

# Statistics Release



Department of  
**Health, Social Services  
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AN ROINN

**Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta  
agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí**

MÄNNYSTRIE O

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an Fowk Siccar**

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## Northern Ireland Waiting Lists – September 2007

This statistics release gives details of the number of people waiting for inpatient or outpatient treatment at hospitals in Northern Ireland at the end of September 2007, the most recent quarter for which figures are available.

### Inpatients

#### Headline Totals – Table 1

The total number of patients waiting to be admitted to hospitals in Northern Ireland at the end of September 2007 stood at 35,918.

Over the quarter, comparing the end of September 2007 with the end of June 2007 (36,595), the total number waiting has decreased by 677 (-1.8%).

Over the year, comparing the end of September 2007 with the end of September 2006 (40,741), the total number waiting decreased by 4,823 (-11.8%).

**Table 1: Quarterly Inpatient Waiting Lists<sup>1</sup> – September 2007**

Waiting for:	Quarter Ending September 2007	Change compared with end of previous quarter	Change compared with end same quarter – previous year
Ordinary Admissions	11,748	-876	-3,098
Day case Admissions	24,170	+ 199	-1,725
<b>Total Waiting</b>	<b>35,918</b>	<b>-677</b>	<b>-4,823</b>

Source: CHI

<sup>1</sup> Refer to Technical Notes – points 3 - 7.

**Detailed notes and definitions are provided in the Technical Notes.**



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## Numbers Waiting for Ordinary Admission and Day Case Treatment

People on the inpatient waiting list in Northern Ireland can be waiting for admission to hospital as day cases or as ordinary admissions.

Of the 35,918 people waiting for admission to hospital at the end of September 2007, 11,748 (32.7%) were waiting for ordinary admission and 24,170 (67.3%) were waiting for day case admission (Table 1).

Since the end of June 2007, the number of cases waiting for ordinary admission has decreased by 876 (-6.9%) and the number waiting for day case admission has increased by 199 (+0.8%).

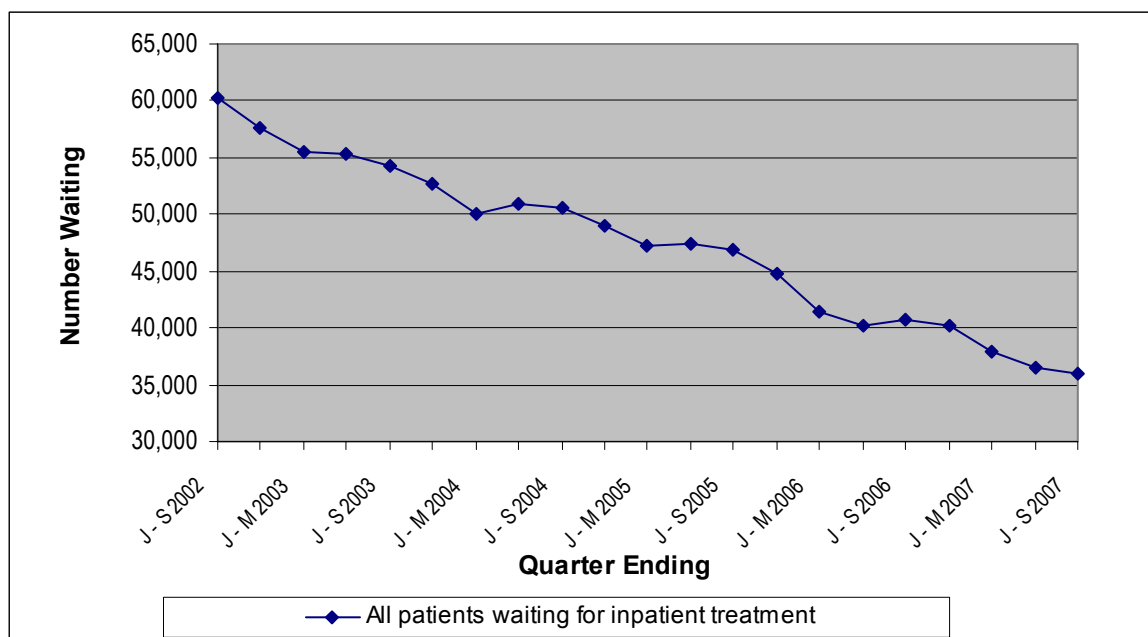
In comparison with September 2006, the number of cases waiting for ordinary admission has decreased by 3,098 (-20.9%) and the number waiting for day case admission has decreased by 1,725 (-6.7%).

The end of September 2007 total of 35,918 patients on the inpatient waiting list represents a decrease of 24,272 (-40.3%) on the peak waiting list figure of 60,190 (end September 2002).

## Trends

The total number of people waiting for inpatient treatment peaked in September 2002. There has been an overall downward trend since this peak.

