

INFORMATION
ANALYSIS
DIRECTORATE



Northern Ireland Waiting Time Statistics: Inpatient Waiting Times Quarter Ending March 2016

Reader Information

Purpose	This publication presents information on waiting times for inpatient treatment in Northern Ireland at 31 st March 2016. It details information on the number of patients waiting, and length of time waiting, for Ordinary and Day Case admissions at Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts in Northern Ireland. This information reports on performance against the 2015/16 Ministerial waiting time target which states that, from April 2015, at least 65% of inpatients and day cases should be treated within 13 weeks; and no patient waiting longer than 26 weeks for treatment. Data are presented by HSC Trust, specialty and time band. The number of completed inpatient waits is also presented in this release by HSC Trust.
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Statistical Quality	Information contained in this release that has been sourced from HSC Trusts has been validated by the Department prior to release. Information on inpatient activity in the Independent Sector has been sourced from the HSC Board. This information is not National Statistics and has not been validated by the Department.
Target audience	Department of Health (DoH), Chief Executives of the HSC Board and Trusts in Northern Ireland, health care professionals, academics, and Health & Social Care stakeholders, the media and general public.
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Key Points

- The total number of patients waiting to be admitted to hospitals in Northern Ireland at 31st March 2016 was 67,898, 1.3% (872) more than the 31st December 2015, and 17.2% (9,964) more than at 31st March 2015 (Figure 1 & Table 1).
- Just under one third (29.7%, 20,144) of those waiting for admission to hospital at the end of March 2016 were waiting for ordinary admission, with the remaining 70.3% (47,754) waiting for day case admission (Figure 1 & Table 1).
- At the end of March 2016, 48.1% (32,676) of patients were waiting more than 13 weeks for inpatient admission, compared with 52.4% (35,113) at the end of December 2015 and 48.0% (27,780) at the end of March 2015 (Figure 5 & Tables 3a & 3b).
- There were 17,601 patients waiting longer than 26 weeks at the 31st March 2016, 17.8% (3,812) less than at 31st December 2015, but 29.2% (3,979) more than at 31st March 2015 (Figure 7 & Table 4).
- The number of HSC patients admitted for inpatient treatment, within HSC hospitals and the Independent Sector was 48,749, an increase of 4.2% (1,983) on the previous quarter, and an increase of 10.7% (4,713) on the quarter ending March 2015 (Figure 11 & Table 5).

Contents

Hospital Information Branch	5
List of Figures	6
List of Tables	7
Technical Notes	8
Introduction	11
Inpatient Admissions	11
Waiting Times for Inpatient Admission	11
Completed Inpatient Waits	18
Completed waits in Health Service Hospitals	18
Completed waits in the Independent Sector	18
Completed waits commissioned by the Health Service	19
Tables	20
Appendix 1: Explanatory Notes	25
Appendix 2: Data in the Publication	27

Hospital Information Branch (HIB)

Hospital Information Branch is responsible for the collection, quality assurance, analysis and publication of timely and accurate information derived from a wide range of statistical information returns supplied by the Health & Social Care (HSC) Trusts and the HSC Board. Statistical information is collected routinely from a variety of electronic patient level administrative systems and pre-defined EXCEL survey return templates.

The Branch aims to present information in a meaningful way and provide advice on its uses to customers in the HSC Committee, Professional Advisory Groups, policy branches within the DoH, other Health organisations, academia, private sector organisations, charity/voluntary organisations as well as the general public. The statistical information collected is used to contribute to major exercises such as reporting on the performance of the HSC system, other comparative performance exercises, target setting and monitoring, development of service frameworks as well as policy formulation and evaluation. In addition, the information is used in response to a significantly high volume of Parliamentary / Assembly questions and ad-hoc queries each year.

Information is disseminated through a number of key statistical publications, including: Inpatient Activity, Outpatient Activity, Emergency Care, Mental Health & Learning Disability and Waiting Time Statistics (Inpatient, Outpatient, Diagnostics and Cancer). A detailed list of these publications is available from:

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

List of Figures

Figure 1:	Total number of patients waiting: Quarterly trends 31 st March 2012 – 31 st March 2016.....	12
Figure 2:	Total number of patients waiting by specialty at 31 st March 2016.....	12
Figure 3:	Total number of patients waiting by HSC Trust at 31 st March 2016	13
Figure 4:	HSC Trust performance against the 2015/16 waiting time target for inpatient admission.....	14
Figure 5:	Proportion of patients waiting over 13 weeks: Quarterly trends 31 st March 2012 – 31 st March 2016.....	15
Figure 6:	Proportion of patients waiting over 13 weeks by HSC Trust at 31 st March 2016.....	15
Figure 7:	Number of patients waiting longer than 26 weeks: Quarterly trends 31 st March 2012 – 31 st March 2016	16
Figure 8:	Patients waiting longer than 26 weeks by specialty at 31 st March 2016.....	16
Figure 9:	Proportion of patients waiting longer than 26 weeks by HSC Trust at 31 st March 2016.....	17
Figure 10:	Total number of completed waits in Health Service Hospitals: Quarterly trends QE June 2010 – QE March 2016.....	18
Figure 11:	Completed inpatient waits including Independent Sector activity: Quarterly trends QE March 2015 – QE March 2016.....	19

List of Tables

Table 1:	Quarterly inpatient waiting lists – 31 st March 2016.....	20
Table 2a:	Number of patients waiting for inpatient admission by weeks waiting and specialty – 31 st March 2016.....	20
Table 2b:	Percentage of patients waiting for inpatient admission by weeks waiting and specialty – 31 st March 2016.....	21
Table 3a:	Number of patients waiting for inpatient admission by HSC Trust and weeks waiting – 31 st March 2016.....	22
Table 3b:	Percentage of patients waiting for inpatient admission by HSC Trust and weeks waiting – 31 st March 2016.....	22
Table 4 :	Patients waiting longer than 26 weeks for inpatient admission – 31 st March 2016.....	22
Table 5:	Completed inpatient waits: QE June 2011 - QE March 2016.....	23
Table 6:	Completed inpatient waits by HSC Trust including Independent Sector activity – QE March 2016.....	24
Table 7:	Completed inpatient waits by HSC Trust including Independent Sector activity: QE March 2015 - QE March 2016.....	24

Technical Notes

This statistics release is part of a quarterly data series presenting information on waiting times for inpatient treatment at HSC Trusts in Northern Ireland.

Data Collection

The information presented in this bulletin derives from the DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset, the Hospital Inpatient System and the Departmental IS1 Part 2 statistical return provided by the HSC Board.

