatient and day case services are not provided at every HSC Trust (see explanatory note 11).

Almost a fifth (19.7%, 3,022) of patients in the Western HSC Trust were waiting longer than 52 weeks at 31st March 2017, 15.2% (4,505) in the Belfast HSC Trust, 11.1% (959) in the South Eastern HSC Trust, 9.5% (1,028) in the Southern HSC Trust, and 1.4% (101) in the Northern HSC Trust (Table 2a).

Of those waiting more than 52 weeks, 5,270 were waiting for an inpatient admission and 4,345 were waiting for a day case admission (Table 1).

Patients waiting over 52 weeks by speciality



A total of 93.7% (9,010) of the 9,615 patients waiting more than 52 weeks to be admitted were in one of the following specialties: Trauma and Orthopaedic (T&O) Surgery; General Surgery; Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT); Urology; Gynaecology; Pain Management and Plastic Surgery (Table 3a).

Source: DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

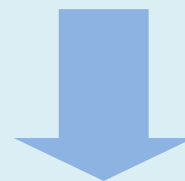
Completed waits for inpatient and day case activity during quarter ending 31st March 2017

There were
48,378

admissions for inpatient and day case treatment in Northern Ireland commissioned by the Health Service



A **decrease of 0.2%** on the previous quarter

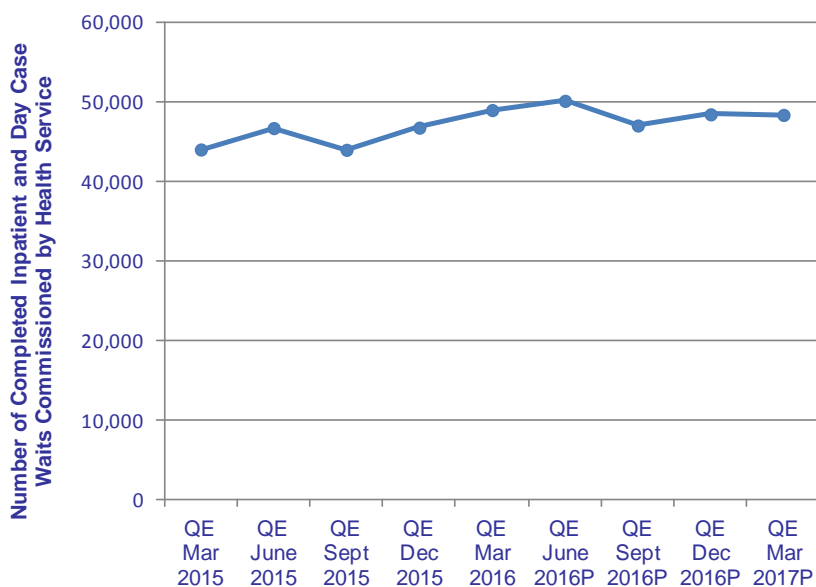


A **decrease of 1.3%** on the same quarter last year

Source: Hospital Inpatient System & IS1 Part 2 Return

Although the number of patients waiting for inpatient and day case admission increased between the 31st December 2016 and 31st March 2017, a total of 44,660 patients were admitted to Health Service hospitals in Northern Ireland during the quarter ending March 2017, 2.7% (1,220) less than during the quarter ending December 2016 (45,880), but 1.2% (551) more than during the quarter ending March 2016 (44,109) (Table 4).

During the quarter ending March 2017, 3,718 patients received inpatient or day case treatment commissioned by the Health Service, within the Independent Sector, 44.3% (1,142) more than the quarter ending December 2016 (2,576), but 23.9% (1,165) less than the same quarter in the previous year (4,883) (Table 4).



Source: Hospital Inpatient System & IS1 Part 2 Return
P Data is provisional

When the number of completed inpatient and day case waits within the Independent Sector during the quarter ending March 2017 (3,718) is combined with those treated in Health Service hospitals during the same period (44,660), provisional figures indicate that 48,378 inpatients and day cases received treatment in Northern Ireland commissioned by the Health Service. This was

a 0.2% (78) decrease in the number of completed waits commissioned by the Health Service between the quarter ending December 2016 (48,456) and the quarter ending March 2017 (48,378) and a decrease of 1.3% (614) compared to quarter ending March 2016 (48,992) (Table 4).