**Figure 1 Total Quarterly Waiting Lists – Five yearly trends September 2002 – September 2007**



Source: CHI

## Patients Waiting 6 Months and Over<sup>2</sup> - September 2007

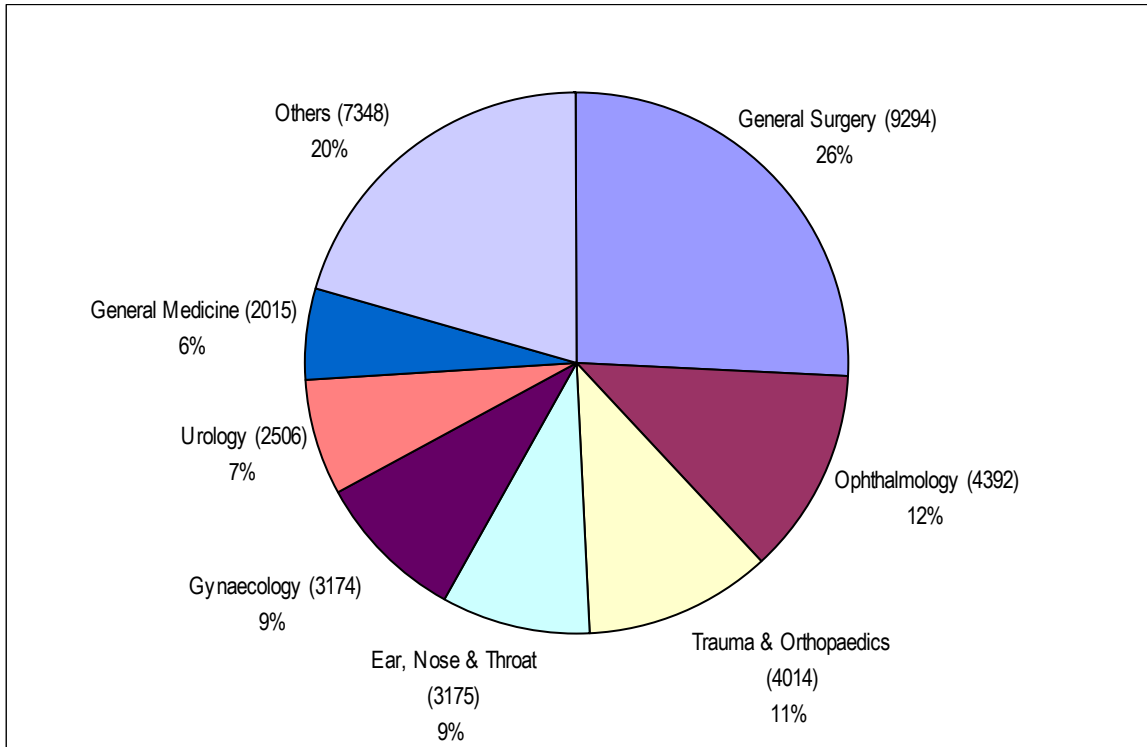
At the end of September 2007, there were 336 patients waiting 6 months and over for inpatient treatment, 0.9% of the total number of patients waiting. 335 patients were waiting in the Trauma and Orthopaedics specialty and 1 patient was waiting for inpatient treatment in the Urology specialty.

<sup>2</sup> Refer to Technical Notes – point 3.

## Inpatients Waiting by Specialty

The overwhelming majority of those waiting (79.5%) were within seven specialties: General Surgery; Ophthalmology; Trauma and Orthopaedic Surgery (T&O); Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT); Gynaecology (Gynae); Urology and General Medicine (Figure 2).

**Figure 2 Inpatients - Total Waiters by Specialty at the end of September 2007**



Source: CHI

## Inpatient Waiting Time by Specialty

Waiting times for inpatients by specialty are shown in Tables 2a and 2b. Overall 77.7% of those waiting for admission were waiting less than 3 months. More than 99% of patients were waiting for treatment in the Acute Services Programme of Care.

**Table 2a Number of Patients Waiting for Admission by Months Waiting and Specialty – September 2007**

Specialty	Patients Waiting for Admission by Months Waiting			Total Number of Patients Awaiting Admission
	0 - 2	3 - 5	6+	
General Surgery	7,425	1,869	0	9,294
Ophthalmology	3,153	1,239	0	4,392
Trauma & Orthopaedics	2,716	963	335	4,014
Ear, Nose & Throat	2,247	928	0	3,175
Gynaecology	2,544	630	0	3,174
Urology	2,028	477	1	2,506
General Medicine	1,750	265	0	2,015
Gastroenterology	1,731	252	0	1,983
Cardiology	944	236	0	1,180
Pain Management	500	163	0	663
Plastic Surgery	488	150	0	638
Oral Surgery	363	102	0	465
Rheumatology	359	90	0	449
Paediatric Surgery	298	126	0	424
Dermatology	281	61	0	342
General Practice (Other)	270	10	0	280
Cardiac Surgery	175	37	0	212
Neurosurgery	105	4	0	109
Neurology	79	16	0	95
Paediatric Dentistry	70	10	0	80
Other	396	32	0	428
<b>All Specialties</b>	<b>27,922</b>	<b>7,660</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>35,918</b>

Source: CHI

**Table 2b Percentage of Patients Waiting for Admission by Months Waiting and Specialty – September 2007**

Specialty	Patients Waiting for Admission by Months Waiting		
	0 - 2	3 - 5	6+
General Surgery	79.9%	20.1%	0.0%
Ophthalmology	71.8%	28.2%	0.0%
Trauma & Orthopaedics	67.7%	24.0%	8.3%
Ear, Nose & Throat	70.8%	29.2%	0.0%
Gynaecology	80.2%	19.8%	0.0%
Urology	80.9%	19.0%	<0.1%
General Medicine	86.8%	13.2%	0.0%
Gastroenterology	87.3%	12.7%	0.0%
Cardiology	80.0%	20.0%	0.0%
Pain Management	75.4%	24.6%	0.0%
Plastic Surgery	76.5%	23.5%	0.0%
Oral Surgery	78.1%	21.9%	0.0%
Rheumatology	80.0%	20.0%	0.0%
Paediatric Surgery	70.3%	29.7%	0.0%
Dermatology	82.2%	17.8%	0.0%
General Practice (Other)	96.4%	3.6%	0.0%
Cardiac Surgery	82.5%	17.5%	0.0%
Neurosurgery	96.3%	3.7%	0.0%
Neurology	83.2%	16.8%	0.0%
Paediatric Dentistry	87.5%	12.5%	0.0%
Other	92.5%	7.5%	0.0%
<b>All Specialties</b>	<b>77.7%</b>	<b>21.3%</b>	<b>0.9%</b>

Source: CHI

### Inpatient Waiting Times by Provider Trust

Waiting times for inpatients by Trust are shown in Table 3.