Data providers are supplied with technical guidance documents outlining the methodologies that should be used in the collection, reporting and validation of each of these data returns. These documents can be accessed at the following link:

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

Rounding

Percentages have been rounded to one decimal place and as a consequence some percentages may not sum to 100.

On occasion, the percentage of patients waiting within overall totals, or percentage changes within quarters, are presented. In some instances these percentages are less than 0.1% or more than 99.9%. Users should be aware that, in such instances the percentage is rounded to zero or 100%.

Data Quality

All waiting time information presented in this bulletin has been validated and quality assured by HSC Trusts prior to publication. HIB performs a series of checks to verify that downloaded information is consistent over time, both within and across specialties. Trend analyses are used to monitor annual variations and emerging trends. Queries arising from validation checks are presented to HSC Trusts for clarification and, if required, data may be amended.

Finally, prior to the publication of this information, the data are presented to HSC Trusts for final sign-off.

Information on completed waits within the Independent Sector is provided by the HSC Board. HSC Trusts are provided with guidance, detailing how they should record details of patients transferred to the Independent Sector for treatment, on their Patient Administration System. Following treatment, the Independent Sector provider informs the transferring HSC Trust who records the patient's inpatient wait as being complete. These records are then validated against financial invoices received by the HSC Trust from the Independent Sector provider for each transferred patient. HSC Trusts then submit these data to the HSC Board who forward the information to Hospital Information Branch for inclusion in this publication. These data are not National Statistics; however, they have been published to provide users with a comprehensive view of completed inpatient waits during each quarter.

Main Uses of Data

Data contained in this release are published primarily to provide an indication of HSC performance. They allow the general public and the DoH Health Committee to assess the performance of the DoH, the HSC Board and HSC Trusts in providing timely access to hospital services in Northern Ireland. These data also provide policy makers with the necessary information to formulate and evaluate health services and are helpful in assessing the effectiveness of resource allocation in

providing services that are fully responsive to patients needs. Additionally, hospital waiting time information is used to inform the media, special interest groups and academics, and by the DoH to respond to parliamentary/assembly questions. An additional aim of this publication is to make waiting time information publicly available to those people using health services in Northern Ireland. Further advice on uses for these data is outlined in Appendix 2 of this publication.

Inpatient Activity in Northern Ireland

When using waiting time statistics, it is useful to have an understanding of inpatient activity across HSC Trusts and over time. This is available at the following link:

<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/articles/inpatient-and-day-case-activity>

Waiting Time Information Elsewhere in the United Kingdom

While it is our intention to direct users to waiting time information elsewhere in the UK, users should be aware that hospital waiting times in other administrations are not always measured in a comparable manner to those in Northern Ireland. Details of the hospital waiting times published elsewhere in the UK can be found as detailed below.

England

<http://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/rtt-waiting-times/>

Scotland

<http://www.isdscotland.org/Health-Topics/Waiting-Times/>

Wales

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/theme/health/nhsperformance/waiting-times/?lang=en>

Data on the length of time waited for a selection of inpatient procedures, that are comparable across the UK, are available at the link below (see Chapter 6 Table 6.6).

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/publications/re-reference-tables.html?edition=tcm%3A77-213417>

A National Statistics Publication

National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value.

All official statistics should comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They are awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the Authority's regulatory arm. The Authority considers whether the statistics meet the highest standards of Code compliance, including the value they add to public decisions and debate.

It is the Department's responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected of National Statistics. If we become concerned about whether these statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, we will discuss any concerns with the Authority promptly. National Statistics status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when standards are restored.

Further information on the Code of Practice for National Statistics is available at:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/>.

A list of those who received 24-hour pre-release access to this publication is available at:

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

Contact Information

As we want to engage with users of our statistics, we invite you to feedback your comments on this publication to:

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Introduction

The information detailed in this release is published primarily to provide an indication of HSC Trust performance. It allows the general public and the DoH Health Committee to assess the performance of the DoH, the HSC Board and HSC Trusts in providing timely access to hospital services in Northern Ireland.

Data contained in this publication relates to the waiting times for admission for inpatient treatment at HSC Trusts in Northern Ireland at 31st March 2016; and Health Service commissioned activity for inpatient treatment, either in HSC hospitals or the Independent Sector, during the quarter ending (QE) March 2016.

Inpatient Admission

Inpatient admissions include both patients waiting for ordinary admission to hospital and patients waiting for day case treatment.

Waiting Times for Inpatient Admission

Total patients waiting¹

At 31st March 2016, a total of 67,898 people were waiting for admission to hospital in Northern Ireland, 1.3% (872) more than at 31st December 2015 (67,026) and 17.2% (9,964) more than at 31st March 2015 (57,934) (Figure 1 & Table 1).

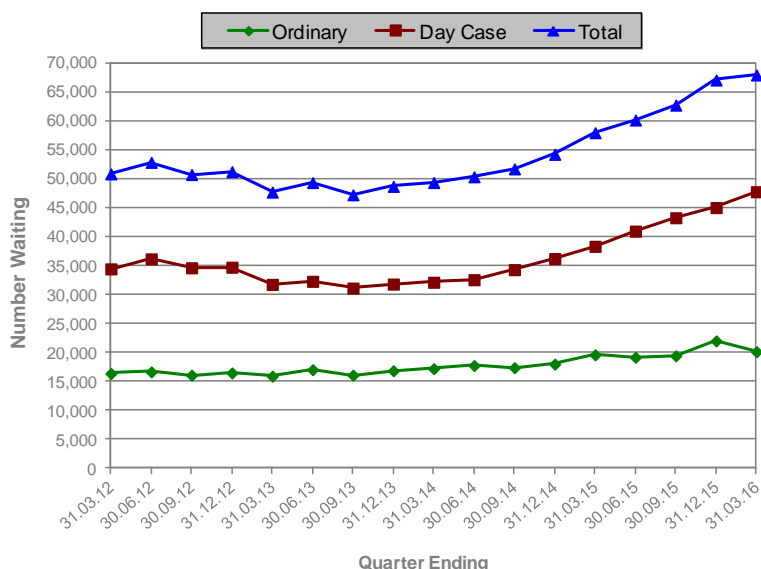
Just under one third (29.7%, 20,144) of those on the inpatient waiting list at the end of March 2016 were waiting for ordinary admissions, with the remaining 70.3% (47,754) waiting for day case admissions (Figure 1 & Table 1).

Compared to the 31st December 2015, the number waiting for ordinary admission decreased by 1,866 (8.5%) whilst the number waiting for day case admission increased by 2,738 (6.1%) (Figure 1 & Table 1).

Compared to 31st March 2015, the number waiting for ordinary admission increased by 539 (2.7%) and the number waiting for day case admission increased by 9,425 (24.6%) (Figure 1 & Table 1).

