

Statistics Release



Department of
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**Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta
agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí**

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an Fowk Siccar**

04 December 2008

Northern Ireland Waiting Lists – September 2008

This statistics release gives details of the number of people waiting for either inpatient treatment, a first outpatient assessment or a selected diagnostic service at hospitals in Northern Ireland at the end of September 2008, the most recent quarter for which figures are available.

Inpatients

Headline Totals¹ – Table 1

The total number of patients waiting to be admitted to hospitals in Northern Ireland at the end of September 2008 stood at 36,766.

Over the quarter, comparing the end of September 2008 with the end of June 2008 (36,073), the total number waiting has increased by 693 (+1.9%). Comparing the end of September 2008 with the end of September 2007 (35,310), the total number waiting has increased by 1,456 (+4.1%).

Table 1 Quarterly Inpatient Waiting Lists – September 2008

Waiting for:	Quarter Ending September 2008	Change compared with end of previous quarter	Change compared with end same quarter – previous year
Ordinary Admissions	12,198	+ 734	+ 357
Day case Admissions	24,568	-41	+ 1099
Total Waiting	36,766	+ 693	+ 1456

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

¹ Refer to technical notes – points 1-3 & 6-9.

Detailed notes and definitions are provided in the Technical Notes.



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.

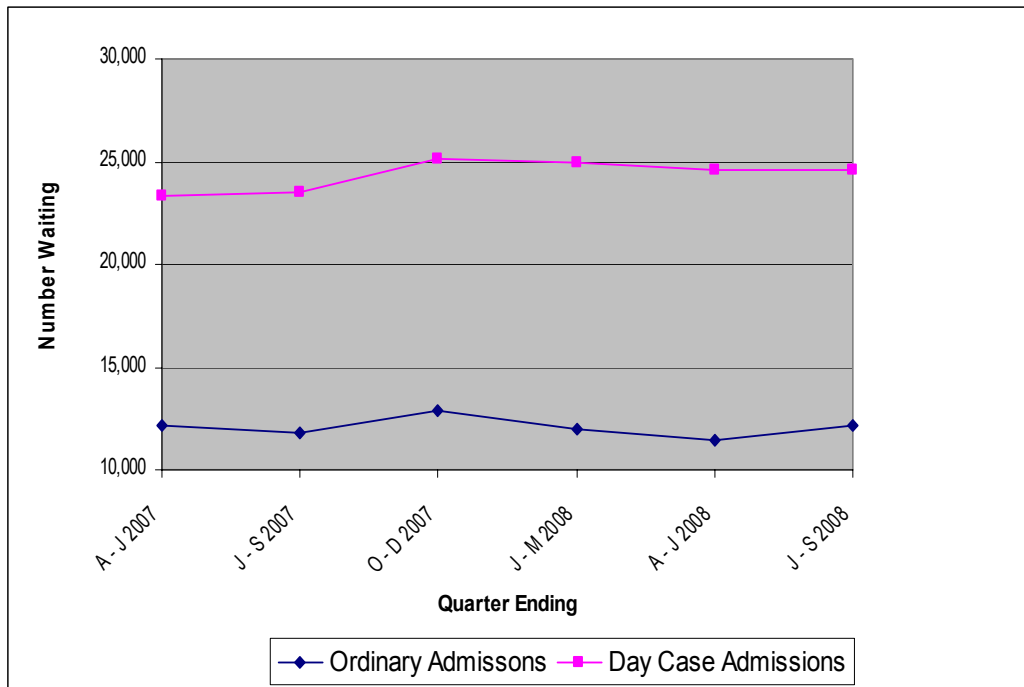
Of the 36,766 people waiting for admission to hospital at the end of September 2008, 12,198 (33.2%) were waiting for ordinary admission and 24,568 (66.8%) were waiting for day case admission (Table 1).

Since the end of June 2008, the number of cases waiting for ordinary admission has increased by 734 (+6.4%) and the number waiting for day case admission has decreased by 41 (-0.2%). Compared with the end of September 2007, the number waiting for ordinary admission increased by 357 (-3.0%) with the number waiting for day case admission increased by 1,099 (+4.7%).

Trends

The total number of patients waiting for both ordinary and day case admission has remained reasonably constant over the last six quarters.

Figure 1 Number of patients waiting for (i) Ordinary Admissions and (ii) Day case Admissions, Six Quarterly Trends June 2007 – September 2008



Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

Ordinary Admission and Day Cases Waiting More Than 13 Weeks² – Table 2

The 2008/09 Priority for Action target relating to waiting times for inpatient treatment, states that from April 2008 no patient should wait longer than 21 weeks for inpatient or day case treatment, reducing to 13 weeks by 31st March 2009.

At the end of September 2008, there were 6,395 patients waiting more than 13 weeks for inpatient treatment, of which 57 were waiting more than 21 weeks. Of the 6,395 patients waiting more than 13 weeks, 2,381 (37.2%) were awaiting ordinary admission and 4,014 (62.8%) were awaiting day case procedures.

Table 2 Patients Waiting More Than 13 Weeks² – September 2008

Waiting for:	Quarter Ending September 2008	Change compared with end of previous quarter	Change compared with end same quarter - previous year
Ordinary Admissions	2,381	+ 540	-792
Day Case Admissions	4,014	+ 1189	-778
Total Waiting	6,395	+ 1729	-1,570

