

Statistics Release



Department of
**Health, Social Services
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An Roinn

**Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta
agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí**

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Northern Ireland Waiting Lists – December 2004

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 December 2004, 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 December 2004 stood at 49,250.

Over the quarter, comparing the end of December 2004 with the end of September 2004 (50,796), the total number waiting has decreased by 1,546 (-3.0%).

Over the year, comparing the end of December 2004 with the end of December 2003 (52,606), the total number waiting decreased by 3,356 (-6.4%).

Table 1: Quarterly Waiting Lists – December 2004

Waiting for:	Quarter Ending December 2004	Change compared with end of previous quarter	Change compared with end same quarter – previous year
Ordinary Admissions	20,360	-1,016	-3,611
Day case Admissions	28,890	-530	+ 255
Total Waiting	49,250	-1,546	-3,356

Source: CH1

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 49,250 people waiting for admission to hospital at the end of December 2004, 20,360 (41.3%) were waiting for ordinary admission and 28,890 (58.7%) were waiting for day case admission (Table 1).

Since the end of September 2004, the number of cases waiting for ordinary admission has decreased by 1,016 (-4.8%) and the number waiting for day case admission has decreased by 530 (-1.8%).

In comparison with December 2003, the number of cases waiting for ordinary admission has decreased by 3,611 (-15.1%) and the number waiting for day case admission has increased by 255 (0.9%).

Excess Waiters¹ – Table 2

In Northern Ireland, inpatient excess waiters are defined as those having to wait 12 months or more for admission to the Cardiac Surgery specialty and those having to wait 18 months or more to other specialties.

The number of excess waiters at the end of December 2004 stood at 2,381 or 4.8% of the total waiting.

Over the quarter, comparing the end of December 2004 with the end of September 2004, the number of excess waiters decreased by 714 (-23.1%).

Over the year, comparing the end of December 2004 with the end of December 2003, the number of excess waiters decreased by 2,996 (-55.7%).

Table 2 Excess Waiters¹ – December 2004

Waiting for:	Quarter Ending December 2004	Change compared with end of previous quarter	Change compared with end same quarter - previous year
Ordinary admissions	1,894	-513	-2,175
Day case admissions	487	-201	-821
Total Waiting	2,381	-714	-2,996

Source: CHI

¹ Refer to Technical Notes – point 6.

Peak Figures

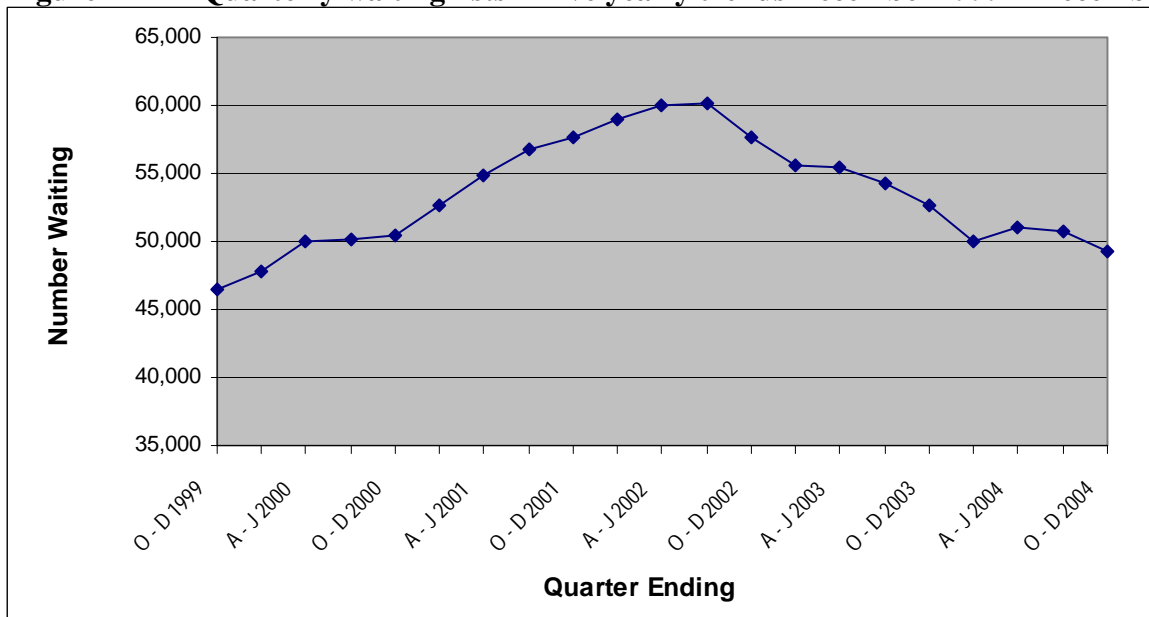
The end of December 2004 total of 49,250 on the inpatient waiting list represents a decrease of 10,940 (-18.2%) on the peak waiting list figure of 60,190 (end September 2002).