Appendix 1: Tables

Table 1: Quarterly inpatient and day case waiting lists – 31st March 2017¹

Type of Admission		Current Quarter (31 st Mar 2017)	Previous Quarter (31 st Dec 2016)	Same Quarter Last Year (31 st Mar 2016)
Inpatient	Total Patients Waiting	23,168	22,148	20,144
	Number waiting over 13 weeks	16,859	15,590	13,129
	<i>Percentage waiting over 13 weeks</i>	72.8%	70.4%	65.2%
	Number waiting over 52 weeks	5,270	4,496	2,932
Day Case	Total Patients Waiting	48,315	48,634	47,754
	Number waiting over 13 weeks	23,178	23,533	19,547
	<i>Percentage waiting over 13 weeks</i>	48.0%	48.4%	40.9%
	Number waiting over 52 weeks	4,345	3,974	3,029
All Admissions	Total Patients Waiting	71,483	70,782	67,898
	Number waiting over 13 weeks	40,037	39,123	32,676
	<i>Percentage waiting over 13 weeks</i>	56.0%	55.3%	48.1%
	Number waiting over 52 weeks	9,615	8,470	5,961

Source: DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

¹Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–13

Table 2a: Number of patients waiting for inpatient and day case admissions by HSC Trust and weeks waiting – 31st March 2017¹

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	5,404	5,472	4,431	2,462	7,401	4,505	29,675
Northern	2,612	1,819	1,258	373	847	101	7,010
South Eastern	2,574	1,941	1,367	515	1,299	959	8,655
Southern	3,273	2,477	1,366	655	2,007	1,028	10,806
Western	3,427	2,447	2,036	1,021	3,384	3,022	15,337
Total	17,290	14,156	10,458	5,026	14,938	9,615	71,483

Source: DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

¹Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–13

Table 2b: Percentage of patients waiting for inpatient and day case admissions by HSC Trust and weeks waiting – 31st March 2017¹

HSC Trust	Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting					
	0 - 6	>6 - 13	>13 - 21	>21 - 26	>26-52	>52
Belfast	18.2%	18.4%	14.9%	8.3%	24.9%	15.2%
Northern	37.3%	25.9%	17.9%	5.3%	12.1%	1.4%
South Eastern	29.7%	22.4%	15.8%	6.0%	15.0%	11.1%
Southern	30.3%	22.9%	12.6%	6.1%	18.6%	9.5%
Western	22.3%	16.0%	13.3%	6.7%	22.1%	19.7%
Total	24.2%	19.8%	14.6%	7.0%	20.9%	13.5%

Source: DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

¹Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–13

Table 3a: Number of patients waiting for inpatient and day case admissions by weeks waiting and specialty – 31st March 2017¹

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	3,987	2,823	1,736	808	2,306	1,873	13,533
T & O Surgery	863	1,876	1,865	1,106	4,247	3,342	13,299
ENT	1,212	1,231	982	454	1,626	1,334	6,839
Ophthalmology	1,517	1,641	1,296	664	1,226	167	6,511
Urology	1,981	1,221	708	379	1,178	1,002	6,469
Gynaecology	1,279	1,045	851	412	1,346	550	5,483
Gastroenterology	1,622	996	659	142	219	21	3,659
Cardiology	751	591	488	241	576	57	2,704
General Medicine	1,406	607	317	127	190	45	2,692
Pain Management	356	451	354	203	823	460	2,647
Plastic Surgery	337	260	197	126	422	449	1,791
Oral Surgery	357	297	201	86	224	96	1,261
Dermatology	356	242	172	54	53	65	942
Paediatric Surgery	104	136	157	80	236	112	825
GP Other	302	191	166	22	16	0	697
Neurology	92	72	66	36	73	0	339
Rheumatology	204	75	10	1	13	18	321
Paediatrics	68	81	39	20	14	1	223
Cardiac Surgery	67	69	58	13	0	0	207
Other	429	251	136	52	150	23	1,041
All Specialties	17,290	14,156	10,458	5,026	14,938	9,615	71,483