**Table 3 Number of Patients Waiting for Admission by Provider Trust<sup>3</sup> and by Months Waiting – September 2007**

Provider Trust	Patients Waiting for Admission by Months Waiting			Total Number of Patients Waiting
	0 - 2	3 - 5	6+	
Belfast	10,843	3,522	335	14,700
Northern	4,242	770	0	5,012
South Eastern	3,593	807	0	4,400
Southern	4,517	1,412	1	5,930
Western	4,727	1,149	0	5,876
<b>Total</b>	<b>27,922</b>	<b>7,660</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>35,918</b>

Source: CHI

<sup>3</sup> Refer to Technical Notes – point 13

## Completed Inpatient Waits – September 2007

Waiting times for completed inpatient waits, for patients treated within Health Service hospitals in Northern Ireland are shown in Table 4. A total of 38,446 inpatients were admitted to Health Service hospitals (excluding those who had previously refused an offer of admission) during the September 2007 quarter. 70.3% of patients received their treatment within 3 months of being placed on the waiting list and 97.4% received their treatment within 6 months. Including patients who had been medically deferred, or did not attend a previously arranged admission date, the total number of patients admitted to Health Service hospitals in Northern Ireland during the quarter was 43,853.

**Table 4 Completed Inpatient Waits<sup>4</sup>**

Quarter	Time Waiting in Months					Total Number of Completed Inpatient Waits	
	0 - 2	3 - 5	6 - 8	9 - 11	12+	Excluding patients who have medically deferred or did not attend on a previously arranged admission date	Including patients who have medically deferred or did not attend on a previously arranged admission date
J - M 2004	74.4%	11.6%	4.8%	3.5%	5.6%	40,924	44,157
A - J 2004	74.6%	11.4%	5.9%	3.1%	4.9%	38,507	41,273
J - S 2004	73.1%	13.1%	5.4%	3.7%	4.6%	37,166	40,153
O - D 2004	73.4%	12.3%	5.5%	3.7%	5.1%	41,330	44,232
<b>J - D 2004</b>	<b>73.9%</b>	<b>12.1%</b>	<b>5.4%</b>	<b>3.5%</b>	<b>5.1%</b>	<b>157,927</b>	<b>169,815</b>
J - M 2005	72.9%	12.9%	4.8%	3.9%	5.5%	39,248	42,567
A - J 2005	74.1%	12.5%	6.2%	3.1%	4.2%	41,183	44,448
J - S 2005	72.0%	12.9%	5.4%	3.8%	5.8%	37,094	40,422
O - D 2005	72.7%	11.6%	6.1%	5.0%	4.7%	40,360	44,606
<b>J - D 2005</b>	<b>72.9%</b>	<b>12.5%</b>	<b>5.6%</b>	<b>3.9%</b>	<b>5.0%</b>	<b>157,885</b>	<b>172,043</b>
J - M 2006	70.2%	13.7%	6.9%	5.8%	3.5%	41,111	45,827
A - J 2006	71.0%	14.8%	8.2%	4.8%	1.2%	39,308	43,553
J - S 2006	69.6%	16.4%	8.7%	4.4%	0.9%	36,752	41,004
O - D 2006	70.8%	17.7%	9.5%	1.4%	0.5%	39,856	44,994
<b>J - D 2006</b>	<b>70.4%</b>	<b>15.6%</b>	<b>8.3%</b>	<b>4.1%</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>157,027</b>	<b>175,378</b>
J - M 2007	70.5%	22.0%	6.6%	0.6%	0.3%	41,079	46,645
A - J 2007	70.9%	25.4%	3.2%	0.2%	0.2%	40,757	46,140
J - S 2007	70.3%	27.1%	2.2%	0.3%	0.2%	38,446	43,853

Source: CH2

<sup>4</sup>Refer to Technical Notes – point 14

## Completed Inpatient Waits including Independent Sector Activity – September 2007

During the September 2007 quarter, a number of patients received inpatient treatment commissioned by the Health Service, within the Independent Sector. Estimates of the number of patients admitted for inpatient treatment within the Independent Sector have been provided by the commissioning Trust.

It is estimated that approximately 2,119 Health Service patients were treated within the Independent Sector during the quarter ending September 2007. When this number is combined with that for inpatients admitted to Health Service hospitals during the quarter, it is estimated that approximately 45,972 inpatients were admitted to hospital in Northern Ireland for treatment commissioned by the Health Service.

**Table 5a Completed Inpatient Waits by Trust including Independent Sector Activity<sup>5</sup>**

Provider Trust	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
Belfast	19,176	723	19,899
Northern	6,168	434	6,602
South Eastern	6,103	106	6,209
Southern	5,926	394	6,320
Western	6,480	462	6,942
<b>Total Treated</b>	<b>43,853</b>	<b>2,119</b>	<b>45,972</b>

Source: Health and Social Care Trusts

<sup>5</sup> Refer to Technical Notes – points 13, 15 & 16

## Completed Inpatient Waits including Independent Sector Activity – March 2007 - September 2007

Table 5b has been included to reflect the total completed inpatient waits for Health Service patients for the past three quarters.