¹Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-8

Figure 1: Total number of patients waiting: Quarterly trends 31st March 2012 – 31st March 2016

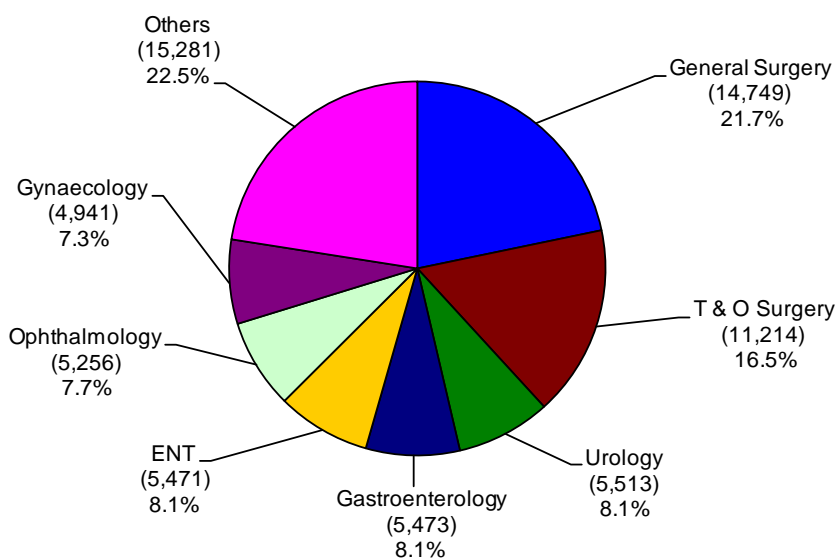


The total number waiting dropped from 56,470 in December 2011 until the end of September 2013 (47,223) since then it has shown a steady increase throughout 2013/14, 2014/15 and into 2015/16. The same pattern is observed for day case admissions and, to a lesser extent, ordinary admissions (Figure 1).

Inpatients Waiting by Specialty¹

Over three quarters (77.5%, 52,617) of the 67,898 patients waiting for inpatient treatment were within seven specialties: General Surgery; Trauma and Orthopaedic (T & O) Surgery; Urology; Gastroenterology; Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT); Ophthalmology and Gynaecology (Figure 2 & Table 2a).

Figure 2: Total number of patients waiting by specialty at 31st March 2016

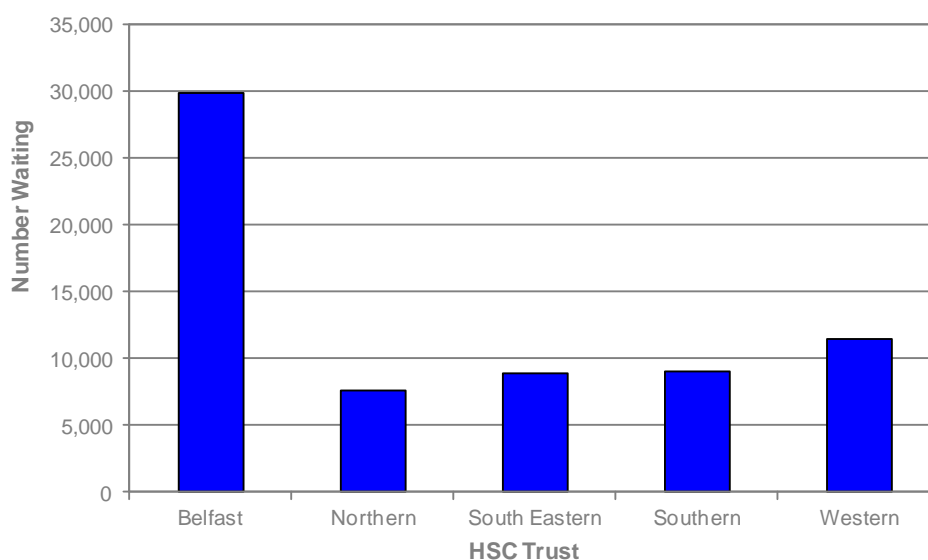


¹Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-8

Total patients waiting by HSC Trust¹

Over two fifths (42.8%, 29,051) of those waiting for admission were in the Belfast HSC Trust, 17.4% (11,810) in the Western HSC Trust, 13.6% (9,243) in the South Eastern HSC Trust, 13.4% (9,106) in the Northern HSC Trust and 12.8% (8,688) in the Southern HSC Trust (Figure 3 & Table 3a).

Figure 3: Total number of patients waiting by HSC Trust at 31st March 2016



Readers should note that many inpatient services are not provided at each of the five HSC Trusts in 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. It is therefore not possible to accurately calculate the number of patients waiting per head of the population in any specific HSC 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.

¹Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-8

Performance against 2015/16 waiting time target²

The Ministerial target for inpatient waiting times states that, from April 2015, at least 65% of inpatients and daycases should be treated within 13 weeks, and no patient should wait longer than 26 weeks for treatment.

Figure 4: Performance against the inpatient waiting time target by HSC Trust

HSC Trust	Target Achieved?	
	At least 65% of patients should wait no longer than 13 weeks	No patient waiting longer than 26 weeks
Belfast	No	No
Northern	Yes	No
South Eastern	No	No
Southern	No	No
Western	No	No
Northern Ireland	No	No

At the end of March 2016, Northern Ireland as a whole did not meet the first component of the inpatient waiting time target, that at least 65% of patients should wait no longer than 13 weeks for inpatient or day case treatment. It should however be noted that the 13 week component was achieved by Northern HSC Trust (Figure 4 & 6 & Tables 3a & 3b).

The second component of the target indicates that no patient should wait longer than 26 weeks. This was not met by any HSC Trust (Figure 4 & 9 & Tables 3a & 3b).

Proportion of patients waiting over 13 weeks

Achievement of the 13 week target requires less than 35% of patients to be waiting over 13 weeks for inpatient treatment. At the end of March 2016, 48.1% (32,676) of patients were waiting more than 13 weeks for inpatient admission, compared with 52.4% (35,113) at the end of December 2015 and 48.0% (27,780) at the end of March 2015 (Figure 5 and Table 3b).

²Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-10

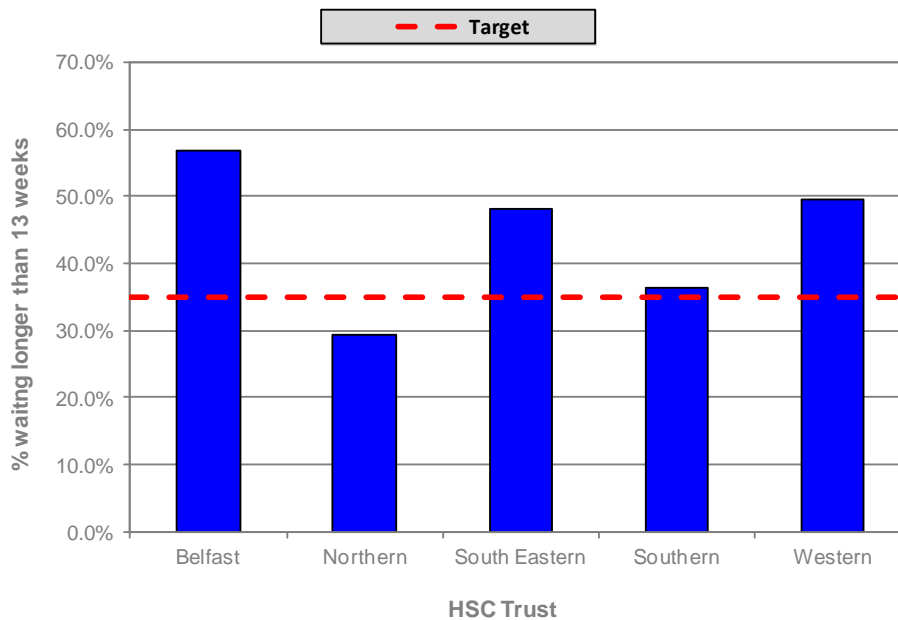
Figure 5: Proportion of patients waiting over 13 weeks: Quarterly trends 31st March 2012 – 31st March 2016



Proportion of patients waiting over 13 weeks by HSC Trust²

At 31st March 2016, almost three fifths (56.9%) of patients were waiting longer than 13 weeks in the Belfast HSC Trust, 49.6% in the Western HSC Trust, 48.1% in the South Eastern HSC Trust, 36.3% in the Southern HSC Trust and 29.5% in the Northern HSC Trust (Figure 6 & Table 3b).

Figure 6: Proportion of patients waiting over 13 weeks by HSC Trust at 31st March 2016



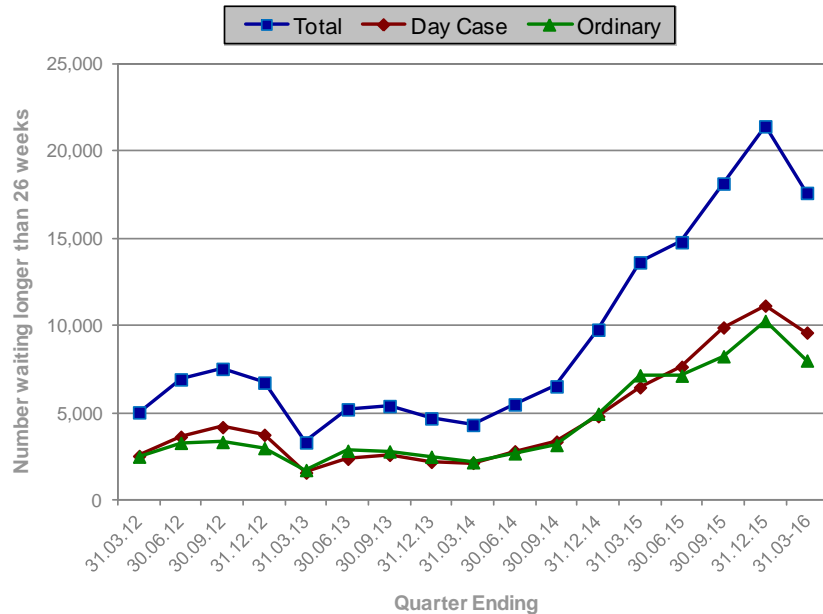
²Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-10

Patients waiting longer than 26 weeks²

At 31st March 2016, just over a quarter (25.9%, 17,601) of patients were waiting more than 26 weeks for inpatient treatment; 8,001 for an ordinary admission and 9,600 for day case procedures (Figure 7 & Table 4).

At the end of March 2016, the number of patients waiting more than 26 weeks was 17.8% (3,812) less than at the end of December 2015 (21,413) but 29.2% (3,979) more than at the end of March 2015 (13,622).

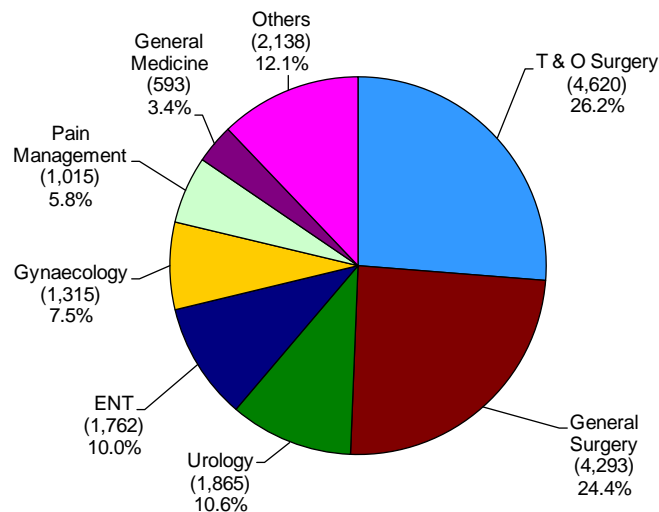
Figure 7: Number of patients waiting longer than 26 weeks: Quarterly trends 31st March 2012 – 31st March 2016



Patients waiting longer than 26 weeks by Specialty²

Almost nine in ten (87.9%, 15,463) patients waiting more than 26 weeks at 31st March 2016 were within the seven specialties: T&O Surgery; General Surgery; Urology; ENT; Gynaecology; Pain Management and General Medicine (Figure 8 & Table 2a).