The number of excess waiters has fallen to 2,381 at the end of December 2004, and represents a decrease of 6,777 (-74.0%) on the peak figure of 9,158 recorded at the end of September 2002.

Trends

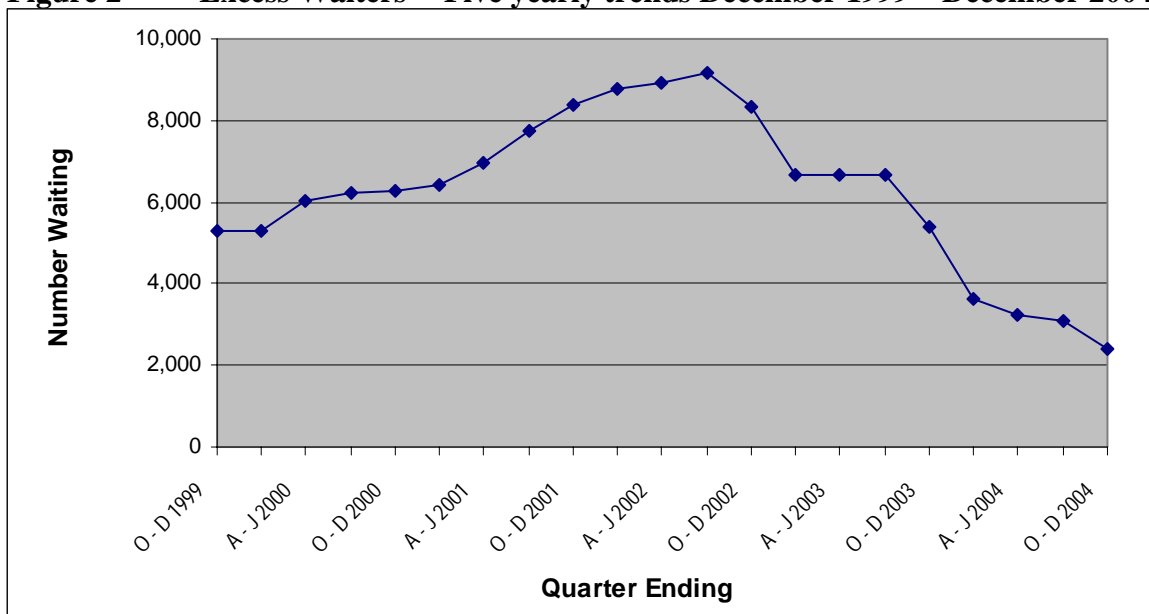
The total number of people waiting was on a generally upward trend from December 1999, and rose to peak in September 2002. The trend reversed and the total number of people waiting decreased between December 2002 and March 2004. The total number of people waiting increased slightly during the quarter ending June 2004, but has decreased in the last two quarters (Figure 1). Excess waiters have been on a downward trend since September 2002. (Figure 2).

Figure 1 Quarterly waiting lists – Five yearly trends December 1999 – December 2004