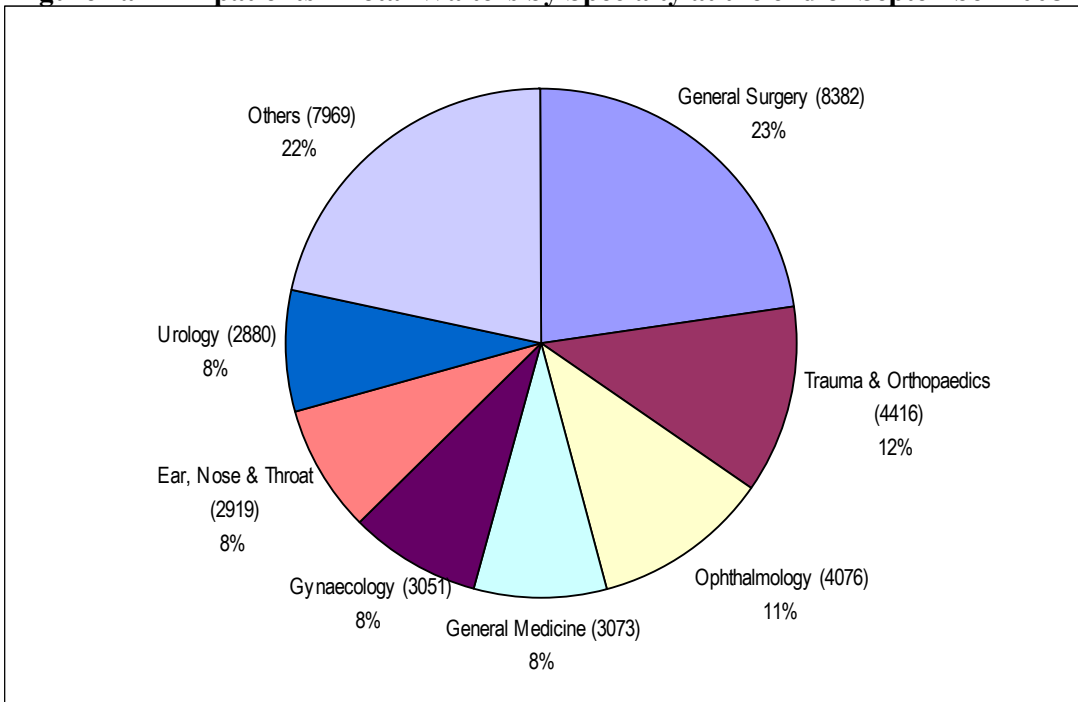
Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

² Refer to Technical Notes – points 1-10.

Inpatients Waiting by Specialty

The overwhelming majority of those waiting (78.0%) were within seven specialties: General Surgery; Ophthalmology; Trauma and Orthopaedic Surgery (T&O); Gynaecology (Gynae); General Medicine; Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) and Urology (Figure 2a).

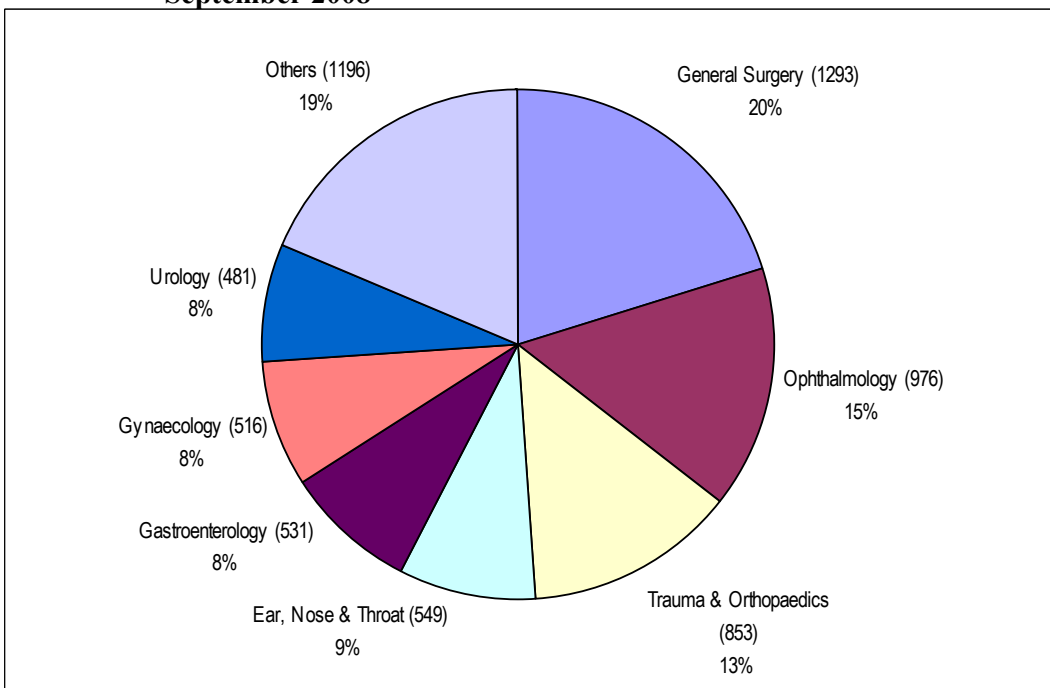
Figure 2a Inpatients - Total Waiters by Specialty at the end of September 2008²



Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

² Refer to Technical Notes – points 1-10.

Figure 2b Inpatients – Patients waiting more than 13 weeks by Specialty at the end of September 2008²



Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

² Refer to Technical Notes – points 1-10.

Inpatient Waiting Time by Specialty

Waiting times for inpatients by specialty are shown in Tables 3a and 3b. Overall 82.6% of those waiting for admission were waiting 13 weeks or less. More than 98% of patients were waiting for treatment in the Acute Services Programme of Care.

Table 3a Number of Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting and Specialty – September 2008²

Specialty	Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting				Total Number of Patients Awaiting Admission
	0 - 6	>6 - 13	>13 - 21	>21	
General Surgery	4,492	2,597	1,293	0	8,382
Trauma & Orthopaedics	1,714	1,849	817	36	4,416
Ophthalmology	1,482	1,618	976	0	4,076
General Medicine	1,664	1,006	403	0	3,073
Gynaecology	1,448	1,087	516	0	3,051
Ear, Nose & Throat	1,251	1,119	544	5	2,919
Urology	1,456	943	470	11	2,880
Gastroenterology	1,185	797	531	0	2,513
Cardiology	522	292	89	0	903
Pain Management	402	302	173	0	877
Oral Surgery	354	211	76	0	641
Plastic Surgery	308	198	84	2	592
Dermatology	262	119	62	0	443
Rheumatology	138	159	131	0	428
General Practice (Other)	246	22	3	0	271
Cardiac Surgery	109	113	29	0	251
Paediatric Surgery	125	84	35	3	247
Neurosurgery	70	79	36	0	185
Nephrology	53	38	5	0	96
Thoracic Surgery	53	16	14	0	83
Other	295	93	51	0	439
All Specialties	17,629	12,742	6,338	57	36,766

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

² Refer to Technical Notes – points 1-10.

