

Statistics Release



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an Fowk Siccar**

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Northern Ireland Waiting Lists – December 2007

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 December 2007, 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 December 2007 stood at 37,763.

Over the quarter, comparing the end of December 2007 with the end of September 2007 (35,375), the total number waiting has increased by 2,388 (+6.8%).

Table 1: Quarterly Inpatient Waiting Lists – December 2007

Waiting for:	Quarter Ending December 2007	Change compared with end of previous quarter
Ordinary Admissions	12,813	+ 972
Day case Admissions	24,950	+ 1416
Total Waiting	37,763	+ 2388

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

¹ Refer to technical notes – points 1-6 & 9-12.

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 37,763 people waiting for admission to hospital at the end of December 2007, 12,813 (33.9%) were waiting for ordinary admission and 24,950 (66.1%) were waiting for day case admission (Table 1).

Since the end of September 2007, the number of cases waiting for ordinary admission has increased by 972 (+8.2%) and the number waiting for day case admission has increased by 1,416 (+6.0%).

Waiting Times for Ordinary Admission and Day Case Treatment² – Table 2

At the end of December 2007, there were 455 patients waiting more than 21 weeks for inpatient treatment, of which 373 were waiting more than 26 weeks. Of the 455 patients waiting more than 21 weeks, 328 (72.1%) were awaiting ordinary admission and 127 (27.9%) were awaiting day case procedures.

Table 2 Patients Waiting More Than 21 Weeks² – December 2007

Waiting for:	Quarter Ending December 2007	Change compared with end of previous quarter
Ordinary Admissions	328	+ 51
Day Case Admissions	127	+ 7
Total Waiting	455	+ 58

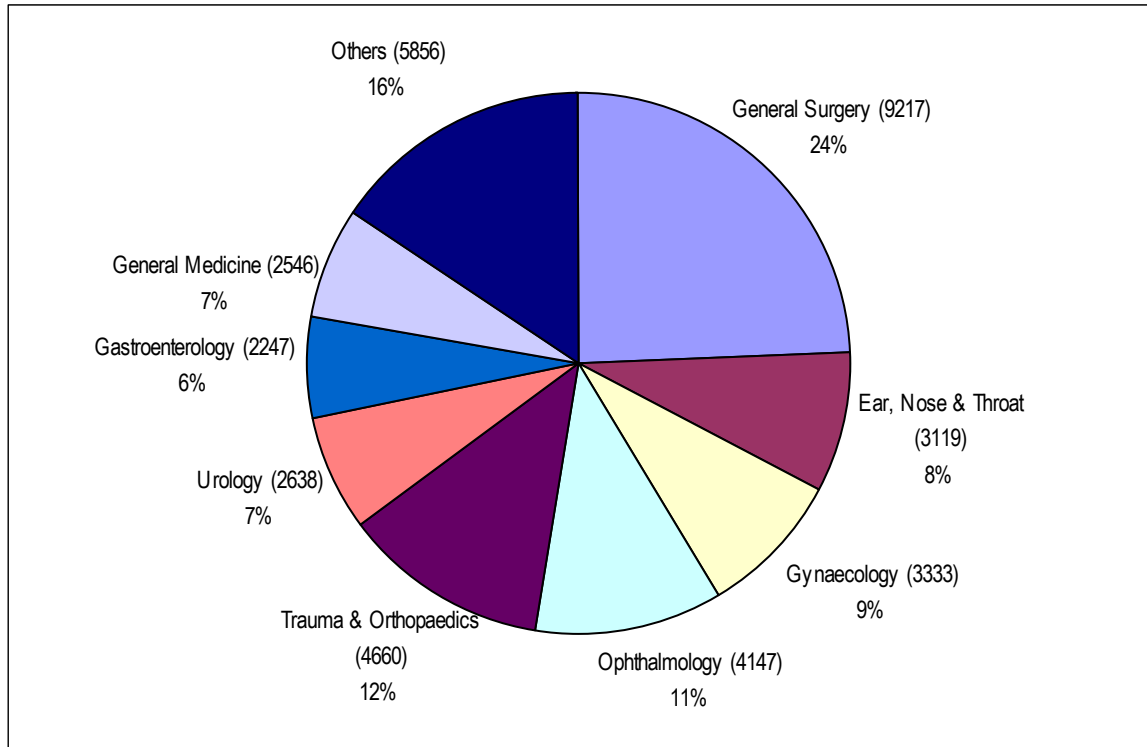
Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

² Refer to Technical Notes – points 1-13.

Inpatients Waiting by Specialty

The overwhelming majority of those waiting (84.5%) were within eight specialties: General Surgery; Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT); Gynaecology (Gynae); Ophthalmology; Trauma and Orthopaedic Surgery (T&O); Urology; Gastroenterology and General Medicine (Figure 1A).