**Table 5b Completed Inpatient Waits by Trust Including Independent Sector Activity<sup>5</sup> – Three Quarterly Trends 31st March 2007 - 30th September 2007**

Provider Trust	Total Number of Completed Inpatient Waits Commissioned by Health Service		
	31st March 2007	30th June 2007	30th September 2007
Belfast	21,318	21,371	19,899
Northern	6,270	6,076	6,602
South Eastern	7,006	7,001	6,209
Southern	6,396	6,784	6,320
Western	7,008	7,056	6,942
<b>Total</b>	<b>47,998</b>	<b>48,288</b>	<b>45,972</b>

Source: Health and Social Care Trusts

<sup>5</sup> Refer to Technical Notes – points 13, 15 & 16

# Outpatients

## Headline Totals - Table 6

The number of patients waiting for a first outpatient appointment (including cancellations and deferrals) at the end of September 2007 stood at 86,659.

Over the quarter, comparing the end of September 2007 with the end of June 2007 (94,428), the total number has decreased by 7,769 (-8.2%).

Over the year, comparing the end of September 2007 with the end of September 2006 (177,508), the total number waiting decreased by 90,849 (-51.2%).

**Table 6: Quarterly Outpatient Waiting Lists<sup>6</sup> – September 2007**

Waiting for:	Quarter Ending September 2007	Change compared with end of previous quarter	Change compared with end same quarter - previous year
Excluding Cancellations and Deferrals	79,775	-7,601	-87,404
Cancellations and Deferrals	6,884	-168	-3,445
<b>Total Waiting</b>	<b>86,659</b>	<b>-7,769</b>	<b>-90,849</b>

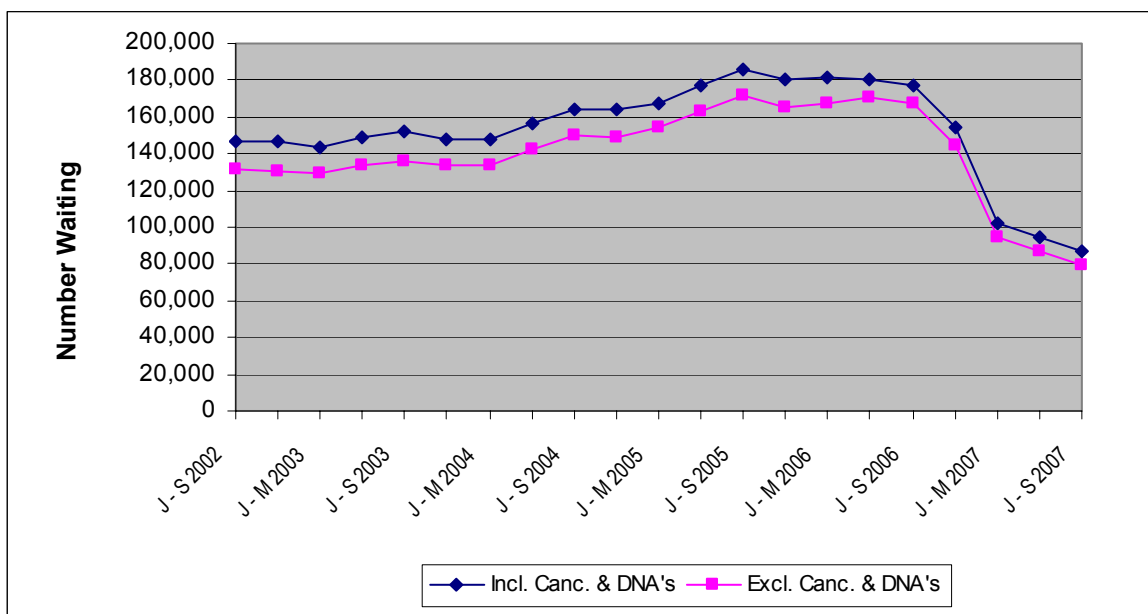
Source: CH3

<sup>6</sup> Refer to Technical Notes – points 17 & 18

## Trends

The total number of people waiting for a first outpatient appointment peaked in September 2005 (185,782). There has been a downward trend since this peak and the outpatient waiting list has decreased in seven of the previous eight quarters.

**Figure 3 Outpatients Waiting for a First Appointment (including and excluding cancellations and deferrals) – Five Yearly Trends September 2002 – September 2007**



Source: CH3.