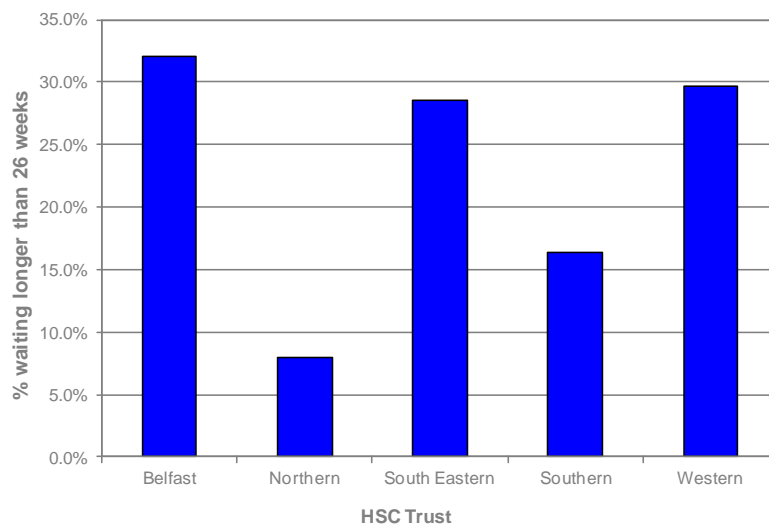
Figure 8: Patients waiting longer than 26 weeks by specialty at 31st March 2016



Proportion of patients waiting longer than 26 weeks by HSC Trust²

At 31st March 2016, almost a third (32.0%, 9,303) of patients were waiting longer than 26 weeks at in the Belfast HSC Trust, 29.7% (3,509) in the Western HSC Trust, 28.5% (2,634) in the South Eastern HSC Trust, 16.4% (1,427) in the Southern HSC Trust and 8.0% (728) in the Northern HSC Trust (Figure 9 & Table 3b).

Figure 9: Proportion of patients waiting longer than 26 weeks by HSC Trust at 31st March 2016



²Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-10

Completed Inpatient Waits³

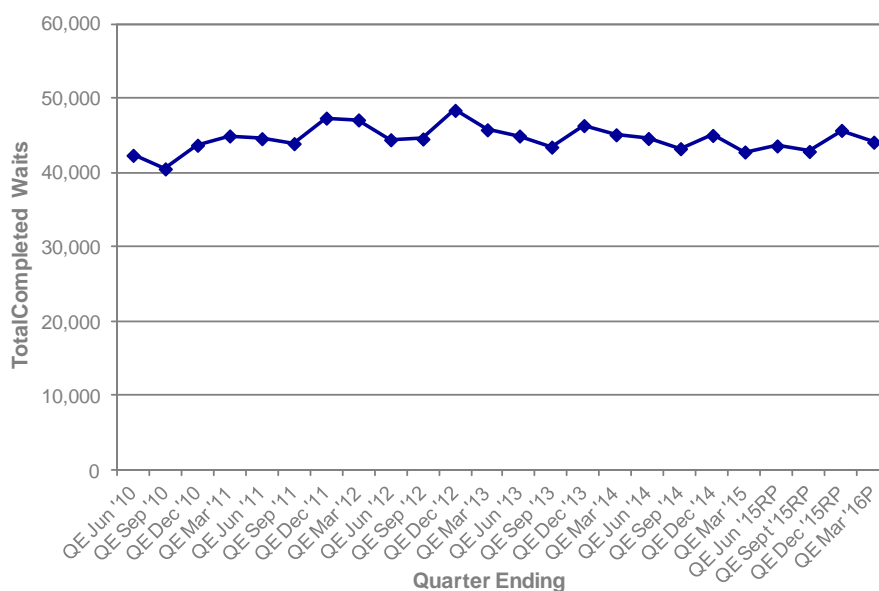
The total number of completed waits refers to the total number of elective admissions for inpatient treatment (excluding those admitted for a planned treatment) each quarter.

Admissions for inpatient treatment in Northern Ireland commissioned by the Health Service can take place in either HSC Hospitals or at an Independent Sector provider.

Completed waits in Health Service Hospitals³

A total of 44,112 patients were admitted to Health Service hospitals in Northern Ireland during the quarter ending March 2016, 3.5% (1,588) less than the quarter ending December 2015 (45,700) but 3.1% (1,316) more than the quarter ending March 2015 (42,796) (Table 5).

**Figure 10: Total number of completed waits in Health Service Hospitals: Quarterly trends
QE June 2010 – QE March 2016**



^P Data are currently provisional

^R Data have been revised

Completed Waits in the Independent Sector³

The number of patients receiving inpatient treatment within the Independent Sector has been provided by the Health and Social Care Board, split by commissioning HSC Trust. These data are not National Statistics; however, they have been published to provide users with a comprehensive view of completed inpatient waits during each quarter.

During the quarter ending March 2016, 4,637 patients received inpatient treatment commissioned by the Health Service, within the Independent Sector. This is over three times more than the quarter ending December 2015 (1,066) and almost three times more than the same quarter in the previous year (1,240) (Table 5). The Health and Social Care Board took the decision from July 2014 to halt the transfer of additional patients to the Independent Sector, and from October 2014 to place a hold on the treatment of patients already transferred and assessed as requiring non-urgent treatment, except for those awaiting diagnostics tests and patients awaiting treatment in cardiac surgery and scoliosis (complex spinal surgery). This decision was made as a result of the DHSSPS financial

³Refer to Explanatory Notes 11-13

position in 2014/15. The use of the Independent sector recommenced in April 2015 to treat those patients whose referral had been paused. Additional IS capacity in the areas of Cardiac Surgery, Complex Spinal Surgery and Diagnosis also continued, but there was no activity commissioned outside these areas due to financial budget constraints until the final quarter of 2015/16 when additional funds became available in year through the November monitoring round.

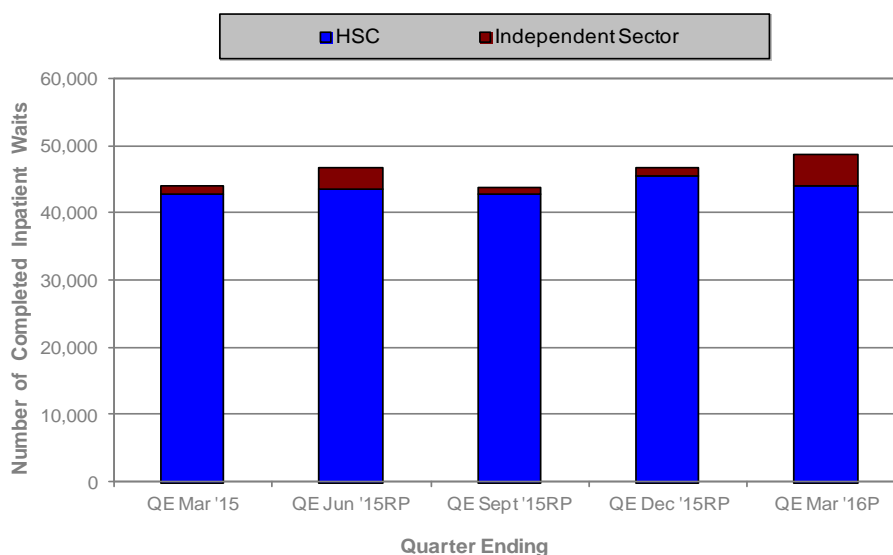
Completed waits commissioned by the Health Service³

The total number of admissions for inpatient treatment commissioned by the Health Service is the number of patients who were admitted to either a Health Service hospital, or within the Independent Sector, commissioned by the Health Service.