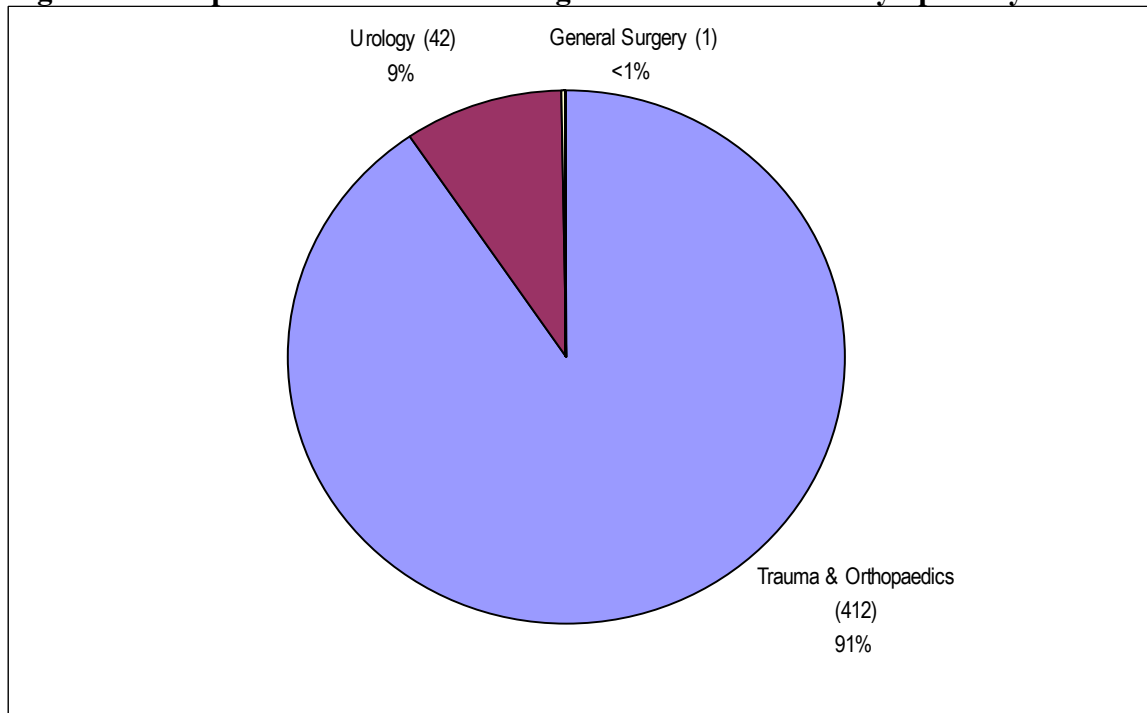
Figure 1a Inpatients - Total Waiters by Specialty at the end of December 2007²



Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

² Refer to Technical Notes – points 1-13.

Figure 1b Inpatients – Patients waiting more than 21 weeks by Specialty at the end of December 2007²



Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

² Refer to Technical Notes – points 1-13.

Inpatient Waiting Time by Specialty

Waiting times for inpatients by specialty are shown in Tables 3a and 3b. Overall 98.8% of those waiting for admission were waiting 21 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 – December 2007²

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	4,130	3,522	1,564	1	0	9,217
Trauma & Orthopaedics	1,378	1,639	1,231	54	358	4,660
Ophthalmology	1,567	1,712	868	0	0	4,147
Gynaecology	1,577	1,269	487	0	0	3,333
Ear, Nose & Throat	1,146	1,319	654	0	0	3,119
Urology	1,230	921	445	27	15	2,638
General Medicine	1,363	978	205	0	0	2,546
Gastroenterology	1,004	896	347	0	0	2,247
Cardiology	570	368	206	0	0	1,144
Pain Management	301	357	189	0	0	847
Plastic Surgery	319	250	112	0	0	681
Oral Surgery	228	203	78	0	0	509
Rheumatology	149	193	125	0	0	467
Paediatric Surgery	186	180	62	0	0	428
Dermatology	129	155	108	0	0	392
Cardiac Surgery	96	152	64	0	0	312
General Practice (Other)	166	20	5	0	0	191
Neurology	66	31	30	0	0	127
Thoracic Medicine	24	27	5	0	0	56
Nephrology	24	28	2	0	0	54
Other	442	177	29	0	0	648
All Specialties	16,095	14,397	6,816	82	373	37,763

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

² Refer to Technical Notes – points 1-13.

Table 3b Percentage of Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting and Specialty – December 2007²

Specialty	Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting				
	0 - 6	>6 - 13	>13 - 21	>21 - 26	>26
General Surgery	44.8%	38.2%	17.0%	<0.1%	0.0%
Trauma & Orthopaedics	29.6%	35.2%	26.4%	1.2%	7.7%
Ophthalmology	37.8%	41.3%	20.9%	0.0%	0.0%
Gynaecology	47.3%	38.1%	14.6%	0.0%	0.0%
Ear, Nose & Throat	36.7%	42.3%	21.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Urology	46.6%	34.9%	16.9%	1.0%	0.6%
General Medicine	53.5%	38.4%	8.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Gastroenterology	44.7%	39.9%	15.4%	0.0%	0.0%
Cardiology	49.8%	32.2%	18.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Pain Management	35.5%	42.1%	22.3%	0.0%	0.0%
Plastic Surgery	46.8%	36.7%	16.4%	0.0%	0.0%
Oral Surgery	44.8%	39.9%	15.3%	0.0%	0.0%
Rheumatology	31.9%	41.3%	26.8%	0.0%	0.0%
Paediatric Surgery	43.5%	42.1%	14.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Dermatology	32.9%	39.5%	27.6%	0.0%	0.0%
Cardiac Surgery	30.8%	48.7%	20.5%	0.0%	0.0%
General Practice (Other)	86.9%	10.5%	2.6%	0.0%	0.0%
Neurology	52.0%	24.4%	23.6%	0.0%	0.0%
Thoracic Medicine	42.9%	48.2%	8.9%	0.0%	0.0%
Nephrology	44.4%	51.9%	3.7%	0.0%	0.0%
Other	68.2%	27.3%	4.5%	0.0%	0.0%
All Specialties	42.6%	38.1%	18.0%	0.2%	1.0%

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

² Refer to Technical Notes – points 1-13.

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 – December 2007³

Provider Trust	Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting					Total Number of Patients Waiting
	0 - 6	>6 - 13	>13 - 21	>21 - 26	>26	
Belfast	6,567	6,069	2,999	80	373	16,088
Northern	2,491	2,061	825	0	0	5,377
South Eastern	2,319	1,682	442	0	0	4,443
Southern	2,290	2,417	1,360	1	0	6,068
Western	2,428	2,168	1,190	1	0	5,787
Total	16,095	14,397	6,816	82	373	37,763

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

³ Refer to Technical Notes – points 1-14.