## Patients Waiting 3 Months and Over<sup>7</sup>

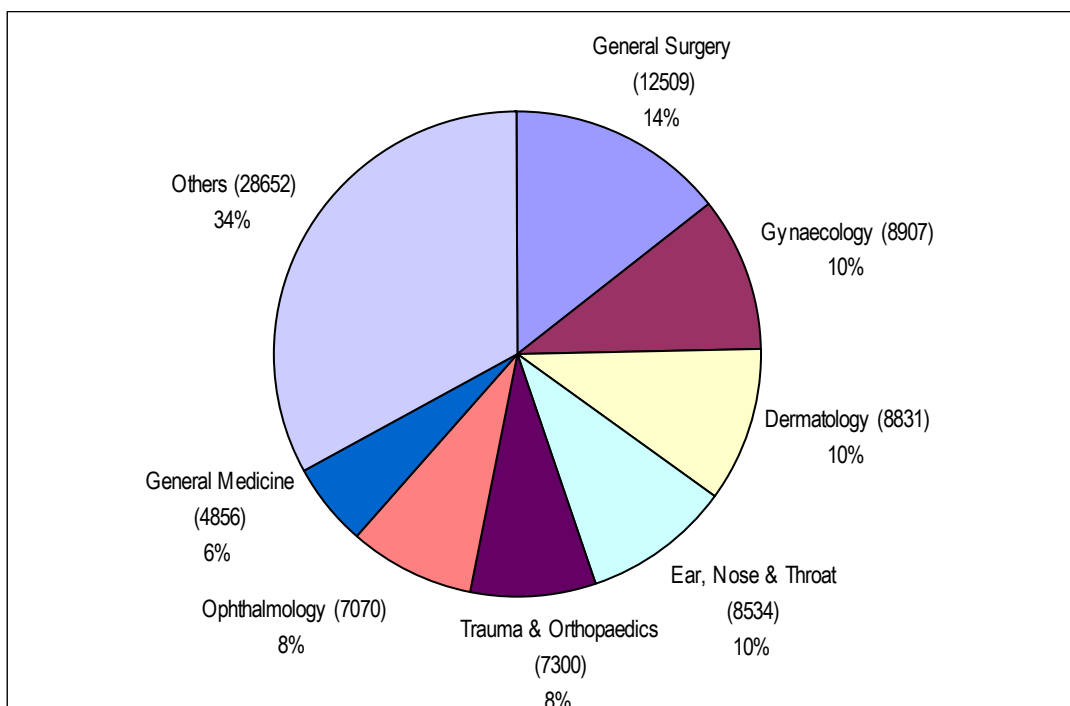
At the end of September 2007, the number of patients waiting three months and over was 10,457, 12.1% of the total waiting. Seven T&O patients were waiting 6 months and over for a first outpatient appointment.

(<sup>7</sup> Refer to technical Notes – point 21).

## Outpatients Waiting by Specialty

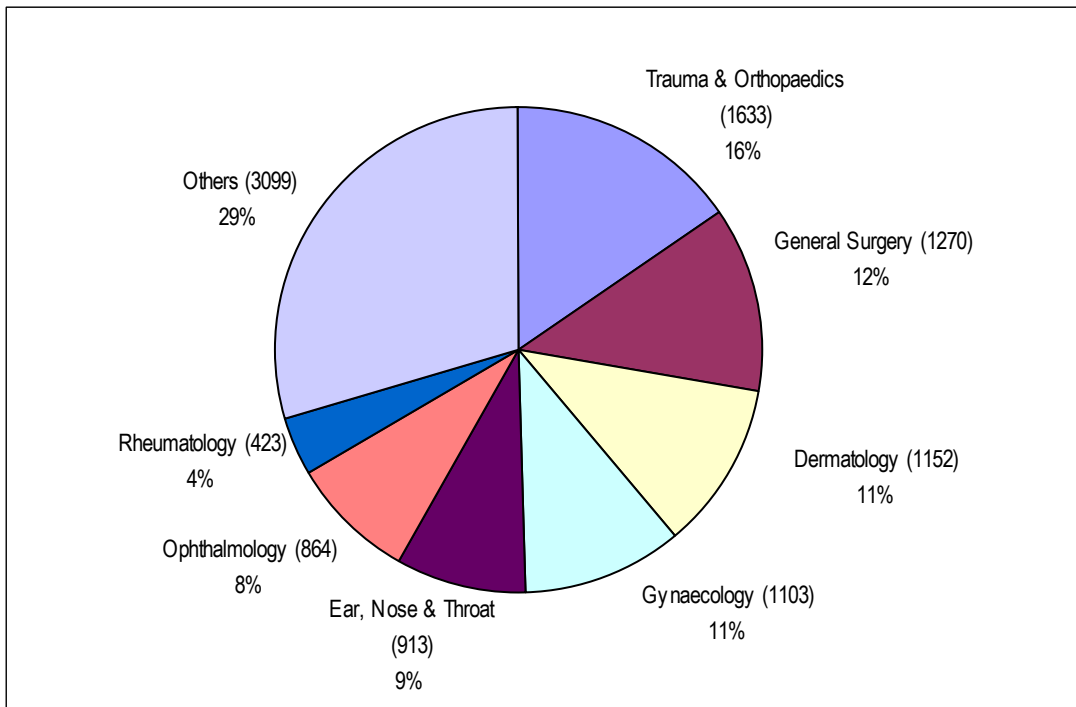
The majority of those waiting (66.9%) were within seven specialties: General Surgery; Gynaecology (Gynae); Dermatology; Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT); Trauma & Orthopaedics; Ophthalmology; and General Medicine (Figure 4a). Figures for patients waiting 3 months and over are shown in Figure 4b. Figures represent the total number waiting for their first outpatient appointment during the September 2007 quarter including those who have cancelled or missed a previous appointment.

**Figure 4a Outpatients – Total Patients Waiting by Specialty at the end of September 2007**



Source: CH3.

**Figure 4b Outpatients – Patients waiting 3 Months and Over<sup>7</sup> by Speciality at the end of September 2007.**



Source: CH3.

<sup>7</sup> Refer to Technical Notes – point 21

## Outpatient Waiting Time by Specialty

Waiting times for outpatients by specialty are shown in Tables 7a and 7b. Overall 87.9% of those waiting for treatment were waiting less than 3 months.