Source: DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

¹Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–13

Table 3b: Percentage of patients waiting for inpatient and day case admissions by weeks waiting and specialty – 31st March 2017¹

Specialty	Percentage of Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting					
	0 - 6	>6 - 13	>13 - 21	>21 - 26	>26-52	>52
General Surgery	29.5%	20.9%	12.8%	6.0%	17.0%	13.8%
T & O Surgery	6.5%	14.1%	14.0%	8.3%	31.9%	25.1%
Urology	17.7%	18.0%	14.4%	6.6%	23.8%	19.5%
ENT	23.3%	25.2%	19.9%	10.2%	18.8%	2.6%
Ophthalmology	30.6%	18.9%	10.9%	5.9%	18.2%	15.5%
Gynaecology	23.3%	19.1%	15.5%	7.5%	24.5%	10.0%
Gastroenterology	44.3%	27.2%	18.0%	3.9%	6.0%	0.6%
General Medicine	27.8%	21.9%	18.0%	8.9%	21.3%	2.1%
Pain Management	52.2%	22.5%	11.8%	4.7%	7.1%	1.7%
Cardiology	13.4%	17.0%	13.4%	7.7%	31.1%	17.4%
Plastic Surgery	18.8%	14.5%	11.0%	7.0%	23.6%	25.1%
Oral Surgery	28.3%	23.6%	15.9%	6.8%	17.8%	7.6%
Dermatology	37.8%	25.7%	18.3%	5.7%	5.6%	6.9%
Paediatric Surgery	12.6%	16.5%	19.0%	9.7%	28.6%	13.6%
GP Other	43.3%	27.4%	23.8%	3.2%	2.3%	0.0%
Neurology	27.1%	21.2%	19.5%	10.6%	21.5%	0.0%
Rheumatology	63.6%	23.4%	3.1%	0.3%	4.0%	5.6%
Cardiac Surgery	30.5%	36.3%	17.5%	9.0%	6.3%	0.4%
Paediatrics	32.4%	33.3%	28.0%	6.3%	0.0%	0.0%
Other	41.2%	24.1%	13.1%	5.0%	14.4%	2.2%
All Specialties	24.2%	19.8%	14.6%	7.0%	20.9%	13.5%

Source: DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

¹Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–13

Table 4: Number of completed inpatient and day case waits commissioned by the Health Service: QE March 2015 - QE March 2017²

Quarter Ending	Number of Completed Inpatient and Day Case Waits		
	Within Health Service Hospitals	Independent Sector*	Total Commissioned by Health Service
QE Dec 2014	45,018	2,826	47,844
QE Mar 2015	42,796	1,240	44,036
QE June 2015	43,606	3,121	46,727
QE Sept 2015	42,864	1,130	43,994
QE Dec 2015	45,700	1,081	46,781
QE Mar 2016	44,109	4,883	48,992
QE June 2016 ^P	45,785	4,366	50,151
QE Sept 2016 ^P	42,992	4,057	47,049
QE Dec 2016 ^P	45,880	2,576	48,456
QE Mar 2017 ^P	44,660	3,718	48,378

Source: Hospital Inpatient System & IS1 Part 2 Return

^PData are currently provisional

* Not National Statistics

²Refer to Explanatory Notes 1, 4 &14-16

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, definitions, as well as notes on how to use the data contained within this statistical release. This booklet is available to view or download from the following link: <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/northern-ireland-waiting-time-statistics-inpatient-waiting-times-march-2017>.

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>.

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. 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 2017, 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.

11. 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.

12. 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.

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

14. 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.

15. 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)

16. The numbers of patients that 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.

17. 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, was £1,670.

18. Figures relating to inpatient and day case waiting times for the quarter ending 30th June 2017 will be released on Thursday 31st August 2017.

Further information on Inpatient and Day Case Waiting Times in Northern Ireland is available from:

Jennifer Finlay

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:

Internet address: <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/type/statisticalreports>