Completed Inpatient Waits – December 2007

Waiting times for completed inpatient waits, for patients treated within Health Service hospitals in Northern Ireland are shown in Table 5. A total of 46,230 inpatients were admitted to Health Service hospitals during the December 2007 quarter. Of those patients who did not self defer, or fail to attend on a previously arranged admission date, 74.7% received their treatment within 3 months of being placed on the waiting list and 98.6% received their treatment within 6 months.

Table 5 Completed Inpatient Waits⁴

Quarter	Time Waiting in Months					Total Number of Completed Inpatient Waits	
	0 - 2	3 - 5	6 - 8	9 - 11	12+	Excluding patients who self deferred or did not attend on a previously arranged admission date	Including patients who have self deferred or did not attend on a previously arranged admission date
J - M 2004	74.3%	11.6%	4.8%	3.5%	5.7%	41,005	44,157
A - J 2004	74.5%	11.4%	5.9%	3.1%	5.0%	38,579	41,273
J - S 2004	72.9%	13.1%	5.5%	3.7%	4.8%	37,247	40,153
O - D 2004	73.3%	12.3%	5.5%	3.7%	5.2%	41,418	44,232
J - D 2004	73.8%	12.1%	5.4%	3.5%	5.2%	158,249	169,815
J - M 2005	72.7%	12.9%	4.9%	3.9%	5.6%	39,359	42,567
A - J 2005	73.9%	12.5%	6.2%	3.1%	4.3%	41,285	44,448
J - S 2005	71.8%	12.9%	5.4%	3.9%	6.0%	37,191	40,422
O - D 2005	72.5%	11.6%	6.1%	5.0%	4.8%	40,456	44,606
J - D 2005	72.8%	12.5%	5.6%	4.0%	5.2%	158,291	172,043
J - M 2006	70.0%	13.7%	6.9%	5.8%	3.6%	41,240	45,827
A - J 2006	70.8%	14.8%	8.2%	4.8%	1.3%	39,425	43,553
J - S 2006	69.5%	16.5%	8.7%	4.4%	1.0%	36,858	41,004
O - D 2006	70.7%	17.7%	9.5%	1.4%	0.6%	39,973	44,994
J - D 2006	70.2%	15.7%	8.3%	4.1%	1.7%	157,496	175,378
J - M 2007	70.3%	22.0%	6.7%	0.6%	0.4%	41,197	46,645
A - J 2007	70.8%	25.5%	3.3%	0.2%	0.2%	40,856	46,140
J - S 2007	70.2%	27.2%	2.2%	0.3%	0.2%	38,530	43,853
O - D 2007	74.7%	23.9%	1.1%	0.2%	0.2%	40,538	46,230
J - D 2007	71.5%	24.6%	3.4%	0.3%	0.2%	161,121	182,868

Source: Departmental Return CH2

⁴ Refer to Technical Notes – point 15.

Completed Inpatient Waits including Independent Sector Activity – December 2007

During the December 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 2,183 Health Service patients were treated within the Independent Sector during the quarter ending December 2007. When this number is combined with that for inpatients admitted to Health Service hospitals during the quarter, it is estimated that approximately 48,413 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 Activity⁵

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	20,544	553	21,097
Northern	6,061	252	6,313
South Eastern	6,742	184	6,926
Southern	6,320	333	6,653
Western	6,563	861	7,424
Total Treated	46,230	2,183	48,413

Source: Health and Social Care Trusts

⁵ Refer to Technical Notes – points 14 & 16-17.

Completed Inpatient Waits including Independent Sector Activity – March 2007 -December 2007

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

Table 6b Completed Inpatient Waits by Trust Including Independent Sector Activity⁵ – Four Quarterly Trends 31st March 2007 – 31st December 2007

Provider Trust	Total Number of Completed Inpatient Waits Commissioned by Health Service			
	31st March 2007	30th June 2007	30th September 2007	31st December 2007
Belfast	21,318	21,371	19,899	21,097
Northern	6,270	6,076	6,602	6,313
South Eastern	7,006	7,001	6,209	6,926
Southern	6,396	6,784	6,320	6,653
Western	7,008	7,322	7,004	7,424
Total	47,998	48,554	46,034	48,413

Source: Health and Social Care Trusts

⁵ Refer to Technical Notes – points 14 & 16-17.

Outpatients

Headline Totals - Table 7

The number of patients waiting for a first outpatient appointment (including cancellations and deferrals) at the end of December 2007 stood at 73,637.

Over the quarter, comparing the end of December 2007 with the end of September 2007 (86,789), the total number has decreased by 13,152 (-15.2%).

Over the year, comparing the end of December 2007 with the end of December 2006 (154,607), the total number waiting decreased by 80,970 (-52.4%).

Excluding cancellations and deferrals, the quarterly and annual decreases were 16.3% and 53.6% respectively.

Table 7: Quarterly Outpatient Waiting Lists - December 2007⁶

Waiting for:	Quarter Ending December 2007	Change compared with end of previous quarter	Change compared with end same quarter - previous year
Excluding Cancellations and Deferrals	66,899	-13,006	-77,325
Cancellations and Deferrals	6,738	-146	-3,645
Total Waiting	73,637	-13,152	-80,970