Table 3b Percentage of Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting and Specialty – September 2008²

Specialty	Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting			
	0 - 6	>6 - 13	>13 - 21	>21
General Surgery	53.6%	31.0%	15.4%	0.0%
Trauma & Orthopaedics	38.8%	41.9%	18.5%	0.8%
Ophthalmology	36.4%	39.7%	23.9%	0.0%
General Medicine	54.1%	32.7%	13.1%	0.0%
Gynaecology	47.5%	35.6%	16.9%	0.0%
Ear, Nose & Throat	42.9%	38.3%	18.6%	0.2%
Urology	50.6%	32.7%	16.3%	0.4%
Gastroenterology	47.2%	31.7%	21.1%	0.0%
Cardiology	57.8%	32.3%	9.9%	0.0%
Pain Management	45.8%	34.4%	19.7%	0.0%
Oral Surgery	55.2%	32.9%	11.9%	0.0%
Plastic Surgery	52.0%	33.4%	14.2%	0.3%
Dermatology	59.1%	26.9%	14.0%	0.0%
Rheumatology	32.2%	37.1%	30.6%	0.0%
General Practice (Other)	90.8%	8.1%	1.1%	0.0%
Cardiac Surgery	43.4%	45.0%	11.6%	0.0%
Paediatric Surgery	50.6%	34.0%	14.2%	1.2%
Neurosurgery	37.8%	42.7%	19.5%	0.0%
Nephrology	55.2%	39.6%	5.2%	0.0%
Thoracic Surgery	63.9%	19.3%	16.9%	0.0%
Other	67.2%	21.2%	11.6%	0.0%
All Specialties	47.9%	34.7%	17.2%	0.2%

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

² Refer to Technical Notes – points 1-10.

Inpatient Waiting Times by Provider Trust

Waiting times for inpatients by Trust are shown in Table 4.

Table 4 Number of Patients Waiting for Admission by Provider Trust and by Weeks Waiting – September 2008²

Provider Trust	Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting				Total Number of Patients Waiting
	0 - 6	>6 - 13	>13 - 21	>21	
Belfast	6,640	5,783	2,782	50	15,255
Northern	2,910	1,661	793	0	5,364
South Eastern	2,321	1,235	442	0	3,998
Southern	2,507	2,001	1,421	0	5,929
Western	3,251	2,062	900	7	6,220
Total	17,629	12,742	6,338	57	36,766

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

² Refer to Technical Notes – points 1-10.

Completed Inpatient Waits – September 2008

Waiting times for completed inpatient waits, for patients treated within Health Service hospitals in Northern Ireland are shown in Table 5. A total of 44,802 inpatients were admitted to Health Service hospitals during the September 2008 quarter.

Table 5 Completed Inpatient Waits³

Quarter	Total Number of Completed Inpatient Waits	
	Excluding patients who self deferred or did not attend on a previously arranged admission date	Including patients who self deferred or did not attend on a previously arranged admission date
J - M 2005	39,359	42,567
A - J 2005	41,285	44,448
J - S 2005	37,191	40,422
O - D 2005	40,456	44,606
J - D 2005	158,291	172,043
J - M 2006	41,240	45,827
A - J 2006	39,425	43,553
J - S 2006	36,858	41,004
O - D 2006	39,973	44,994
J - D 2006	157,496	175,378
J - M 2007	41,197	46,645
A - J 2007	40,856	46,140
J - S 2007	38,530	43,853
O - D 2007	40,538	46,230
J - D 2007	161,121	182,868
J - M 2008	39,091	45,217
A - J 2008	42,372	48,612
J - S 2008	38,811	44,802

Source: Departmental Return CH2

³ Refer to Technical Notes – points 11-12.

Completed Inpatient Waits including Independent Sector Activity – September 2008

During the September 2008 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 3,578 Health Service patients were treated within the Independent Sector during the quarter ending September 2008. When this number is combined with that for inpatients admitted to Health Service hospitals during the quarter, it is estimated that approximately 48,380 inpatients were admitted to hospital in Northern Ireland for treatment commissioned by the Health Service.

Table 6a Completed Inpatient Waits by Trust including Independent Sector Activity⁴

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	19,207	1,071	20,278
Northern	6,047	278	6,325
South Eastern	6,637	292	6,929
Southern	6,330	841	7,171
Western	6,581	1,096	7,677
Total Treated	44,802	3,578	48,380

Source: Health and Social Care Trusts

⁴ Refer to Technical Notes – points 11-13.

Completed Inpatient Waits including Independent Sector Activity, Quarter Ending 30 September 2007 – Quarter Ending 30 September 2008

Table 6b has been included to reflect the total completed inpatient waits for Health Service patients for the past five quarters.

Table 6b Completed Inpatient Waits by Trust Including Independent Sector Activity⁴, Quarter Ending 30 September 2007 – Quarter Ending 30 September 2008

Provider Trust	Total Number of Completed Inpatient Waits Commissioned by Health Service				
	30 September 2007	31 December 2007	31 March 2008	30 June 2008	30 September 2008
Belfast	19,899	21,097	21,069	21,006	20,278
Northern	6,602	6,313	5,817	6,897	6,325
South Eastern	6,999	7,128	7,000	7,443	6,929
Southern	6,320	6,653	6,716	7,088	7,171
Western	7,004	7,426	7,270	8,395	7,677
Total	46,824	48,617	47,872	50,829	48,380

Source: Health and Social Care Trusts

⁴ Refer to Technical Notes – points 11-13.

Outpatients

Headline Totals - Table 7

The number of patients waiting for a first outpatient appointment (including cancellations and deferrals) at the end of September 2008 stood at 74,390.

Over the quarter, comparing the end of September 2008 with the end of June 2008 (77,091), the total number has decreased by 2,701 (-3.5%).

Over the year, comparing the end of September 2008 with the end of September 2007 (86,789), the total number waiting decreased by 12,399 (-14.3%).

Excluding cancellations and deferrals, the quarterly and annual decreases were -3.7% and -14.5% respectively.