**Table 7a Number of Patients Waiting for a First Appointment by Months Waiting and Specialty – September 2007**

Specialty	Patients Waiting for an Appointment by Months Waiting			Total Number of Patients Waiting
	0 - 2	3 - 5	6 - 8	
General Surgery	11,239	1,270	0	12,509
Gynaecology	7,804	1,103	0	8,907
Dermatology	7,679	1,152	0	8,831
Ear, Nose & Throat	7,621	913	0	8,534
Trauma & Orthopaedics	5,667	1,626	7	7,300
Ophthalmology	6,206	864	0	7,070
General Medicine	4,480	376	0	4,856
Paediatrics	2,687	350	0	3,037
Neurology	2,012	412	0	2,424
Mental Illness	2,153	254	0	2,407
Cardiology	2,207	111	0	2,318
Rheumatology	1,791	423	0	2,214
Urology	1,769	179	0	1,948
Oral Surgery	1,375	163	0	1,538
Gastroenterology	949	141	0	1,090
Plastic Surgery	940	136	0	1,076
Restorative Dentistry	923	124	0	1,047
Pain Management	853	171	0	1,024
Obs & Gynae (Obstetrics)	964	11	0	975
Geriatric Medicine	780	8	0	788
Other	6,103	663	0	6,766
<b>All Specialties</b>	<b>76,202</b>	<b>10,450</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>86,659</b>

Source: CH3

**Table 7b Percentage of Patients Waiting for a First Appointment by Months Waiting and Specialty – September 2007**

Specialty	Patients Waiting for an Appointment by Months Waiting		
	0 - 2	3 - 5	6 - 8
General Surgery	89.8%	10.2%	0.0%
Gynaecology	87.6%	12.4%	0.0%
Dermatology	87.0%	13.0%	0.0%
Ear, Nose & Throat	89.3%	10.7%	0.0%
Trauma & Orthopaedics	77.6%	22.3%	0.1%
Ophthalmology	87.8%	12.2%	0.0%
General Medicine	92.3%	7.7%	0.0%
Paediatrics	88.5%	11.5%	0.0%
Neurology	83.0%	17.0%	0.0%
Mental Illness	89.4%	10.6%	0.0%
Cardiology	95.2%	4.8%	0.0%
Rheumatology	80.9%	19.1%	0.0%
Urology	90.8%	9.2%	0.0%
Oral Surgery	89.4%	10.6%	0.0%
Gastroenterology	87.1%	12.9%	0.0%
Plastic Surgery	87.4%	12.6%	0.0%
Restorative Dentistry	88.2%	11.8%	0.0%
Pain Management	83.3%	16.7%	0.0%
Obs & Gynae (Obstetrics)	98.9%	1.1%	0.0%
Geriatric Medicine	99.0%	1.0%	0.0%
Other	90.2%	9.8%	0.0%
<b>All Specialties</b>	<b>87.9%</b>	<b>12.1%</b>	<b>&lt; 0.1%</b>

Source: CH3.

## Outpatient Waiting Times by Provider Trust

Waiting times for outpatients by Trust are shown in Table 8.

**Table 8 Number of Patients Waiting for a First Outpatient Appointment by Provider Trust<sup>3</sup> and Months Waiting – September 2007**

Provider Trust	Patients Waiting for an Appointment by Months Waiting			Total Number of Patients
	0 - 2	3 - 5	6 - 8	
Belfast	27,647	4,310	7	31,964
Northern	12,851	1,823	0	14,674
South Eastern	11,942	1,287	0	13,229
Southern	11,695	1,694	0	13,389
Western	12,067	1,336	0	13,403
<b>Total</b>	<b>76,202</b>	<b>10,450</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>86,659</b>

Source: CH3

<sup>3</sup> refer to Technical Notes – point 13

## Outpatient Waiting Time by Programme of Care

Waiting times for a first outpatient appointment by programme of care are shown in Table 9. The vast majority (93.8%) of patients were awaiting their first outpatient appointment in the Acute Services Programme of Care.

**Table 9** Number of Patients Waiting for a First Appointment by Months Waiting and Programme of Care – September 2007

Programme of Care	Patients Waiting for an Appointment by Months Waiting			Total Number of Patients Waiting
	0 - 2	3 - 5	6 - 8	
Acute Services	71,301	9,986	7	81,294
Maternity & Child Health	964	11	0	975
Elderly Care	1,328	77	0	1,405
Mental Health	2,562	373	0	2,935
Learning Disability	47	3	0	50
<b>All POCs</b>	<b>76,202</b>	<b>10,450</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>86,659</b>

Source: CH3

## Completed Outpatient Waits

Waiting times for completed outpatient waits, for patients treated within Health Service hospitals in Northern Ireland are shown in Table 10. A total of 102,848 patients received a first outpatient appointment within Health Service hospitals (excluding those who had previously cancelled or not attended a previous appointment) during the September 2007 quarter. 71.7% of patients attended their first appointment within 3 months of being placed on the waiting list and 99.0% received their first outpatient appointment within 6 months. Including patients who have cancelled, or not attended a previous appointment, the total number of patients that received a first outpatient appointment within Health Service hospitals in Northern Ireland during the quarter was 110,509.