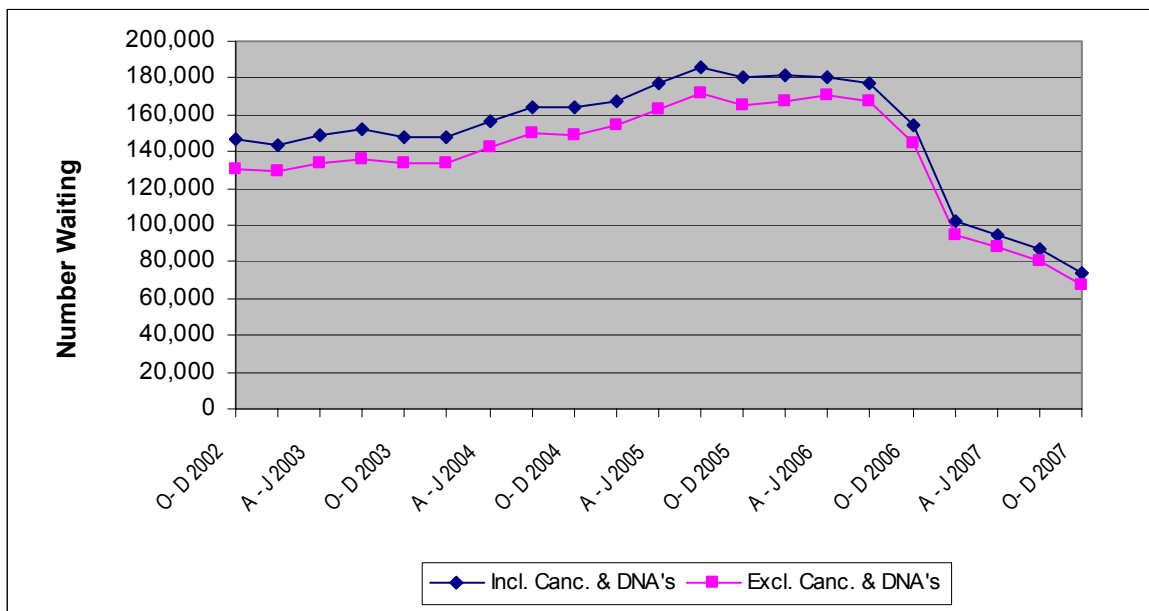
Source: Departmental Return CH3 parts 1 & 2

⁶ Refer to Technical Notes 18 - 20.

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 eight of the previous nine quarters.

Figure 2 Outpatients Waiting for a First Appointment (including and excluding cancellations and deferrals) – Five Yearly Trends December 2002 – December 2007



Source: Departmental Return CH3 parts 1 & 2.

Outpatients Waiting 3 Months and Over

At the end of December 2007, the number of patients waiting three months and over for a first outpatient appointment was 2,904, 3.9% of the total waiting. 134 patients were waiting 6 months and over for a first outpatient appointment

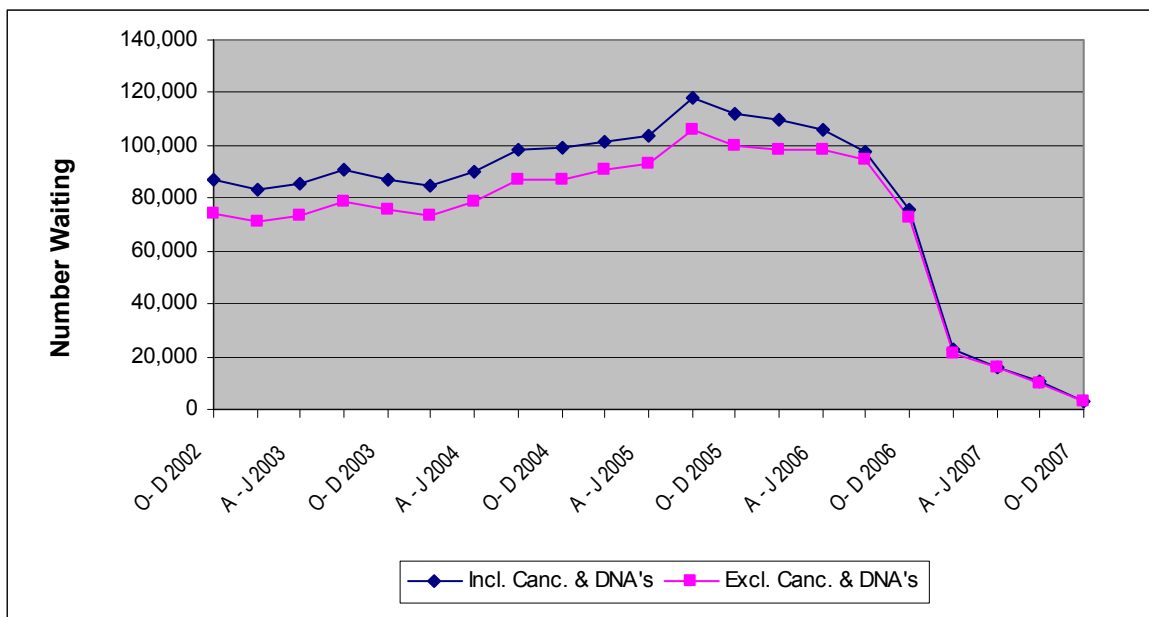
Table 8 Patients Waiting 3 Months and Over⁷ - December 2007

Waiting for:	Quarter Ending December 2007	Change compared with end of previous quarter	Change compared with end same quarter - previous year
Excluding Cancellations and Deferrals	2,683	-7,508	-70,232
Cancellations and Deferrals	221	-175	-2,406
Total Waiting	2,904	-7,683	-72,638

Source: Departmental Return CH3 parts 1 & 2.

⁷ Refer to Technical Notes 18-23.

Figure 3 Outpatients waiting 3 Months and Over for a First Appointment (including and excluding cancellations and deferrals) - Five Yearly Trends December 2002 – December 2007⁷