Table 7 Quarterly Outpatient Waiting Lists – September 2008⁵

Waiting for:	Quarter Ending September 2008	Change compared with end of previous quarter	Change compared with end same quarter - previous year
Excluding Cancellations and Deferrals	68,351	-2,590	-11,554
Cancellations and Deferrals	6,039	-111	-845
Total Waiting	74,390	-2,701	-12,399

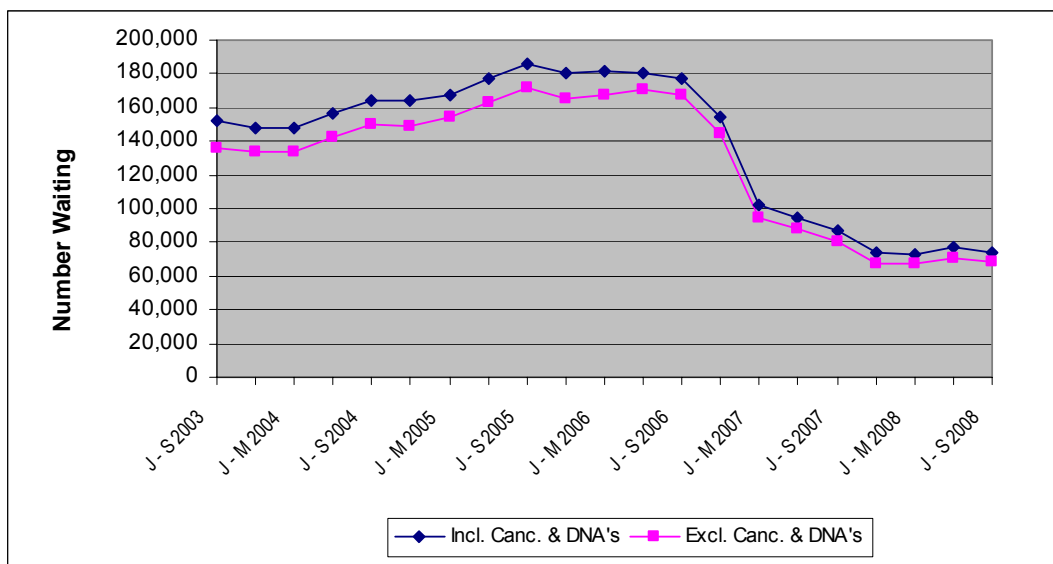
Source: Departmental Return CH3 parts 1 & 2

⁵ Refer to Technical Notes 14-17.

Trends

The total number of people waiting for a first outpatient appointment peaked in September 2005. There has been a downward trend since this peak and the outpatient waiting lists total has decreased in nine of the previous ten quarters.

Figure 3 Outpatients Waiting for a First Appointment (including and excluding cancellations and deferrals), Five Yearly Trends September 2003 – September 2008



Source: Departmental Return CH3 parts 1 & 2.

Outpatients Waiting More than 9 Weeks

The 2008/09 Priority For Action Target relating to Waiting Times for a first outpatient appointment states that 'Trusts should ensure that, from April 2008, no patient waits longer than 13 weeks for a first outpatient appointment, reducing to 9 weeks by March 2009. At the end of September 2008, the number of patients waiting more than 9 weeks for a first outpatient appointment was 7,910, 10.6% of the total waiting.

Table 8 Patients Waiting More than 9 Weeks⁶ - September 2008

Waiting for:	Quarter Ending September 2008	Change compared with end of previous quarter
Excluding Cancellations and Deferrals	7,622	-380
Cancellations and Deferrals	288	62
Total Waiting	7,910	-318

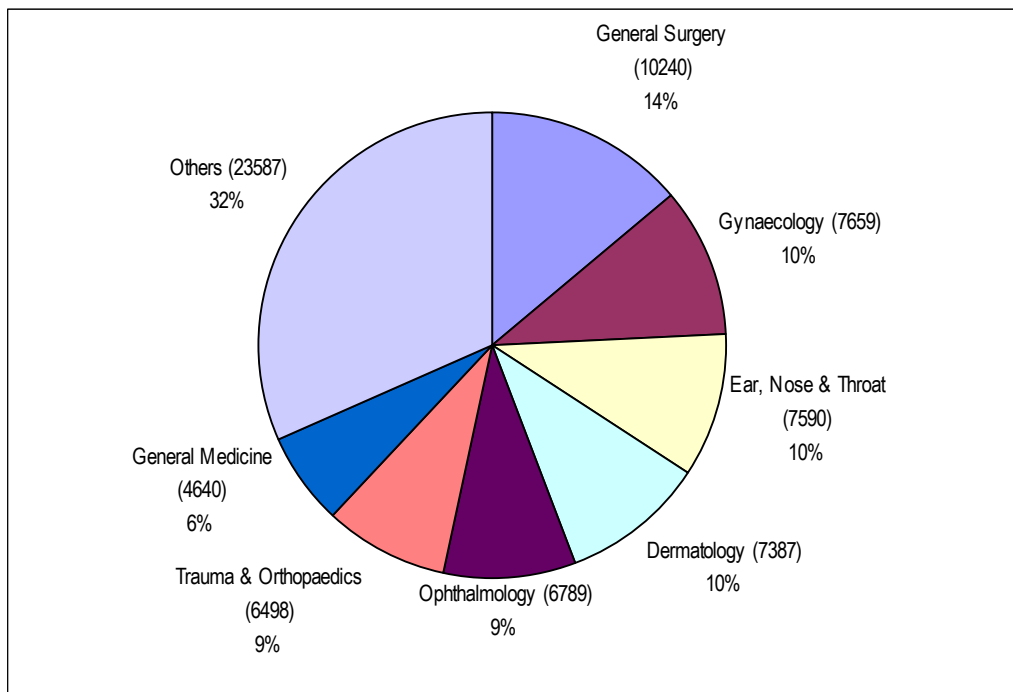
Source: Departmental Return CH3 parts 1 & 2.

⁶ Refer to Technical Notes 14-20.

