

Statistics Release



Department of
**Health, Social Services
and Public Safety**

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AN ROINN

**Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta
agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí**

MÄNNYSTRIE O

**Poustie, Resydènter Heisin
an Fowk Siccar**

28 August 2008

Northern Ireland Cancer Waiting Times – March 2008

This statistics release gives details of the waiting times for patients accessing cancer services at hospitals in Northern Ireland during the month of March 2008.

The data contained within this release reports on the performance of all Health and Social Care Trusts in Northern Ireland, measured against the three Priorities for Action (PfA) targets for 2007/08 relating to waiting times for cancer services in Northern Ireland during March 2008.

Waiting Times for a First Assessment with a Breast Cancer Specialist

Achievement of the 2007/2008 Priorities for Action Target relating to waiting times for a First Assessment with a Breast Cancer Specialist requires that ‘in March 2008, all urgent GP referrals for suspected breast cancer (excluding those that have subsequently been reclassified as routine by the breast cancer specialist) and any routine GP referrals that have subsequently been reclassified as urgent by a breast cancer specialist, must wait no longer than 14 days for an appointment with a breast cancer specialist’.

Table 1 reports the performance of all Health and Social Care Trusts in Northern Ireland towards this target for the month of March 2008.

Table 1: Reporting on the 14 day waiting time target from referral to a first assessment with a breast cancer specialist in Health and Social Care Trusts in Northern Ireland¹

March 2008

	Total number of patients first seen by a breast cancer specialist during March 2008 following an urgent GP referral for suspected breast cancer	Number of patients who waited 14 days or less for a first assessment with a breast cancer specialist during March 2008	Number of patients who waited more than 14 days for a first assessment with a breast cancer specialist during March 2008	Percentage of patients first seen by a breast cancer specialist within 14 days, during March 2008, following an urgent GP referral for suspected breast cancer
Northern Ireland	447	447	0	100.0%

Source: Departmental Return SDR2

¹Refer to Technical Notes – points 1-3.

Waiting Times for Treatment

Achievement of the 2007/2008 Priorities for Action Target relating to waiting times for treatment following a decision to treat requires that ‘for all patients that received their first definitive treatment for cancer in March 2008, at least 98% will have waited no longer than 31 days from the date on which the decision to treat was taken to the date of first definitive treatment’.

Table 2 reports the performance of all Health and Social Care Trusts in Northern Ireland towards this target for the month of March 2008.

Table 2: Reporting on the 31 day target from decision to treat to treatment for all cancers in Health and Social Care Trusts in Northern Ireland²

March 2008

	Total number of patients first treated for cancer during March 2008	Number of patients first treated for cancer during March 2008 within 31 days of a decision to treat being taken	Number of patients first treated for cancer during March 2008 NOT treated within 31 days of a decision to treat being taken	Percentage of patients first treated during March 2008 within 31 days of a decision to treat being taken
Northern Ireland	523	513	10	98.1%

Source: Northern Ireland Cancer Waiting Times Dataset

²Refer to Technical Notes – points 1 & 4-5.

Waiting Times for Treatment following a GP referral for Suspect Cancer

Achievement of the 2007/2008 Priorities for Action Target relating to waiting times for treatment following an urgent GP referral for suspect cancer requires that ‘for all patients that received their first definitive treatment for cancer in March 2008 following an urgent referral by a GP for suspected cancer (including any routine referrals that were subsequently reclassified as urgent by a cancer specialist), at least 75% will have waited no longer than 62 days from the date of their initial GP referral to the first definitive treatment’.

Table 3 reports the performance of all Health and Social Care Trusts in Northern Ireland towards this target for the month of March 2008.

Table 3: Reporting on the 62 day waiting time target from an urgent GP referral for suspect cancer to treatment, for all cancers in Health and Social Care Trusts in Northern Ireland³

March 2008

	Total number of patients treated during March 2008 following an urgent GP referral for suspect cancer	Number of patients treated during March 2008 within 62 days of the receipt of the urgent GP referral for suspect cancer	Number of patients treated during March 2008 but NOT within 62 days of the receipt of the urgent GP referral for suspect cancer	Percentage of patients treated during March 2008 within 62 days of the receipt of an urgent GP referral for suspect cancer
Northern Ireland	146	131	15	89.7%

Source: Northern Ireland Cancer Waiting Times Dataset

³Refer to Technical Notes – points 1 & 6-7.

Technical Notes

1. The sources of data contained in this bulletin are the Departmental Return SDR 2 (Table 1) and the Northern Ireland Cancer Waiting Times Dataset (Tables 2 and 3).
2. Data contained in Table 1 relates to all urgent General Practitioners referrals (excluding those that have been reclassified as routine by the breast specialist) for suspect breast cancer, and routine GP referrals that have subsequently been reclassified as urgent by a breast specialist. Figures also include all patients living outside Northern Ireland and all privately funded patients waiting for treatment in Health and Social Care hospitals. Referrals from sources other than a GP, and routine GP referrals (except for those reclassified as urgent) are excluded.
3. The completed waiting time in Table 1 is measured from the date an initial breast cancer referral is first received by the Provider HSC Trust, and ends on the date that the patient had attended their first outpatient appointment with a breast cancer specialist. Adjustments are made to the completed waiting time in the event of a patient cancelling or failing to attend a first outpatient appointment.
4. Data contained in Table 2 relates to patients who received a first definitive treatment for cancer (having been given an 'International Classification of Diseases 10' diagnosis) during the month of March 2008, irrespective of their source of referral. Data include treatment for all cancers, with the exception of basal cell carcinoma. Figures also include all patients living outside Northern Ireland and all privately funded patients waiting for treatment in Health and Social Care hospitals. Patients that have not been given an ICD 10 diagnosis are excluded.
5. The completed waiting time in Table 2 is measured from the date a decision was taken to treat a patient for cancer and ends on the date that the patient received their first definitive treatment for cancer. Adjustments are made to the completed waiting time in the event of a patient cancelling or self deferring treatment or as a result of suspension for either medical or social reasons.
6. Data contained in Table 3 relates to all patients who received a first definitive treatment for cancer (having been given an ICD 10 diagnosis) during the month of March 2008, following an urgent referral for suspect cancer from a General Practitioner, and routine GP referrals that have subsequently been reclassified as urgent by a cancer specialist. Data relate to urgent GP referrals for all cancers with the exception of basal cell carcinoma. Figures also include all patients living outside Northern Ireland and all privately funded patients waiting for treatment in Health and Social Care hospitals. Referrals from sources other than a GP, routine referrals from a GP and patients who have not been given an ICD 10 diagnosis are excluded.
7. The completed waiting time in Table 3 is measured from the date an initial urgent referral for suspect cancer from a GP is received by the Provider Health and Social Care Trust and ends on the date the patient received their first definitive treatment for cancer. Adjustments are made to the completed waiting time in the event of a patient cancelling or self deferring treatment or as a result of suspension for either medical or social reasons.
8. Data on the waiting times for patients accessing cancer services at hospitals in Northern Ireland will be published on a quarterly basis, for the position during the quarter ending June 2008, and each quarter thereafter. Quarterly data will also be published by Provider Health and Social Care Trust.
9. Data contained within this publication are not governed by National Statistics.

Additional Information

Further information on waiting lists in Northern Ireland is available from:

Office Information Manager
Hospital Information Branch
Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety
Annexe 2
Castle Buildings
Stormont
BT4 3SQ

E-mail: statistics@dhsspsni.gov.uk

Internet address: http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats_research/stats-activity_stats-2/waiting_times.htm