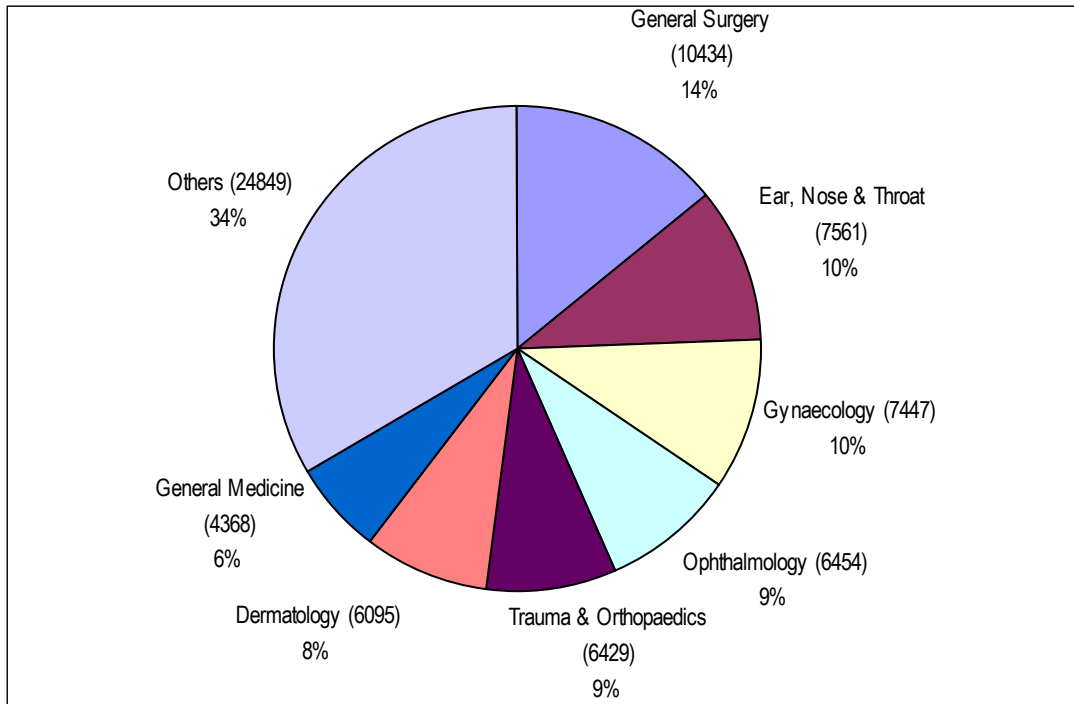
Source: Departmental Return CH3 Parts 1 & 2

⁷ Refer to Technical Notes 18-23.

Outpatients Waiting by Specialty

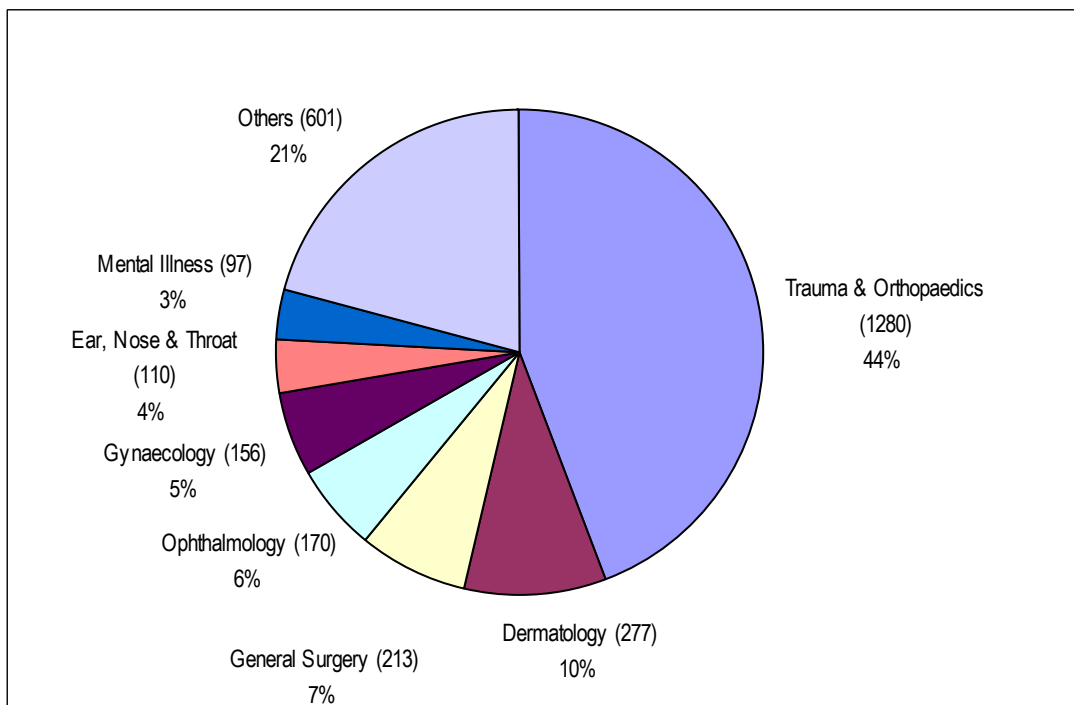
The majority of those waiting (66.0%) were within seven specialties: General Surgery; Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT); Gynaecology (Gynae); Ophthalmology; Trauma & Orthopaedics; Dermatology and General Medicine (Figure 4a). Figures represent the total number waiting for their first outpatient appointment during the December 2007 quarter including those who have cancelled or missed a previous appointment.

Figure 4a Outpatients – Total Waiters by Specialty at the end of December 2007



Source: Departmental Return CH3 Parts 1 & 2.

Figure 4b Outpatients – Patients waiting 3 Months and Over by specialty at the end of December 2007



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 96.1% of those waiting for treatment were waiting less than 3 Months.

Table 9a Number of Patients Waiting for a First Appointment by Months Waiting and Specialty – December 2007

Specialty	Patients Waiting for an Appointment by Months Waiting				Total Number of Patients
	0 - 2	3 - 5	6 - 8	9+	
General Surgery	10,221	213	0	0	10,434
Ear, Nose & Throat	7,451	110	0	0	7,561
Gynaecology	7,291	156	0	0	7,447
Ophthalmology	6,284	169	1	0	6,454
Trauma & Orthopaedics	5,149	1,150	0	130	6,429
Dermatology	5,818	277	0	0	6,095
General Medicine	4,279	89	0	0	4,368
Paediatrics	2,535	39	0	0	2,574
Cardiology	2,252	9	0	0	2,261
Mental Illness	1,911	97	0	0	2,008
Neurology	1,975	25	0	0	2,000
Urology	1,617	29	0	0	1,646
Oral Surgery	1,569	73	0	0	1,642
Rheumatology	1,505	66	0	0	1,571
Gastroenterology	999	8	0	0	1,007
Restorative Dentistry	854	32	0	0	886
Plastic Surgery	864	6	0	0	870
Pain Management	852	15	0	0	867
Obs & Gynae (Obstetrics)	797	10	0	0	807
Geriatric Medicine	752	4	0	0	756
Other	5,758	193	3	0	5,954
All Specialties	70,733	2,770	4	130	73,637