Source: CH1

Figure 2 Excess Waiters¹ - Five yearly trends December 1999 – December 2004



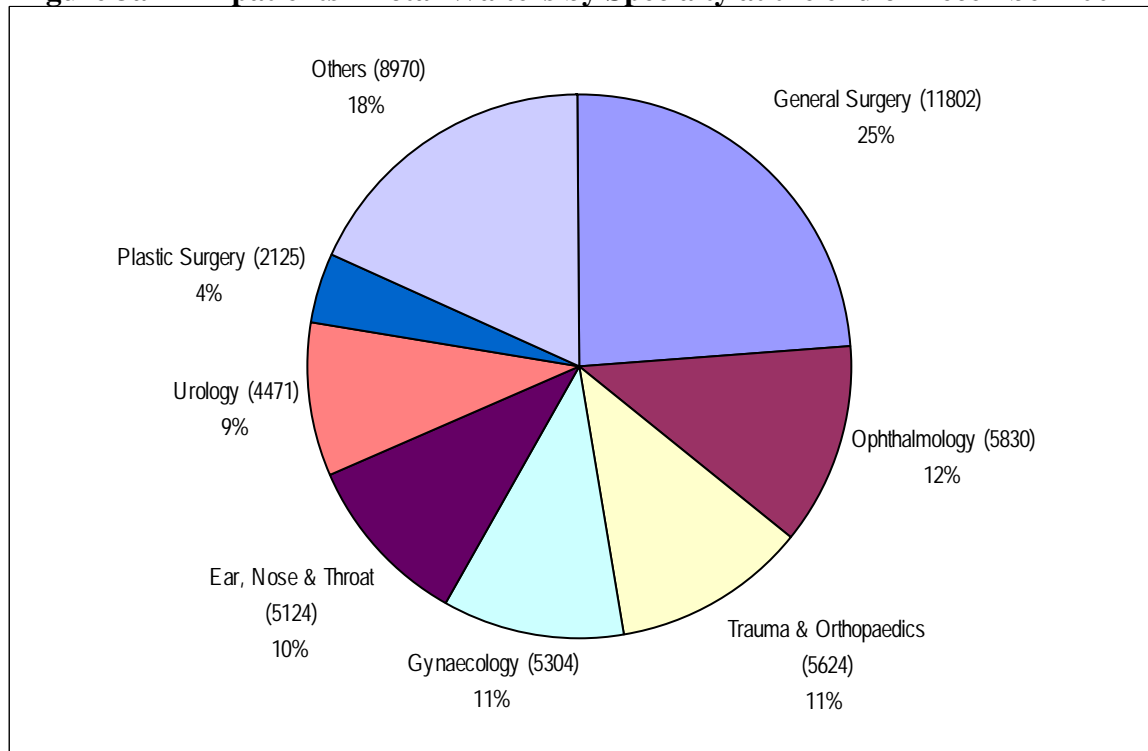
Source: CH1

¹ Refer to Technical Notes – point 6.

Inpatients Waiting by Specialty

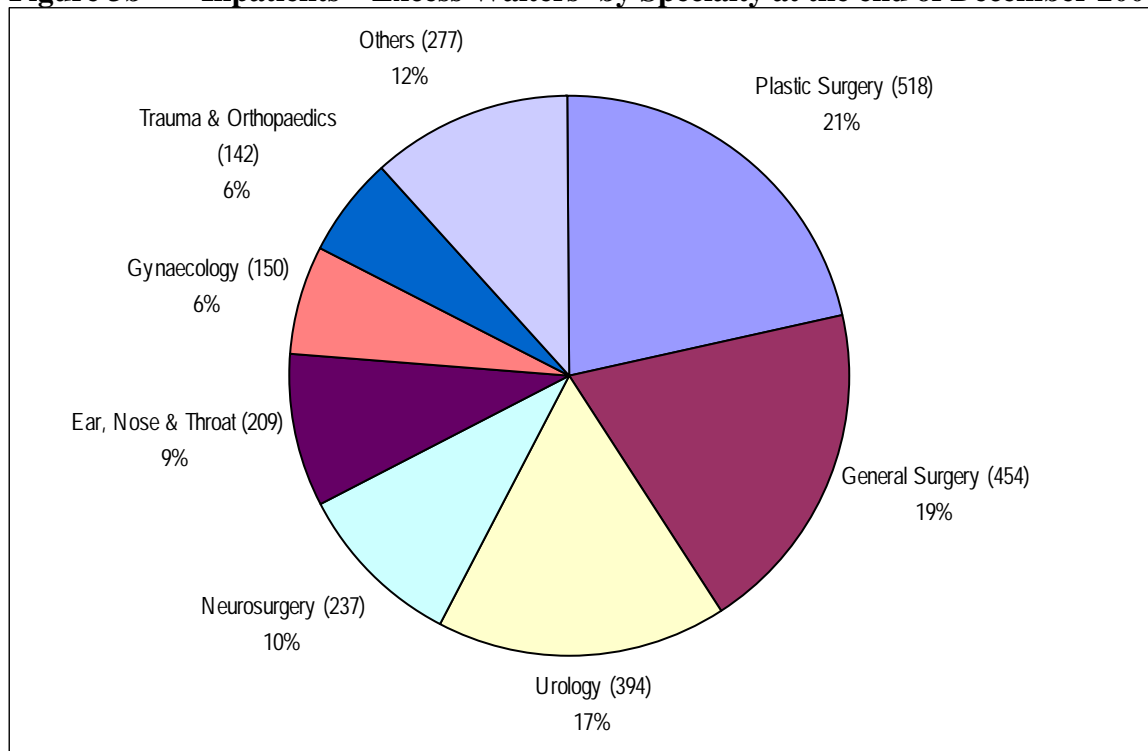
The overwhelming majority of those waiting (82%) were within seven specialties: General Surgery; Ophthalmology; Trauma and Orthopaedic Surgery (T&O); Gynaecology (Gynae); Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT); Urology and Plastic Surgery (Figure 3a). Corresponding figures for excess waiters are shown in Figure 3b.