**Table 10 Completed Outpatient Waits for First Appointment<sup>8</sup>**

Quarter	Time Waiting in Months					Total Number of Completed Outpatient Waits	
	0 - 2	3 - 5	6 - 8	9 - 11	12+	Excluding patients who had cancelled or did not attend a previous appointment	Including patients who had cancelled or did not attend a previous appointment
J - M 2004	69.8%	17.1%	5.2%	2.9%	5.0%	91,496	99,195
A - J 2004	71.8%	15.9%	5.5%	2.7%	4.0%	88,213	95,422
J - S 2004	70.6%	17.9%	5.4%	2.5%	3.6%	84,455	92,527
O - D 2004	68.9%	17.3%	7.0%	2.6%	4.2%	91,915	99,955
<b>J - D 2004</b>	<b>70.3%</b>	<b>17.1%</b>	<b>5.8%</b>	<b>2.7%</b>	<b>4.2%</b>	<b>356,079</b>	<b>387,099</b>
J - M 2005	68.4%	16.4%	7.0%	3.3%	4.9%	86,944	94,865
A - J 2005	70.1%	15.6%	6.9%	2.9%	4.5%	91,489	99,698
J - S 2005	70.8%	16.0%	5.7%	2.9%	4.6%	82,721	92,047
O - D 2005	67.7%	15.9%	7.5%	3.1%	5.7%	91,969	101,037
<b>J - D 2005</b>	<b>69.2%</b>	<b>16.0%</b>	<b>6.8%</b>	<b>3.1%</b>	<b>5.0%</b>	<b>353,123</b>	<b>387,647</b>
J - M 2006	68.0%	15.6%	7.6%	3.7%	5.2%	91,695	101,249
A - J 2006	68.3%	15.0%	7.2%	4.0%	5.5%	90,531	99,418
J - S 2006	63.9%	16.0%	7.3%	4.9%	7.9%	90,716	100,769
O - D 2006	61.0%	17.8%	9.7%	4.5%	7.0%	104,266	113,927
<b>J - D 2006</b>	<b>65.2%</b>	<b>16.2%</b>	<b>8.0%</b>	<b>4.3%</b>	<b>6.4%</b>	<b>377,208</b>	<b>415,363</b>
J - M 2007	61.4%	24.0%	8.6%	2.8%	3.2%	110,712	121,104
A - J 2007	70.9%	27.2%	1.9%	0.1%	0.0%	105,202	114,317
J - S 2007	71.7%	27.3%	0.8%	0.1%	0.0%	102,848	110,509

Source: CH4

<sup>8</sup>Refer to Technical Notes – point 23

## Completed Outpatient Waits including Independent Sector Activity– September 2007

During the September 2007 quarter, a number of patients attended a first outpatient appointment, commissioned by the Health Service, within the Independent Sector. Estimates of the number of patients attending a first outpatient appointment, within the Independent Sector have been provided by commissioning Trusts.

It is estimated that approximately 5,731 Health Service patients attended a first outpatient appointment, within the Independent Sector, during the quarter ending September 2007. When this number is combined with that for outpatients attending a first appointment in Health Service hospitals during the same period, it is estimated that approximately 116,240 outpatients attended a first appointment in Northern Ireland for an assessment commissioned by the Health Service.

**Table 11a Completed Outpatient Waits by Trust including Independent Sector Activity<sup>9</sup>**

<b>Provider Trust</b>	<b>Number of Completed Outpatient Waits within Health Service Hospitals</b>	<b>Number of Completed Outpatient Waits in Independent Sector</b>	<b>Total Number of Completed Outpatient Waits Commissioned by Health Service</b>
Belfast	39,485	342	39,827
Northern	15,482	2,073	17,555
South Eastern	16,811	858	17,669
Southern	15,758	459	16,217
Western	22,973	1,999	24,972
<b>Total Treated</b>	<b>110,509</b>	<b>5,731</b>	<b>116,240</b>

Source: Health and Social Care Trusts

<sup>9</sup>Refer to Technical Notes – points 13 & 24.

**Completed Outpatient Waits including Independent Sector Activity – March 2007 - September 2007**

Table 11b has been included to reflect the total completed inpatient waits in the Health Service for the past three quarters.

**Table 11b Completed Outpatient Waits by Trust Including Independent Sector Activity<sup>9</sup> – Three Quarterly Trends 31st March 2007 - 30th September 2007**

<b>Provider Trust</b>	<b>Total Number of Completed Outpatient Waits Commissioned by Health Service</b>		
	<b>31st March 2007</b>	<b>30th June 2007</b>	<b>30th September 2007</b>
Belfast	55,666	41,909	39,827
Northern	19,450	15,829	17,555
South Eastern	26,748	19,246	17,669
Southern	19,798	16,980	16,217
Western	25,071	24,292	24,972
<b>Total</b>	<b>146,733</b>	<b>118,256</b>	<b>116,240</b>