When the number of completed inpatient waits within the Independent Sector during the quarter ending March 2016 (44,112) is combined with that for inpatients treated in Health Service hospitals during the same period (4,637), it is estimated that approximately 48,749 inpatients received treatment in Northern Ireland commissioned by the Health Service (Tables 5 & 6). There has been a 4.2% (1,983) increase in the number of completed inpatient waits commissioned by the Health Service between the quarter ending December 2015 (46,766) and quarter ending March 2016 (48,749) and an increase of 10.7% (4,713) compared to quarter ending March 2015 (44,036) (Figure 11 & Table 7).

The overall increase of 1,983 in completed inpatient waits, between the quarter ending December 2015 and the quarter ending March 2016, was made up of a decrease of 1,588 in completed inpatient waits within the HSC, combined with an increase of 3,571 in the number of completed inpatient waits within the Independent Sector (Figure 11 & Table 5).

Figure 11: Completed inpatient waits including Independent Sector activity: Quarterly trends QE March 2015 – QE March 2016^P



^P Data are currently provisional

^R Data have been revised

Over one third (34.5%, 16,802) of all completed waits for the quarter ending March 2016 occurred in the Belfast HSC Trust, 17.9% (8,713) in the Western HSC Trust, 17.5% (8,508) in the Southern HSC Trust, 15.4% (7,483) in the Southern Eastern HSC Trust and 14.9% (7,243) in the Northern HSC Trust (Table 6).

³Refer to Explanatory Notes 11-13

Inpatient Admissions

Table 1: Quarterly inpatient waiting lists – 31st March 2016¹

Waiting for:	Number of patients waiting: 31st March 2016	Change compared with end of previous quarter	Change compared with end same quarter – previous year
Ordinary Admissions	20,144	-1,866	+539
Day Case Admissions	47,754	+2738	+9,425
Total Waiting	67,898	+872	+9,964

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

¹Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–8

Table 2a: Number of patients waiting for inpatient admission by weeks waiting and specialty – 31st March 2016²

Specialty	Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting					Total Number of Patients Awaiting Admission
	0 - 6	>6 - 13	>13 - 21	>21 - 26	>26	
General Surgery	4,302	3,430	1,917	807	4,293	14,749
T & O Surgery	1,188	2,236	2,031	1,139	4,620	11,214
Urology	1,639	963	735	311	1,865	5,513
Gastroenterology	2,049	1,951	923	210	340	5,473
ENT	1,243	1,328	791	347	1,762	5,471
Ophthalmology	1,660	1,813	1,007	349	427	5,256
Gynaecology	1,115	1,297	798	416	1,315	4,941
Pain Management	541	705	526	270	1,015	3,057
General Medicine	1,419	583	155	114	593	2,864
Cardiology	647	658	520	186	221	2,232
Plastic Surgery	349	430	249	141	561	1,730
Oral Surgery	404	347	144	69	152	1,116
Dermatology	349	280	128	12	88	857
Paediatric Surgery	130	153	125	85	237	730
GP Other	268	263	117	14	6	668
Neurology	117	104	88	24	3	336
Rheumatology	144	93	16	1	4	258
Cardiac Surgery	72	75	63	18	5	233
Neurosurgery	90	81	46	9	3	229
Other	395	311	125	49	91	971
All Specialties	18,121	17,101	10,504	4,571	17,601	67,898

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

²Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–10

Table 2b: Percentage of patients waiting for inpatient admission by weeks waiting and specialty – 31st March 2016²

Specialty	Percentage of Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting				
	0 - 6	>6 - 13	>13 - 21	>21 - 26	>26
General Surgery	29.2%	23.3%	13.0%	5.5%	29.1%
T & O Surgery	10.6%	19.9%	18.1%	10.2%	41.2%
Urology	29.7%	17.5%	13.3%	5.6%	33.8%
Gastroenterology	37.4%	35.6%	16.9%	3.8%	6.2%
ENT	22.7%	24.3%	14.5%	6.3%	32.2%
Ophthalmology	31.6%	34.5%	19.2%	6.6%	8.1%
Gynaecology	22.6%	26.2%	16.2%	8.4%	26.6%
Pain Management	17.7%	23.1%	17.2%	8.8%	33.2%
General Medicine	49.5%	20.4%	5.4%	4.0%	20.7%
Cardiology	29.0%	29.5%	23.3%	8.3%	9.9%
Plastic Surgery	20.2%	24.9%	14.4%	8.2%	32.4%
Oral Surgery	36.2%	31.1%	12.9%	6.2%	13.6%
Dermatology	40.7%	32.7%	14.9%	1.4%	10.3%
Paediatric Surgery	17.8%	21.0%	17.1%	11.6%	32.5%
GP Other	40.1%	39.4%	17.5%	2.1%	0.9%
Neurology	34.8%	31.0%	26.2%	7.1%	0.9%
Rheumatology	55.8%	36.0%	6.2%	0.4%	1.6%
Cardiac Surgery	30.9%	32.2%	27.0%	7.7%	2.1%
Neurosurgery	39.3%	35.4%	20.1%	3.9%	1.3%
Other	40.7%	32.0%	12.9%	5.0%	9.4%
All Specialties	26.7%	25.2%	15.5%	6.7%	25.9%

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

²Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–10

Table 3a: Number of patients waiting for inpatient admission by HSC Trust and weeks waiting – 31st March 2016²

HSC Trust	Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting					Total Number of Patients Waiting
	0 - 6	>6 - 13	>13 - 21	>21 - 26	>26	
Belfast	6,155	6,354	4,818	2,421	9,303	29,051
Northern	3,277	3,145	1,567	389	728	9,106
South Eastern	2,516	2,284	1,227	582	2,634	9,243
Southern	2,947	2,587	1,252	475	1,427	8,688
Western	3,226	2,731	1,640	704	3,509	11,810
Total	18,121	17,101	10,504	4,571	17,601	67,898

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

²Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–10

Table 3b: Percentage of patients waiting for inpatient admission by HSC Trust and weeks waiting – 31st March 2016²

HSC Trust	Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting				
	0 - 6	>6 - 13	>13 - 21	>21 - 26	>26
Belfast	21.2%	21.9%	16.6%	8.3%	32.0%
Northern	36.0%	34.5%	17.2%	4.3%	8.0%
South Eastern	27.2%	24.7%	13.3%	6.3%	28.5%
Southern	33.9%	29.8%	14.4%	5.5%	16.4%
Western	27.3%	23.1%	13.9%	6.0%	29.7%
Total	26.7%	25.2%	15.5%	6.7%	25.9%