Source: Departmental Return CH3 Parts 1 & 2

Table 9b Percentage of Patients Waiting for a First Appointment by Months Waiting and Specialty – December 2007

Specialty	Patients Waiting for an Appointment by Months Waiting			
	0 - 2	3 - 5	6 - 8	9 +
General Surgery	98.0%	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Ear, Nose & Throat	98.5%	1.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Gynaecology	97.9%	2.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Ophthalmology	97.4%	2.6%	0.0%	0.0%
Trauma & Orthopaedics	80.1%	17.9%	0.0%	2.0%
Dermatology	95.5%	4.5%	0.0%	0.0%
General Medicine	98.0%	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Paediatrics	98.5%	1.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Cardiology	99.6%	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%
Mental Illness	95.2%	4.8%	0.0%	0.0%
Neurology	98.8%	1.3%	0.0%	0.0%
Urology	98.2%	1.8%	0.0%	0.0%
Oral Surgery	95.6%	4.4%	0.0%	0.0%
Rheumatology	95.8%	4.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Gastroenterology	99.2%	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%
Restorative Dentistry	96.4%	3.6%	0.0%	0.0%
Plastic Surgery	99.3%	0.7%	0.0%	0.0%
Pain Management	98.3%	1.7%	0.0%	0.0%
Obs & Gynae (Obstetrics)	98.8%	1.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Geriatric Medicine	99.5%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Other	96.7%	3.2%	0.1%	0.0%
All Specialties	96.1%	3.8%	< 0.1%	0.2%

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 Months Waiting – December 2007⁸

Provider Trust	Patients Waiting for an Appointment by Months Waiting				Total Number of Patients Waiting
	0 - 2	3 - 5	6 - 8	9+	
Belfast	26,428	1,372	1	130	27,931
Northern	11,893	486	0	0	12,379
South Eastern	11,113	164	0	0	11,277
Southern	10,593	330	0	0	10,923
Western	10,706	418	3	0	11,127
Total	70,733	2,770	4	130	73,637

Source: Departmental Return CH3 Parts 1 & 2

⁸Refer to Technical Notes – points 14 & 18-23.

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 (93.5%) 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 Months Waiting and Programme of Care – December 2007

Programme of Care	Patients Waiting for an Appointment by Months Waiting				Total Number of Patients Waiting
	0 - 2	3 - 5	6 - 8	9+	
Acute Services	66,176	2,540	1	130	68,847
Maternity & Child Health	797	10	0	0	807
Elderly Care	1,264	37	0	0	1,301
Mental Health	2,437	177	3	0	2,617
Learning Disability	59	6	0	0	65
All POCs	70,733	2,770	4	130	73,637

Source: Departmental Return CH3 Parts 1 & 2

Completed Outpatient Waits – December 2007

Waiting times for completed outpatient waits, for patients treated within Health Service hospitals in Northern Ireland are shown in Table 12. A total of 109,058 patients received a first outpatient appointment within Health Service hospitals (excluding those who had previously cancelled or not attended a previous appointment) during the December 2007 quarter. 79.0% of patients attended their first appointment within 3 months of being placed on the waiting list and 99.5% 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 attended a first outpatient appointment within Health Service hospitals in Northern Ireland during the quarter was 116,547.

Table 12 Completed Outpatient Waits for First Appointment⁹

Quarter	Time Waiting in Months				Total Number of Completed Outpatient Waits	
	0 - 2	3 - 5	6 - 8	9+	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%	7.9%	91,496	99,195
A - J 2004	71.8%	15.9%	5.5%	6.7%	88,213	95,422
J - S 2004	70.6%	17.9%	5.4%	6.1%	84,455	92,527
O - D 2004	68.9%	17.3%	7.0%	6.8%	91,915	99,955
J - D 2004	70.3%	17.1%	5.8%	6.9%	356,079	387,099
J - M 2005	68.4%	16.4%	7.0%	8.2%	86,944	94,865
A - J 2005	70.1%	15.6%	6.9%	7.4%	91,489	99,698
J - S 2005	70.8%	16.0%	5.7%	7.5%	82,721	92,047
O - D 2005	67.7%	15.9%	7.5%	8.9%	91,969	101,037
J - D 2005	69.2%	16.0%	6.8%	8.0%	353,123	387,647
J - M 2006	68.0%	15.6%	7.6%	8.8%	91,695	101,249
A - J 2006	68.3%	15.0%	7.2%	9.5%	90,531	99,418
J - S 2006	63.9%	16.0%	7.3%	12.7%	90,716	100,769
O - D 2006	61.0%	17.8%	9.7%	11.5%	104,266	113,927
J - D 2006	65.2%	16.2%	8.0%	10.7%	377,208	415,363
J - M 2007	61.4%	24.0%	8.6%	6.0%	110,712	121,104
A - J 2007	70.9%	27.2%	1.9%	0.1%	105,202	114,317
J - S 2007	71.7%	27.3%	0.8%	0.2%	102,848	110,509
O - D 2007	79.0%	20.5%	0.4%	0.0%	109,058	116,547
J - D 2007	70.7%	24.7%	3.0%	1.6%	427,820	462,477

Source: Departmental Return CH4

⁹Refer to Technical Notes – point 24

Completed Outpatient Waits including Independent Sector Activity– December 2007

During the December 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 6,973 Health Service patients attended a first outpatient appointment, within the Independent Sector, during the quarter ending December 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 123,520 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 Activity¹⁰

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	42,906	1,980	44,886
Northern	16,034	1,932	17,966
South Eastern	19,273	1,487	20,760
Southern	16,067	302	16,369
Western	22,267	1,272	23,539
Total Treated	116,547	6,973	123,520

Source: Health and Social Care Trusts

¹⁰Refer to Technical Notes – points 14 & 25-26.