Outpatients Waiting by Specialty

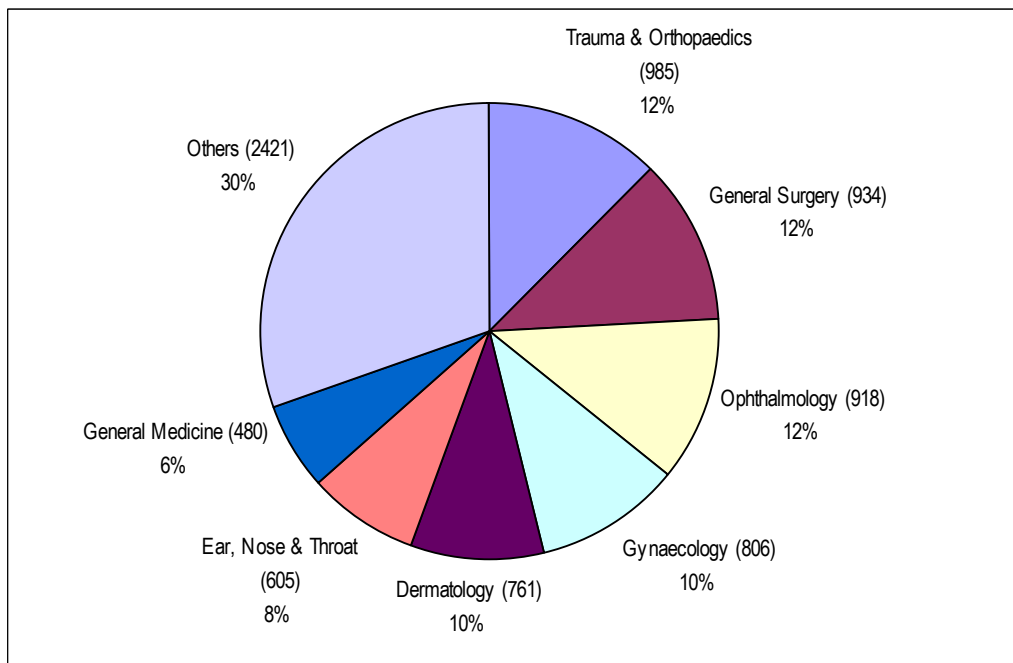
The majority of those waiting (68.0%) were within seven specialties: General Surgery; Gynaecology (Gynae), Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT); Dermatology; Ophthalmology; Trauma & Orthopaedics and General Medicine (Figure 4a). Figures represent the total number waiting for their first outpatient appointment during the September 2008 quarter including those who have cancelled or missed a previous appointment.

Figure 4a Outpatients – Total Waiters by Specialty at the end of September 2008



Source: Departmental Return CH3 Parts 1 & 2.

Figure 4b Outpatients – Patients Waiting More than 9 Weeks by Specialty at the end of September 2008



Source: Departmental Return CH3 Parts 1 & 2.

Outpatient Waiting Time by Specialty

Waiting times for outpatients by specialty are shown in Tables 9a and 9b. Overall 89.4% of those waiting for treatment were waiting less than 9 weeks.

Table 9a Number of Patients Waiting for a First Appointment by Weeks Waiting and Specialty – September 2008

Specialty	Patients Waiting for an Appointment by Weeks Waiting				Total Number of Patients Waiting
	0-6	>6-9	>9-13	>13	
General Surgery	7,433	1,873	934	0	10,240
Gynaecology	5,445	1,408	806	0	7,659
Ear, Nose & Throat	5,467	1,518	604	1	7,590
Dermatology	5,120	1,506	739	22	7,387
Ophthalmology	4,324	1,547	918	0	6,789
Trauma & Orthopaedics	4,166	1,347	900	85	6,498
General Medicine	3,319	841	478	2	4,640
Cardiology	1,745	469	274	55	2,543
Paediatrics	1,844	402	166	44	2,456
Neurology	1,533	510	308	4	2,355
Urology	1,504	347	216	4	2,071
Rheumatology	1,130	401	234	1	1,766
Oral Surgery	1,128	288	101	0	1,517
Pain Management	794	269	128	0	1,191
Gastroenterology	716	236	128	0	1,080
Restorative Dentistry	666	159	96	0	921
Plastic Surgery	566	205	56	1	828
Geriatric Medicine	658	106	32	0	796
Thoracic Medicine	394	123	48	0	565
Mental Illness	370	120	26	0	516
Other	3,695	788	401	98	4,982
All Specialties	52,017	14,463	7,593	317	74,390

Source: Departmental Return CH3 Parts 1 & 2

Table 9b Percentage of Patients Waiting for a First Appointment by Weeks Waiting and Specialty – September 2008

Specialty	Patients Waiting for an Appointment by Weeks Waiting			
	0-6	>6-9	>9-13	>13
General Surgery	72.6%	18.3%	9.1%	0.0%
Gynaecology	71.1%	18.4%	10.5%	0.0%
Ear, Nose & Throat	72.0%	20.0%	8.0%	<0.1%
Dermatology	69.3%	20.4%	10.0%	0.3%
Ophthalmology	63.7%	22.8%	13.5%	0.0%
Trauma & Orthopaedics	64.1%	20.7%	13.9%	1.3%
General Medicine	71.5%	18.1%	10.3%	<0.1%
Cardiology	68.6%	18.4%	10.8%	2.2%
Paediatrics	75.1%	16.4%	6.8%	1.8%
Neurology	65.1%	21.7%	13.1%	0.2%
Urology	72.6%	16.8%	10.4%	0.2%
Rheumatology	64.0%	22.7%	13.3%	0.1%
Oral Surgery	74.4%	19.0%	6.7%	0.0%
Pain Management	66.7%	22.6%	10.7%	0.0%
Gastroenterology	66.3%	21.9%	11.9%	0.0%
Restorative Dentistry	72.3%	17.3%	10.4%	0.0%
Plastic Surgery	68.4%	24.8%	6.8%	0.1%
Geriatric Medicine	82.7%	13.3%	4.0%	0.0%
Thoracic Medicine	69.7%	21.8%	8.5%	0.0%
Mental Illness	71.7%	23.3%	5.0%	0.0%
Other	74.2%	15.8%	8.0%	2.0%
All Specialties	69.9%	19.4%	10.2%	0.4%

Source: Departmental Return CH3 Parts 1 & 2.

Outpatient Waiting Times by Provider Trust

Waiting times for outpatients by Trust are shown in Table 10.