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

²Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–10

Table 4: Patients waiting longer than 26 weeks for inpatient admission– 31st March 2016²

Waiting for:	Number of patients waiting: 31st March 2016	Change compared with end of previous quarter	Change compared with end same quarter - previous year
Ordinary Admissions	8,001	-2,268	+844
Day Case Admissions	9,600	-1,544	+3,135
Total Waiting	17,601	-3,812	+3,979

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

²Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–10

Completed Inpatient Waits

Table 5: Completed inpatient waits: QE June 2011 - QE March 2016³

Quarter	Number of Completed Inpatient Waits within Health Service Hospitals	Number of Completed Inpatient Waits in Independent Sector*	Total Number of Completed Inpatient Waits Commissioned by Health Service
A - J 2011	44,583	2,804	47,387
J - S 2011	43,914	1,099	45,013
O - D 2011	47,347	3,795	51,142
J - M 2012	47,106	8,207	55,313
A - M 2011/12	182,950	15,905	198,855
A - J 2012	44,439	5,150	49,589
J - S 2012	44,544	7,595	52,139
O - D 2012	48,390	6,259	54,649
J - M 2013	45,779	8,274	54,053
A - M 2012/13	183,152	27,278	210,430
A - J 2013	44,941	6,685	51,626
J - S 2013	43,451	8,467	51,918
O - D 2013	46,343	6,486	52,829
J - M 2014	45,107	5,272	50,379
A - M 2013/14	179,842	26,910	206,752
A - J 2014	44,609	6,370	50,979
J - S 2014	43,240	5,927	49,167
O - D 2014	45,018	2,826	47,844
J - M 2015	42,796	1,240	44,036
A - M 2014/15	175,663	16,363	192,026
A - J 2015 ^{RP}	43,608	3,113	46,721
J - S 2015 ^{RP}	42,866	1,126	43,992
O - D 2015 ^{RP}	45,700	1,066	46,766
J - M 2016 ^P	44,112	4,637	48,749
A - M 2015/16^P	176,286	9,942	186,228

Source: Hospital Inpatient System & Departmental Return IS1 Part 2

^RData have been revised

^PData are currently provisional

*Not National Statistics

³Refer to Explanatory Notes 11 – 13

Table 6: Completed inpatient waits by HSC Trust including Independent Sector activity – QE March 2016³

HSC Trust	Number of Completed Inpatient Waits within Health Service Hospitals ^P	Number of Completed Inpatient Waits in Independent Sector ^{P*}	Total Number of Completed Inpatient Waits Commissioned by Health Service ^P
Belfast	14,808	1,994	16,802
Northern	6,712	531	7,243
South Eastern	6,653	830	7,483
Southern	8,079	429	8,508
Western	7,860	853	8,713
Total Treated	44,112	4,637	48,749

Source: Hospital Inpatient System & Departmental Return IS1 Part 2

^PData are currently provisional

*Not National Statistics

³Refer to Explanatory Notes 11 - 13

Table 7: Completed inpatient waits by HSC Trust including Independent Sector activity: QE March 2015 - QE March 2016³

HSC Trust	Total Number of Completed Inpatient Waits Commissioned by Health Service				
	QE March 2015	QE June 2015 ^{RP}	QE September 2015 ^{RP}	QE December 2015 ^{RP}	QE March 2016 ^P
Belfast	15,568	17,558	15,813	16,344	16,802
Northern	6,565	6,355	6,566	6,815	7,243
South Eastern	6,442	6,787	6,231	6,784	7,483
Southern	8,166	7,961	8,161	8,979	8,508
Western	7,295	8,060	7,221	7,844	8,713
Total	44,036	46,721	43,992	46,766	48,749

Source: Hospital Inpatient System & Departmental Return IS1 part 2

^RData have been revised

^PData are currently provisional

³Refer to Explanatory Notes 11 - 13

Appendix 1: Explanatory Notes

1. The sources for the data contained in this release are the DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset, Hospital Inpatient System Dataset and the Departmental Return IS1 Part 2. These returns collect information from Health and Social Care Trusts and the Health and Social Care Board on a quarterly basis.
2. 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 waiting times have been published in spreadsheet format (Microsoft Excel), split by HSC Trust, Specialty, Programme of Care and Intended Management of the patient (i.e. Ordinary 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>
3. Trust based information returns (DoH Inpatient Waiting Time Dataset, Hospital Inpatient System Dataset and the Departmental Return IS1) include patients living outside Northern Ireland and privately funded patients waiting for treatment in Health Service hospitals in Northern Ireland.
4. Inpatient waiting list data comprise the number of patients waiting for ordinary admission to hospital and the number of patients waiting for day case treatment.
5. Ordinary admissions 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). (See explanatory note 7). 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 ordinary admission. Day cases are not included.
6. 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 ordinary admission.
7. The waiting list inpatient figures presented include people waiting to be admitted as inpatients either as day cases or ordinary admissions. They do not include:
 - Patients admitted as emergency cases;
 - Outpatients;
 - Patients undergoing a planned programme of treatment e.g. a series of admissions for chemotherapy;
 - 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.
8. Waiting time begins from the date the clinician decided to admit the patient. Patients subsequently offered a date but unable to attend have their waiting times calculated from the most recent date offered. These are known as CNA's (Could Not Attend) and are included in the total number waiting.
9. The Ministerial target, for inpatient waiting times, as set out in the Health and Social Care (Commissioning Plan) Direction states that, from April 2015, at least 65% of patients should wait no longer than 13 weeks for inpatient or day case treatment, and no patient should wait longer than 26 weeks for inpatient or day case treatment.

10. For Tables 2a, 2b, 3a, 3b, 4 and Figures 4 - 9, each inpatient waiting timeband relates to the number of completed weeks a patient has been waiting for inpatient admission. For example, a patient waiting exactly 6 weeks would be included in the 0-6 week timeband 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 timeband. Patients waiting 'more than 13 weeks' includes all patients in the >13 - 21, >21 – 26, >26 timebands. Patients waiting 'more than 26 weeks' includes all patients in the >26 timeband.
11. 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.
12. 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)
13. The numbers of patients that received inpatient treatment, commissioned by the Health Service, in the Independent Sector are provided in Tables 5, 6, 7 and Figures 10 and 11. These figures are provided by the HSC Board. 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 inpatient waits during each quarter.
14. 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.
15. Figures relating to inpatient waiting times for the quarter ending 30th June 2016 will be released on Thursday 25th August 2016.