Source: Health and Social Care Trusts

<sup>9</sup>Refer to Technical Notes – points 13 & 24

## Technical Notes

1. The sources for the data contained in this release are the Information Returns CH1, CH2, CH3, CH4 and Health and Social Care Trusts. These returns collect information from Hospital Trusts on a quarterly basis.
2. Trust based information (CH1, CH2, CH3 and CH4) returns include all patients living outside Northern Ireland and all privately funded patients waiting for treatment in Health Service hospitals. This Trust based information falls within the scope of National Statistics.
3. Hospital Information Branch are initiating a National Statistics consultation on proposals to change the methodology used in compiling official inpatient waiting time information in Northern Ireland. Documents relating to this consultation can be found on the DHSSPS website. The current ministerial target for inpatient/day cases states that, by 31 March 2008, no patient should be waiting more than 21 weeks for inpatient admission. The successful completion of the National Statistics consultation proposals and the transition to patient level data will enable the 21 week target to be monitored in future quarters.
4. The inpatient waiting time position for the end of June 2007 has been revised from 36,144 to 36,595 due to an amendment received from the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust.
5. Due to administrative difficulties within the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, relating to a number of Trauma and Orthopaedics patients transferred to the Independent Sector, it has not been possible to accurately reflect the total number waiting at the end of June.
6. Due to further administrative difficulties within the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, it has not been possible to differentiate a cohort of 618 patients waiting for Inpatient Trauma and Orthopaedic treatment in the Independent Sector at the end of September 2007 into the 'ordinary admission' and 'day case' categories. Hospital Information Branch have analysed the case mix of patients waiting for inpatient admission in the T & O specialty in the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust in previous quarters and estimate that approximately 70% of these patients were waiting for ordinary admission, with approximately 30% waiting for day case admission. It is therefore estimated that 433 of these patients were waiting for ordinary admission and 185 were waiting for day case admission.
7. Waiting time relates to the number of completed months a patient has been waiting (or in the case for completed waits, how long a patient had waited) for either their first outpatient appointment or for inpatient admission. For example, a patient waiting 2 months and 30 days would be included in the 0-2 month category and a patient waiting 3 months and 01 day would be included in the 3-5 month category.
8. Inpatient waiting list data comprises the number of patients waiting for ordinary admission to hospital and the number of patients waiting for day case treatment.
9. 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). 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.
10. Day Cases are patients admitted electively during the course of a day with the intention of receiving care but 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.

11. 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 already in hospitals but included on other waiting lists;
  - Patients who are temporarily suspended from waiting lists.
12. 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.
13. In accordance with the Review of Public Administration, with effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2007, five new integrated Health and Social Care Trusts (Belfast, Northern, South Eastern and Southern Western) replaced the previous eighteen provider Trusts in Northern Ireland. Where applicable, tables have been presented based on the new Trust Areas.
14. A number of Health and Social Care Trusts have experienced technical difficulties in estimating the exact length of time a patient had waited for inpatient treatment. Consequently, some completed inpatient waiting times may not be reflective of the exact time the patient had waited for inpatient treatment.
15. The number of patients that received inpatient treatment, commissioned by the Health Service, in the Independent Sector are provided in Tables 5a and 5b. These figures have been provided for each transferring Health and Social Care Trust (Health Trust responsible for the patients waiting time). They are not governed by National Statistics and they have not been validated by the Department.
16. Estimates for Completed Inpatient Waits within the Independent Sector at the Belfast City Hospital Site of Belfast Health and Social Care Trust reflect the position up to and including 21<sup>st</sup> September 2007.
17. Due to administrative difficulties within the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust relating to a number of Trauma and Orthopaedics patients transferred to the Independent Sector it has not been possible to accurately reflect the total number waiting for a first outpatient assessment at the end of June 2007.
18. The Outpatient waiting time position for the end of June 2007 has been revised from 94,407 to 94,428 due to amendments received from the Southern Health and Social Care Trust and the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust.
19. Outpatients are defined as patients still waiting for their first outpatient appointment at the end of the quarter. An outpatient appointment is to enable a patient to see a consultant, a member of his firm or locum for such a member, in respect of one referral.
20. Outpatient waiting list figures presented do not include maternity specialties 510 and 520.
21. The current Ministerial target for outpatients states that no patient should be waiting more than 13 weeks for a first outpatient appointment by 31 March 2008. Due to technical reasons it has not been possible to provide outpatient waiting lists in weeks for quarter ending 30 September 2007. Figures provided on outpatients waiting, '3 months and over' are approximations for

patients waiting 'more than 13 weeks'. Hospital information branch are currently developing a technical solution to allow outpatient waiting times to be reported by weeks waiting. It is hoped that this solution will be in place to allow reporting by weeks waiting to be published for the quarter ending December 2007.

22. Following a recent revision in policy, patients who either cancel or fail to attend an outpatient appointment have their waiting time reset to either the date on which the appointment was cancelled (CNA) or the date on which they did not attend (DNA) the appointment.
23. A number of Health and Social Care Trusts have experienced technical difficulties in estimating the exact length of time a patient had waited for a first outpatient assessment. Consequently, some completed outpatient waiting times may not be reflective of the exact waiting time the patient had waited for a first outpatient assessment.
24. The number of patients that received an outpatient assessment, commissioned by the Health Service, in the Independent Sector is provided in Tables 11a and 11b. These figures have been provided for each transferring Health and Social Care Trust (Trust responsible for the patients waiting time). They are not governed by National Statistics and they have not been validated by the Department.
25. Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety policy is to publish revised figures with subsequent statistical releases unless it is decided that the magnitude of the change merits earlier notification.
26. The number of patients that received an outpatient assessment, commissioned by the Health Service for the end of June 2007 has been revised from 114,250 to 114,317 due to an amendment received from the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust.
27. Figures relating to the quarter ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2007 will be released on Thursday, 6<sup>th</sup> March 2008.
28. For general enquiries about National Statistics, contact the National Statistics Public Service on

**020 7533 5888**

minicom: 01633 812399

E-mail: [info@statistics.gov.uk](mailto:info@statistics.gov.uk)

Fax: 01633 652747

Letters: room DG/18, Drummond Gate,  
LONDON SW1V 2QQ

You can also find National Statistics on the internet – Go to [www.statistics.gov.uk](http://www.statistics.gov.uk)

## **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](mailto:statistics@dhsspsni.gov.uk)

Internet address: [http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats\\_research/stats-activity\\_stats-2/waiting\\_times.htm](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats_research/stats-activity_stats-2/waiting_times.htm)