Figure 3a Inpatients - Total Waiters by Specialty at the end of December 2004



Source: CHI

Figure 3b Inpatients – Excess Waiters¹ by Specialty at the end of December 2004



Source: CHI

¹ Refer to Technical Notes – point 6.

Inpatient Waiting Time by Specialty

Waiting times for inpatients by specialty are shown in Tables 3a and 3b. The proportion of those waiting less than 12 months ranged from 100% in General Practice (Other) to 39.6% in Neurosurgery. Overall over four fifths (88.8%) of those waiting for admission were waiting less than 12 months. More than 99% of patients were waiting for treatment in the Acute Services Programme of Care.

Table 3a Number of Patients Waiting for Admission by Months Waiting and Specialty – December 2004

Specialty	Patients Waiting for Admission by Months Waiting									Total Number of Patients Awaiting Admission
	0 - 2	3 - 5	6 - 8	9 - 11	12 - 14	15 - 17	18 - 20	21 - 23	24 +	
General Surgery	6,390	1,988	1,339	906	510	215	117	113	224	11,802
Ophthalmology	2,665	1,321	983	525	200	85	24	9	18	5,830
Trauma & Orthopaedics	1,863	1,438	1,108	670	254	149	68	38	36	5,624
Gynaecology	2,665	1,134	679	358	202	116	58	33	59	5,304
Ear, Nose & Throat	2,076	975	749	656	354	105	66	54	89	5,124
Urology	1,836	926	579	357	219	160	72	81	241	4,471
Plastic Surgery	616	335	276	180	115	85	75	37	406	2,125
General Medicine	1,343	266	51	11	3	1	0	0	0	1,675
Cardiology	777	243	123	123	60	46	58	25	56	1,511
Gastroenterology	885	203	63	28	22	2	1	0	2	1,206
Rheumatology	544	98	71	11	1	0	1	0	0	726
Paediatric Surgery	311	134	118	76	28	24	7	6	1	705
Oral Surgery	209	69	114	49	25	10	11	12	20	519
Neurosurgery	79	40	44	36	42	25	18	25	194	503
Pain Management	218	102	97	38	2	7	3	1	0	468
Cardiac Surgery	139	114	62	14	1	0	0	0	0	330
Dermatology	225	34	37	8	2	2	0	0	0	308
Neurology	83	34	26	27	19	10	5	2	1	207
Thoracic Surgery	61	9	25	20	13	4	9	1	3	145
General Practice (Other)	83	35	6	2	0	0	0	0	0	126
Other	440	65	20	13	3	0	0	0	0	541
All Specialties	23,508	9,563	6,570	4,108	2,075	1,046	593	437	1,350	49,250

Table 3b Percentage of Patients Waiting for Admission by Months Waiting and Specialty – December 2004