Appendix 2: Data in the publication

General guidance on using the data

The data contained in the publication are presented on a quarterly basis. While seasonal impact should be minimal, it is advisable that data for the current quarter be compared with both the previous quarter (to gauge the most recent direction of performance), and the same quarter in the previous year (to assess any seasonal impact).

Number of patients waiting for inpatient admission

Description of data

Data on the number of health service patients who are waiting for inpatient admission at a Health and Social Care (HSC) Trust in Northern Ireland. The term 'inpatient' is used to describe all patients admitted to hospital, both ordinary admissions and day case admissions (see explanatory notes 5 and 6 in Appendix 1 for a description of these terms).

Data Provider

Data are sourced directly from the Patient Administration System, via a facility known as the HSC Data Warehouse, at each HSC Trust.

Data Quality Assessment

Data are derived from a single administrative system. Data providers have been given in-depth guidance providing instructions for recording, collection and submission of data. In addition, variance checks are employed as an integral part of the production process with large discrepancies between the current quarter and both the previous quarter, and the corresponding quarter in the previous year, being queried with the data provider.

Guidance on using data

- Number of patients waiting for inpatient admission – this is the number of inpatients who are waiting for inpatient surgery following a 'decision to admit' being taken by their consultant. It does not include patients waiting for a planned procedure, regular day and night attenders, patients currently in hospital, maternity patients and patients who are currently suspended. Data relate to the numbers who have still to be admitted at the end of each quarter and provide users with an indication of demand for HSC inpatient services. It should not be used to estimate the numbers who have been admitted for an inpatient procedure (completed inpatient waits).
- Lengths of time patients are waiting for inpatient admission – this relates to the lengths of time patients have been waiting for inpatient admission at the end of the relevant quarter. These are sometimes referred to as current waiters. Explanatory note 8, in Appendix 1, explains how these waiting times are measured. This information relates to how long patients are waiting for inpatient admission, not the length of time they waited before being admitted, also known as completed waits. Data on the total length of time patients waited for admission, are not collected.
- An assessment of both the total number waiting and the length of time patients are waiting, when compared with equivalent data for previous quarters, allow users to gauge the disparity between demand for inpatient services and the overall capacity for providing these services, both within the HSC and Independent Sector providers.
- Inpatient waiting times by HSC Trust – patients will be waiting for admission to a specific HSC Trust. Patients are reported by the HSC Trusts responsible for the service that will be treating the patient. This is not necessarily the nearest HSC Trust to the patient's residence. Certain clinical services may not be provided at a patient's local HSC Trust, and in the case of more complex procedures, such as cardiac surgery, services are provided at a single regional centre for Northern Ireland. In some cases, the HSC Trust at which the patient is waiting may not be the actual facility at which the procedure will be performed, as a consultant from one HSC Trust may provide a 'visiting' service 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. 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.

- Inpatient waiting times by specialty – a consultant will decide to admit a patient for a specific clinical procedure. Following the decision to admit being taken, the patient will be added to the waiting list for a procedure, usually to be undertaken by the consultant who assessed the patient. Each consultant employed by the HSC Trust will have an allocated specialty of employment, and it will be this specialty against which the patient's waiting time will be reported. These data provide a useful insight into the differences in both demand for certain types of medical procedures, and also the existing capacity available to meet these demands.

Number of patients admitted for an inpatient procedure (completed inpatient waits)

Description of data

Data on the number of health service patients who were admitted for inpatient admission at either a HSC Trust, or who had been transferred by a HSC Trust for treatment by an Independent Sector provider, in Northern Ireland. The term 'inpatient' is used to describe all patients admitted to hospital, both ordinary admissions and day case admission (see explanatory notes 5 and 6 in Appendix 1 for a description of these terms). These data are also known as completed inpatient waits. (See explanatory note 12 for exclusions).

Data Provider

Data on patients treated within HSC Trusts are sourced directly from the Patient Administration System, via a facility known as the HSC Data Warehouse, at each HSC Trust. Data on HSC patients treated by an Independent Sector provider are provided on the Departmental Return IS1 Part 2 by the HSC Board, which is responsible for the regional commissioning of independent sector provision.

Data Quality Assessment

Data are derived from a range of administrative systems. For data on completed inpatient waits within HSC Trusts, data providers have been given in-depth guidance providing instructions for recording, collection and submission of data. In addition, variance checks are employed as an integral part of the production process with large discrepancies between the current quarter and both the previous quarter, and the corresponding quarter in the previous year, being queried with the data provider. HSC Trusts are provided with in-depth guidance, detailing how they should record details of patients transferred to the Independent Sector for assessment, on their Patient Administrative System. Following assessment, the Independent Sector provider informs the transferring HSC Trust who records the patient's inpatient wait as being complete. These records are then validated against financial invoices received by the HSC Trust from the Independent Sector provider for each transferred patient. HSC Trusts then submit these data to the HSC Board. These are not categorised as National Statistics.

Guidance on using data

- Number of HSC patients admitted for an inpatient procedure at a HSC hospital – these data relate to the number of patients who were admitted for an inpatient procedure within the HSC during each quarter and include both ordinary admissions and day case admissions. Health Service patients will be admitted for an inpatient procedure at a HSC hospital, at either a routinely provided inpatient service, or a more irregular inpatient service provided by the HSC Trust, in addition to the routine services. These latter services (sometimes referred to as 'Waiting List Initiatives') are often provided in response to a specific need, such as increases in both the number of patients waiting and lengths of time waiting. Data on the number of HSC patients admitted for

an inpatient procedure at a HSC hospital provide users with a good indication of the capacity available within the HSC in treating inpatients.

- Number of HSC patients admitted for an inpatient procedure with an Independent Sector provider – these data relate to the number of Health Service patients who were admitted for an inpatient procedure provided by the Independent Sector. Independent Sector provision is introduced when the demand for certain types of inpatient service is greater than the capacity within HSC hospitals. When this situation results in increases in both the number of patients waiting and the length of time waiting, patients may be admitted for a procedure undertaken by an Independent Sector provider. The cost of treating these patients is met by the transferring HSC Trust, who retains responsibility for the patients waiting time. Data on the number of HSC patients admitted for an inpatient procedure with an Independent Sector provider, provide users with a good indication of demand for inpatient services within the HSC exceeding available capacity.
- Total number of HSC patients admitted for an inpatient procedure – this relates to the total number of HSC patients admitted for an inpatient procedure irrespective of the location or provider of the treatment. This provides users with an indication of the number of patients who would previously have been on the waiting list but had been treated during the latest quarter. Data on the total number of inpatients admitted allow users to assess the impact that actual admissions during the quarter have had upon the total number of patients waiting for inpatient admission at the end of the quarter.

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

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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/topics/dhssps-statistics-and-research>