Table 10 Number of Patients Waiting for a First Outpatient Appointment by Provider Trust and Weeks Waiting – September 2008⁶

Provider Trust	Patients Waiting for an Appointment by Weeks Waiting				Total Number of Patients Waiting
	0-6	>6-9	>9-13	>13	
Belfast	19,223	5,590	3,572	300	28,685
Northern	8,072	2,367	1,460	10	11,909
South Eastern	9,057	2,568	1,072	1	12,698
Southern	8,320	2,367	1,013	2	11,702
Western	7,345	1,571	476	4	9,396
Total	52,017	14,463	7,593	317	74,390

Source: Departmental Return CH3 Parts 1 & 2

⁶Refer to Technical Notes – points 14-20.

Outpatient Waiting Times by Programme of Care

Waiting times for a first outpatient appointment by programme of care are shown in Table 11. The vast majority (96.7%) of patients were awaiting their first outpatient appointment in the Acute Services Programme of Care.

Table 11 Number of Patients Waiting for a First Appointment by Weeks Waiting and Programme of Care – September 2008

Programme of Care	Patients Waiting for an Appointment by Weeks Waiting				Total Number of Patients Waiting
	0-6	>6-9	>9-13	>13	
Acute Services	50,053	14,098	7,483	315	71,949
Maternity & Child Health	451	41	6	0	498
Elderly Care	954	157	40	0	1,151
Mental Health	526	146	55	2	729
Learning Disability	33	21	9	0	63
All POCs	52,017	14,463	7,593	317	74,390

Source: Departmental Return CH3 Parts 1 & 2

Completed Outpatient Waits – September 2008

Waiting times for completed outpatient waits, for patients treated within Health Service hospitals in Northern Ireland, are shown in Table 12. A total of 101,318 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 2008 quarter. Including patients who have cancelled, or did not attend a previous appointment, the total number of patients that attended a first outpatient appointment within Health Service hospitals in Northern Ireland during the quarter was 109,341.

Table 12 Completed Outpatient Waits for First Appointment⁷

Quarter	Total Number of Completed Outpatient Waits	
	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 2005	86,944	94,865
A - J 2005	91,489	99,698
J - S 2005	82,721	92,047
O- D 2005	91,969	101,037
J - D 2005	353,123	387,647
J - M 2006	91,695	101,249
A - J 2006	90,531	99,418
J - S 2006	90,716	100,769
O- D 2006	104,266	113,927
J - D 2006	377,208	415,363
J - M 2007	110,712	121,104
A - J 2007	105,202	114,317
J - S 2007	102,848	110,509
O- D 2007	109,135	116,634
J - D 2007	427,897	462,564
J - M 2008	104,041	112,140
A - J 2008	108,230	115,771
J - S 2008	101,318	109,341

Source: Departmental Return CH4

⁷Refer to Technical Notes – point 21.

Completed Outpatient Waits including Independent Sector Activity– September 2008

During the September 2008 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 8,635 Health Service patients attended a first outpatient appointment, within the Independent Sector, during the quarter ending September 2008. 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 117,976 outpatients attended a first appointment in Northern Ireland for an assessment commissioned by the Health Service.

Table 13a Completed Outpatient Waits by Trust including Independent Sector Activity⁸

Provider Trust	Number of Completed Outpatient Waits within Health Service Hospitals	Number of Completed Outpatient Waits in Independent Sector	Total Number of Completed Outpatient Waits Commissioned by Health Service
Belfast	43,251	1,767	45,018
Northern	14,789	2,568	17,357
South Eastern	18,402	1,458	19,860
Southern	15,511	694	16,205
Western	17,388	2,148	19,536
Total Treated	109,341	8,635	117,976

Source: Health and Social Care Trusts

⁸Refer to Technical Notes – points 22 - 24.

Completed Outpatient Waits including Independent Sector Activity, September 2007 - September 2008

Table 13b has been included to reflect the total completed outpatient waits in the Health Service for the past five quarters.

Table 13b Completed Outpatient Waits by Trust Including Independent Sector Activity⁸, Quarter Ending 30 September 2007 – Quarter Ending 30 September 2008

Provider Trust	Total Number of Completed Outpatient Waits Commissioned by Health Service				
	30 September 2007	31 December 2007	31 March 2008	30 June 2008	30 September 2008
Belfast	39,827	45,196	43,938	44,762	45,018
Northern	17,555	18,053	15,618	18,261	17,357
South Eastern	17,675	20,827	19,131	20,639	19,860
Southern	16,217	16,369	14,674	17,560	16,205
Western	24,970	23,541	22,478	20,248	19,536
Total	116,244	123,986	115,839	121,470	117,976

Source: Health and Social Care Trusts

⁸Refer to Technical Notes – points 22-24.

Diagnostic Services

Tables 14 -18 provide details of the number of people waiting for the 16 selected diagnostic services, carried out at hospitals in Northern Ireland, and covered by the maximum waiting time Ministerial target for 2008/09⁹.

Headline Totals – Table 14

The total number of patients waiting for one of the 16 selected diagnostic services at hospitals in Northern Ireland at the end of September 2008 stood at 30,645, a decrease of 106 (-0.3%) on the position at 30th June 2008 (30,751).

Table 14 Quarterly Diagnostic Services Waiting List – September 2008⁹

Diagnostic Service:	Number of Patients Waiting Quarter Ending September 2008	Change compared with the end of the previous quarter
Imaging (excluding Interventional Imaging)		
Magnetic Resonance Imaging	2,954	-705
Computerised Tomography	2,669	-227
Non-obstetric ultrasound	6,615	560
Barium Studies	1,314	170
DEXA Scan	852	17
Radio-Nuclide Imaging	594	-54
Physiological Measurement		
Audiology - pure tone audiometry	557	-4
Cardiology - echocardiography	2,611	-246
Cardiology - perfusion studies	470	14
Neurophysiology - peripheral neurophysiology	1,081	5
Respiratory physiology - sleep studies	304	-57
Urodynamics - pressures and flows	485	111
Day case Endoscopy		
Colonoscopy	2,901	370
Flexi sigmoidoscopy	1,265	-28
Cystoscopy	1,676	52
Gastroscopy	4,297	-84
Other Endoscopy		
Colonoscopy	0	0
Flexi sigmoidoscopy	0	0
Cystoscopy	0	0
Gastroscopy	0	0
Total waiting for selected diagnostic tests	30,645	-106

Source: Departmental Return SDR1

⁹Refer to Technical Notes – points 25-31.