Completed Outpatient Waits including Independent Sector Activity – March 2007 - December 2007

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

Table 13b Completed Outpatient Waits by Trust Including Independent Sector Activity¹⁰ – Four Quarterly Trends 31st March 2007 – 31st December 2007

Provider Trust	Total Number of Completed Outpatient Waits Commissioned by Health Service			
	31st March 2007	30th June 2007	30th September 2007	31st December 2007
Belfast	55,666	41,909	39,827	44,886
Northern	19,450	15,829	17,555	17,966
South Eastern	26,748	19,246	17,676	20,760
Southern	19,798	16,980	16,217	16,369
Western	25,071	24,292	24,970	23,539
Total	146,733	118,256	116,245	123,520

Source: Health and Social Care Trusts

¹⁰Refer to Technical Notes – points 14 & 25-26.

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 2007/08¹¹.

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 December 2007 stood at 32,583.

Table 14: Quarterly Diagnostic Services Waiting List – December 2007¹¹

Diagnostic Service:	Number of Patients Waiting Quarter Ending December 2007
Imaging (excluding Interventional Imaging)	
Magnetic Resonance Imaging	3,375
Computerised Tomography	2,429
Non-obstetric ultrasound	7,182
Barium Studies	1,607
DEXA Scan	1,274
Radio-Nuclide Imaging	756
Physiological Measurement	
Audiology - pure tone audiometry	439
Cardiology - echocardiography	3,024
Cardiology - perfusion studies	352
Neurophysiology - peripheral neurophysiology	1,549
Respiratory physiology - sleep studies	254
Urodynamics - pressures and flows	523
Day case Endoscopy	
Colonoscopy	2,456
Flexi sigmoidoscopy	1,448
Cystoscopy	1,698
Gastroscopy	4,217
Other Endoscopy	
Colonoscopy	0
Flexi sigmoidoscopy	0
Cystoscopy	0
Gastroscopy	0
Total waiting for selected diagnostic tests	32,583

Source: Departmental Return SDR1

¹¹Refer to Technical Notes – points 27-32.

Table 15: Diagnostic Services Waiting Times by Diagnostic Test and Weeks Waiting¹¹

Diagnostic Test	Patients Waiting for a Diagnostic Test by Weeks Waiting					Total Number of Patients Waiting
	0 - 6 weeks	6 - 13 weeks	13 - 21 weeks	21- 26 weeks	26 weeks +	
Magnetic Resonance Imaging	1,865	1,248	260	2	0	3,375
Computerised Tomography	1,918	475	36	0	0	2,429
Non Obstetric Ultrasound	5,127	1,973	82	0	0	7,182
Barium Studies	1,146	442	19	0	0	1,607
DEXA Scan	814	414	46	0	0	1,274
Radio Nuclide Imaging	596	160	0	0	0	756
Audiology - Pure Tone	260	179	0	0	0	439
Cardiology - Echocardiography	2,043	928	53	0	0	3,024
Cardiology - Perfusion Studies	252	93	7	0	0	352
Neurophysiology - Peripheral Neurophysiology	501	556	340	44	108	1,549
Respiratory Physiology - Sleep Studies	146	78	30	0	0	254
Urodynamics - Pressures &	228	210	57	6	22	523
Day case colonoscopy	1,083	957	416	0	0	2,456
Day case flexi sigmoidoscopy	713	564	171	0	0	1,448
Day case cystoscopy	837	574	281	6	0	1,698
Day case gastroscopy	2,123	1,578	516	0	0	4,217
Total waiting for selected diagnostic tests	19,652	10,429	2,314	58	130	32,583

Source: Departmental Return SDR1

¹¹Refer to Technical Notes – points 27-32.

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

Table 16: Diagnostic Services Waiting Times by Provider Trust¹²

Provider Trust	Patients Waiting for a Diagnostic Test by Weeks Waiting					Total Number of Patients Waiting
	0 - 6 weeks	6 - 13 weeks	13 - 21 weeks	21- 26 weeks	26 weeks +	
Belfast	6,220	4,302	1,122	45	100	11,789
Northern	3,611	1,601	413	0	0	5,625
South Eastern	2,830	1,577	120	0	0	4,527
Southern	3,910	1,677	423	13	30	6,053
Western	3,081	1,272	236	0	0	4,589
Total	19,652	10,429	2,314	58	130	32,583

Source: Departmental Return SDR1

¹²Refer to Technical Notes – points 14 & 27-32.

Diagnostic Services Waiting over 13/21 Weeks

The 2007/08 Ministerial target for diagnostic services states that by 31st March 2008, no patient should be waiting more than 13 weeks for any of the 16 selected diagnostic services (except for day case endoscopies when no patient should be waiting more than 21 weeks at 31st March 2008).

The total number of patients waiting at the end of December 2007, for the selected tests, excluding day case endoscopies, was 22,764. Of this number 1,112 (4.9%) have been waiting over 13 weeks.

Table 17: Selected Diagnostic Tests – Over 13 Weeks¹¹

Diagnostic Test	Total Number of Patients Waiting	Patients Waiting over 13 weeks
Magnetic Resonance Imaging	3,375	262
Computerised Tomography	2,429	36
Non Obstetric Ultrasound	7,182	82
Barium Studies	1,607	19
DEXA Scan	1,274	46
Radio Nuclide Imaging	756	0
Audiology - Pure Tone Audiometry	439	0
Cardiology - Echocardiography	3,024	53
Cardiology - Perfusion Studies	352	7
Neurophysiology - Peripheral Neurophysiology	1,549	492
Respiratory Physiology - Sleep Studies	254	30
Urodynamics - Pressures & Flows	523	85
Total waiting	22,764	1,112

Source: Departmental Return SDR1

¹¹Refer to Technical Notes – points 27-32.