Table 15 Diagnostic Services Waiting Times by Diagnostic Test and Weeks Waiting – September 2008⁹

Diagnostic Test	Patients Waiting for a Diagnostic Test by					Total Number of Patients Waiting
	0 - 6 weeks	>6 - 9 weeks	>9 - 13 weeks	>13 - 21 weeks	>21 weeks	
Magnetic Resonance Imaging	2,254	458	242	0	0	2,954
Computerised Tomography	2,253	249	167	0	0	2,669
Non Obstetric Ultrasound	5,232	1,129	254	0	0	6,615
Barium Studies	1,152	136	26	0	0	1,314
DEXA Scan	781	70	1	0	0	852
Radio Nuclide Imaging	527	58	9	0	0	594
Audiology - Pure Tone Audiometry	430	85	42	0	0	557
Cardiology - Echocardiography	1,816	464	331	0	0	2,611
Cardiology - Perfusion Studies	289	112	62	7	0	470
Neurophysiology - Peripheral Neurophysiology	684	241	156	0	0	1,081
Respiratory Physiology - Sleep Studies	202	81	21	0	0	304
Urodynamics - Pressures & Flows	305	105	74	1	0	485
daycase colonoscopy	1,375	488	521	517	0	2,901
daycase flexi sigmoidoscopy	719	229	156	161	0	1,265
daycase cystoscopy	792	319	315	250	0	1,676
daycase gastroscopy	2,240	683	684	690	0	4,297
Total waiting for selected diagnostic tests	21,051	4,907	3,061	1,626	0	30,645

Source: Departmental Return SDR1

⁹Refer to Technical Notes – points 25-31.

Waiting times for diagnostic services by Trust are shown in Table 16.

Table 16 Diagnostic Services Waiting Times by Provider Trust – September 2008⁹

Diagnostic Test	Patients Waiting for a Diagnostic Test by Weeks Waiting					Total Number of Patients Waiting
	0 - 6 weeks	>6 - 9 weeks	>9 - 13 weeks	>13 - 21 weeks	>21 weeks	
Belfast	7,031	1,876	1,277	464	0	10,648
Northern	3,362	823	478	385	0	5,048
South Eastern	3,193	857	399	213	0	4,662
Southern	4,206	821	517	435	0	5,979
Western	3,259	530	390	129	0	4,308
Total	21,051	4,907	3,061	1,626	0	30,645

Source: Departmental Return SDR1

⁹Refer to Technical Notes – points 25-31.

Diagnostic Services Waiting over 9/13 Weeks

The 2008/09 Ministerial target for diagnostic services states that from April 2008, no patient should wait longer than 13 weeks for one of the selected diagnostic tests (21 weeks for a day case endoscopy) reducing to 9 weeks (13 weeks for a day case endoscopy) by 31st March 2009.

There were 1,393 patients waiting over 9 weeks for the 16 selected diagnostic services (except for day case endoscopies). Eight of these patients were waiting over 13 weeks.

Table 17 Selected Diagnostic Tests – Over 9 Weeks⁹

Diagnostic Test	Total Number of Patients Waiting	Total Number of Patients Waiting over 9 weeks	Total Number of Patients Waiting over 13 weeks
Magnetic Resonance Imaging	2,954	242	0
Computerised Tomography	2,669	167	0
Non Obstetric Ultrasound	6,615	254	0
Barium Studies	1,314	26	0
DEXA Scan	852	1	0
Radio Nuclide Imaging	594	9	0
Audiology - Pure Tone Audiometry	557	42	0
Cardiology - Echocardiography	2,611	331	0
Cardiology - Perfusion Studies	470	69	7
Neurophysiology - Peripheral			
Neurophysiology	1,081	156	0
Respiratory Physiology - Sleep Studies	304	21	0
Urodynamics - Pressures & Flows	485	75	1
Total waiting	20,506	1,393	8

Source: Departmental Return SDR1

⁹Refer to Technical Notes – points 25-31.

There were 1,618 patients waiting over 13 weeks for a day case endoscopy at the 30th September 2008, none of which were waiting more than 21 weeks.

Table 18 Day Case Endoscopies – Over 13 Weeks⁹

Diagnostic Test	Total Number of Patients Waiting	Total Number of Patients Waiting over 13 weeks	Total Number of Patients Waiting over 21 weeks
Day case Colonoscopy	2,901	517	0
Day case Flexi Sigmoidoscopy	1,265	161	0
Day case Cystoscopy	1,676	250	0
Day case Gastroscopy	4,297	690	0
Total Waiting	10,139	1,618	0

Source: Departmental Return SDR1

⁹Refer to Technical Notes – points 25-31.

Technical Notes

1. The sources for the data contained in this release are the DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Time Dataset and Departmental Returns CH2, CH3, CH4 and SDR1. These returns collect information from Health and Social Care Trusts on a quarterly basis.
2. Trust based information (DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Time Dataset, CH2, CH3, CH4 and SDR1) returns include all patients living outside Northern Ireland and all privately funded patients waiting for treatment in Health Service hospitals in Northern Ireland.
3. Due to an amendment to data relating to the Belfast, South Eastern and Western Health and Social Care Trusts, the total number of patients waiting for inpatient treatment at 30th June 2008 has been revised to 36,073 and the total number of patients waiting for inpatient treatment at 30th September 2007 has been revised to 35,310.
4. For Tables 2, 3a, 3b, 4 and Figure 2b, inpatient waiting time 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 exactly 6 weeks and 1 day would be included in the >6-13 (greater than 6 weeks but waiting no longer than 13 weeks) timeband.
5. The current ministerial target for inpatient waiting times states that from April 2008 no patient should wait longer than 21 weeks for inpatient or day case treatment, reducing to 13 weeks by 31st March 2009. Patients waiting 'more than 13 weeks' include all patients in the >13-21 and >21 week timebands. Patients waiting 'more than 21 weeks' include all patients in the >21 week timeband.
6. 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.
7. 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.
8. 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.
9. 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.

10. 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.
11. Waiting times for completed inpatient waits are available upon request from Hospital Information Branch.
12. The number of patients that received inpatient treatment, commissioned by the Health Service, in the Independent Sector are provided in Tables 6a and 6b. These figures have been provided for each transferring Health and Social Care Trust (Health Trust responsible for the patients 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.
13. The number of patients that received inpatient treatment, commissioned by the Health Service, in the Independent Sector during the period 1st April 2008 – 30th June 2008 has been revised from 1,965 to 2,217. This is due to revisions received from the South Eastern and Western Health and Social Care Trusts.
14. Outpatient waiters 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.
15. In previous quarters outpatient waiting list figures included patients waiting for an appointment in the Obstetrics speciality (501) and excluded all other obstetric patients (specialty 510, Obstetrics (Ante Natal) and specialty 520, Obstetrics (Post Natal)), as these services are provided on a planned rather than elective basis. From the quarter ending September 2008, all ante natal obstetric appointments are now recorded under speciality 510 (including those previously recorded as specialty 501) and all post natal obstetric appointments are recorded under specialty 520. As a result, all obstetric appointments are now excluded from outpatient waiting lists figures.
16. During 2008/09, Health and Social Care Trusts commenced a process of reclassifying a number of mental health 'consultant led' outpatient services as 'non consultant led' services. While this decision has been taken to improve the delivery of mental health services, the process has resulted in patients waiting for reclassified mental health services no longer being reported on the outpatient waiting list (see point 14). The process of reclassification has occurred on a service by service basis since the beginning of 2008/09 and relates to the following specialties; Geriatric medicine, Mental Handicap, Mental Illness, Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, Forensic Psychiatry, Psychotherapy and Old Age Psychiatry. Services reclassified during the quarter ending September 2008 are excluded from the figures contained in this bulletin. Figures relating to services reclassified during the quarter ending June 2008 have been retrospectively removed from data presented for that quarter. Waiting times for 'non consultant led' mental health services are subject to an additional PFA target and are performance managed by the DHSSPS.
17. The total number of patients waiting for a first outpatient appointment at 30 June 2008 has been revised to 77,091 due to amendments received from the Belfast, Northern, South Eastern and Western Health and Social Care Trusts primarily as a result of the reclassification of 'consultant led' mental health services (see note 16).
18. For Tables 8, 9a, 9b, 10, 11 and Figure 4b, outpatient waiting time relates to the number of completed weeks a patient has been waiting for outpatient assessment For example, a patient

waiting exactly 6 weeks would be included in the 0-6 week timeband and a patient waiting exactly 6 weeks and 1 day would be included in the >6-9 (greater than 6 weeks but waiting no longer than 9 weeks) timeband.

19. The current ministerial target for outpatient waiting times states that from April 2008 no patient should wait longer than 13 weeks for a first outpatient appointment, reducing to 9 weeks by 31st March 2009. Patients waiting 'more than 9 weeks' include all patients in the >9-13 and >13 week timebands. Patients waiting 'more than 13 weeks' include all patients in the >13 week timeband.
20. Due to technical difficulties it is not currently possible to accurately report on the total number of patients waiting for a first Integrated Clinical Assessment and Treatment Services (ICATS) appointment at 30th September 2008.
21. Waiting times for completed outpatient waits are available upon request from Hospital Information Branch.
22. Data on the number of completed outpatient waits performed within the Independent sector, as commissioned by the Royal Group of Hospitals site of the Belfast HSC Trust are included within the figures contained in Table 12.
23. The number of patients that received an outpatient assessment, commissioned by the Health Service, in the Independent Sector is provided in Tables 13a and 13b. These figures have been provided for each transferring Health and Social Care Trust (Trust responsible for the patients 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 outpatient waits during each quarter.
24. The number of patients that received an outpatient assessment, commissioned by the Health Service, in the Independent Sector during the period 1st April 2008 – 30th June 2008 has been revised from 5,716 to 5,699. This is due to revisions received from the South Eastern and Western Health and Social Care Trusts.
25. The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety commenced the collection of waiting times information for diagnostic services for the quarter ending 31st December 2007, following a pilot exercise for the quarter ending 30th September 2007. The source for the data is the Information Return SDR1. This return will be collected from Hospital Trusts on a quarterly basis. The data are not National Statistics and they have had limited validation by the Department, however they have been included to provide users with a comprehensive view of waiting times for the selected diagnostic services subject to the 2008/09 Ministerial target.
26. A diagnostic service provides an examination, test or procedure used to identify a person's disease or condition and which allows a medical diagnosis to be made.
27. The Ministerial target for diagnostic waiting times states that from April 2008, no patient should wait longer than 13 weeks for one of the selected diagnostic tests (21 weeks for a day case endoscopy) reducing to 9 weeks (13 weeks for a day case endoscopy) by 31st March 2009. The 16 selected services are: Magnetic Resonance Imaging; Computerised Tomography; Non-Obstetric Ultrasound; Barium Studies; DEXA Scan; Radio-Nuclide Imaging; Pure Tone Audiometry; Echocardiography; Perfusion Studies; Peripheral Neurophysiology; Sleep Studies; Urodynamics Pressures and Flows; Colonoscopy; Flexi Sigmoidoscopy; Cystoscopy; Gastroscopy.

28. The diagnostic waiting time target relates to all tests with a diagnostic element. Included are tests that are part diagnostic and subsequently part therapeutic. A therapeutic procedure is defined as a procedure which involves actual treatment of a person's disease, condition or injury. Purely therapeutic procedures are excluded from the diagnostic waiting times target. Patients currently admitted to a hospital bed and waiting for an emergency procedure, patients waiting for a planned procedure and patients waiting for procedures as part of screening programme are also excluded from the waiting times target.
29. The waiting time for a diagnostic service commences on the date on which the referral for the service is received by the Health Care provider and stops on the date on which the test is performed.
30. A number of the diagnostic services reported on the SDR 1 return are managed as either an ordinary admission or a day case. As such, they will be included in both the inpatient and diagnostic services waiting time figures. Due to the risk of multiple counting, these two sets of data should not be combined to give an estimate of the total number of patients waiting for either inpatient admission or a diagnostic service.
31. Waiting time statistics for day case endoscopies also include patients waiting for endoscopies that are managed as ordinary admissions.
32. 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.
33. Figures relating to the quarter ending 31st December 2008 will be released on Thursday, 5th March 2009.
34. 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

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LONDON SW1V 2QQ

You can also find National Statistics on the internet – Go to 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

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BT4 3SQ

E-mail: statistics@dhsspsni.gov.uk

Internet address: http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/stats-hospital_community_statistics#waiting