The total number of patients waiting for a day case endoscope at the end of December 2007 was 9,819. Of this number, six (<1%) have been waiting over 21 weeks.

Table 18: Day Case Endoscopies – Over 21 Weeks

Diagnostic Test	Total Number of Patients Waiting	Total Number of Patients Waiting over 21 weeks
Day case Colonoscopy	2,456	0
Day case Cystoscopy	1,698	6
Day case Flexi Sigmoidoscopy	1,448	0
Day case Gastroscopy	4,217	0
Total Waiting	9,819	6

Source: Departmental Return SDR1

¹¹Refer to Technical Notes – points 27-32.

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 Hospital Trusts on a quarterly basis.
2. Hospital Information Branch initiated 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, contained in the DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset, enables the 21 week target to be monitored.
3. From the quarter ending 30th June 2007, the Departmental Return CH1, which collected the number of patients waiting for inpatient (ordinary and day case) admissions has been replaced by the DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Time Dataset, a patient level extract from the Trust Patient Administration Systems (PAS).
4. 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.
5. These figures do not include a cohort of patients transferred by Belfast Health and Social Care Trust during 2006/07 for a first outpatient appointment with Independent Sector providers. Following a first outpatient appointment, a decision to admit a number of these patients for inpatient treatment was taken by Independent Sector providers. Due to deficiencies in the independent sector providers administration processes, a number of patients for whom a decision to admit for inpatient treatment may have been taken, are not included in the inpatient waiting time figures. These figures are undergoing review and are subject to ongoing validation relating to the number of, and length of time that, such patients had been waiting for inpatient treatment at the end of December 2007. This issue is currently being addressed by the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust and an update for these patients at 31st December will be provided in the next publication.
6. Due to similar administrative difficulties, it has not been possible to differentiate a cohort of 866 patients waiting for Inpatient Trauma and Orthopaedic treatment in the Independent Sector at the end of December 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 speciality 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 606 of these patients were waiting for ordinary admission and 260 were waiting for day case admission. These figures are included within the inpatient waiting time position.
7. For Tables 2a, 2b and 3 and for Figure 2b, inpatient waiting time relates to the number of completed waits 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.
8. The current ministerial target for inpatient waiting times states that, by 31 March 2008, no patient should be waiting more than 21 weeks for inpatient admission. Patients waiting 'more than 21 weeks' include all patients in the >21-26 week (patients waiting more than 21 weeks

but waiting no longer than 26 weeks) and >26 week (patients waiting more than 26 weeks) timebands .

9. 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.
10. 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.
11. 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.
12. 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.
13. 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.
14. In accordance with the Review of Public Administration, with effect from the 01 April 2007, five new integrated Health and Social Care Trusts (Belfast, Northern, South Eastern, Southern and Western) replaced the previous eighteen provider Trusts in Northern Ireland. Where applicable, tables have been presented based on the new Trust Areas.
15. Waiting times for completed inpatient waits relate to the entire time period between the initial decision to admit and the date of admission, including periods of medical suspension. The completed waiting time for patients who self deferred or failed to attend on a previously arranged admission date are not included in these estimates.
16. 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 governed by National Statistics and they have not been validated by the Department.
17. The number of patients that received inpatient treatment, commissioned by the Health Service, in the Independent Sector during the period 01 July 2007 - 30 September 2007 has been revised from 2,119 to 2,181. This is due to a revision received from the Western Health and Social Care Trust

18. Outpatients 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.
19. Outpatient waiting list figures presented do not include maternity specialties 510 and 520.
20. From the 1st October 2007, Integrated Clinical Assessment and Treatment Services (ICATS) were introduced for orthopaedic patients referred for first outpatient assessment in the Trauma & Orthopaedic specialty. ICATS are provided by integrated multidisciplinary teams of Health Service Professionals, including GPs with a special interest, specialist nurses and Allied Health Professionals. They are provided in a variety of community and secondary care settings and they include assessment, treatment, diagnostic and advisory services. The introduction of these services is aimed at reducing outpatient waiting times by referring to hospitals, only those patients who will benefit from seeing a consultant. Waiting times for ICATS appointments are subject to existing outpatient waiting times targets i.e. no patient to be waiting more than 13 weeks by 31 March 2008. Waiting times for patients waiting for an ICATS appointment will appear in the March bulletin. Due to technical difficulties, it is not possible to present the triage outcomes for patients referred to ICATS during the quarter. All patients referred for an ICATS triage, from 1st October 2007, were waiting less than 13 weeks for either a Tier 2 ICATS appointment, diagnostic service or first outpatient assessment at 31st December 2007.
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 31 December 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. This solution will be in place to allow reporting by weeks waiting to be published for the quarter ending March 2008.
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. The number of patients waiting for a first outpatient appointment at the end of September 2007 has been revised from 86,659 to 86,789 due to an amendment received from the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust.
24. 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.
25. 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 governed by National Statistics and they have not been validated by the Department.
26. The number of patients that received an outpatient assessment, commissioned by the Health Service, in the Independent Sector during the period 01 July 2007 - 30 September 2007 has been revised from 5,736 to 5,731. This is due to revisions received from the South Eastern and Western Trusts.

27. 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 governed by National Statistics and they have had limited validation by the Department.
28. 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.
29. The Ministerial target for diagnostic waiting times states by 31st March 2008, no patient should wait more than 13 weeks for any of the 16 selected diagnostic services (except day case endoscopies for which patients should wait no longer than 21 weeks). 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.
30. 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.
31. 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.
32. A number of the diagnostic services reported on the SDR 1 return are managed as day cases. 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.
33. 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.
34. Figures relating to the quarter ending 31st March 2008 will be released on Thursday, 5th June 2008.
35. 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
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