Specialty	Patients Waiting for Admission by Months Waiting								
	0 - 2	3 - 5	6 - 8	9 - 11	12 - 14	15 - 17	18 - 20	21 - 23	24 +
General Surgery	54.1%	16.8%	11.3%	7.7%	4.3%	1.8%	1.0%	1.0%	1.9%
Ophthalmology	45.7%	22.7%	16.9%	9.0%	3.4%	1.5%	0.4%	0.2%	0.3%
Trauma & Orthopaedics	33.1%	25.6%	19.7%	11.9%	4.5%	2.6%	1.2%	0.7%	0.6%
Gynaecology	50.2%	21.4%	12.8%	6.7%	3.8%	2.2%	1.1%	0.6%	1.1%
Ear, Nose & Throat	40.5%	19.0%	14.6%	12.8%	6.9%	2.0%	1.3%	1.1%	1.7%
Urology	41.1%	20.7%	13.0%	8.0%	4.9%	3.6%	1.6%	1.8%	5.4%
Plastic Surgery	29.0%	15.8%	13.0%	8.5%	5.4%	4.0%	3.5%	1.7%	19.1%
General Medicine	80.2%	15.9%	3.0%	0.7%	0.2%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Cardiology	51.4%	16.1%	8.1%	8.1%	4.0%	3.0%	3.8%	1.7%	3.7%
Gastroenterology	73.4%	16.8%	5.2%	2.3%	1.8%	0.2%	0.1%	0.0%	0.2%
Rheumatology	74.9%	13.5%	9.8%	1.5%	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Paediatric Surgery	44.1%	19.0%	16.7%	10.8%	4.0%	3.4%	1.0%	0.9%	0.1%
Oral Surgery	40.3%	13.3%	22.0%	9.4%	4.8%	1.9%	2.1%	2.3%	3.9%
Neurosurgery	15.7%	8.0%	8.7%	7.2%	8.3%	5.0%	3.6%	5.0%	38.6%
Pain Management	46.6%	21.8%	20.7%	8.1%	0.4%	1.5%	0.6%	0.2%	0.0%
Cardiac Surgery	42.1%	34.5%	18.8%	4.2%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Dermatology	73.1%	11.0%	12.0%	2.6%	0.6%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Neurology	40.1%	16.4%	12.6%	13.0%	9.2%	4.8%	2.4%	1.0%	0.5%
Thoracic Surgery	42.1%	6.2%	17.2%	13.8%	9.0%	2.8%	6.2%	0.7%	2.1%
General Practice (Other)	65.9%	27.8%	4.8%	1.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Other	81.3%	12.0%	3.7%	2.4%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
All Specialties	47.7%	19.4%	13.3%	8.3%	4.2%	2.1%	1.2%	0.9%	2.7%

Source: CHI

Completed Waits

Waiting times for completed inpatient waits are shown in Table 4. A total of 41,116 inpatients were admitted to hospital (excluding those who had previously refused an offer of attendance) during the December 2004 quarter. 73.4% of patients received their treatment within 3 months of being placed on the waiting list and 94.9% received their treatment within 12 months.

Table 4 Completed Inpatient Waits

Quarter	Time Waiting in Months									Total
	0 - 2	3 - 5	6 - 8	9 - 11	12 - 14	15 - 17	18 - 20	21 - 23	24+	
J - M 2001	76.9%	11.3%	4.4%	3.1%	1.6%	1.1%	0.5%	0.3%	0.8%	36,377
A - J 2001	76.6%	11.2%	5.3%	3.0%	1.7%	0.9%	0.5%	0.3%	0.7%	35,858
J - S 2001	74.4%	11.9%	5.6%	3.2%	1.9%	1.2%	0.6%	0.4%	0.8%	33,271
O - D 2001	75.0%	10.8%	5.5%	3.7%	2.1%	1.1%	0.7%	0.4%	0.9%	37,656
J - D 2001	75.7%	11.3%	5.2%	3.2%	1.8%	1.0%	0.6%	0.3%	0.8%	143,162
J - M 2002	74.9%	11.9%	4.7%	3.1%	2.3%	1.3%	0.7%	0.4%	0.8%	38,042
A - J 2002	74.4%	12.1%	5.3%	2.9%	2.1%	1.2%	0.6%	0.4%	0.9%	36,907
J - S 2002	72.6%	13.6%	5.2%	3.3%	1.9%	1.4%	0.8%	0.4%	0.8%	33,861
O - D 2002	73.6%	11.1%	5.8%	3.6%	2.3%	1.3%	0.8%	0.4%	1.0%	38,591
J - D 2002	73.9%	12.1%	5.3%	3.3%	2.1%	1.3%	0.7%	0.4%	0.9%	147,401
J - M 2003	73.6%	12.0%	4.6%	3.1%	2.2%	1.7%	0.9%	0.5%	1.3%	38,987
A - J 2003	73.9%	12.5%	5.2%	3.1%	2.0%	1.2%	0.7%	0.4%	1.0%	38,512
J - S 2003	71.9%	14.1%	5.2%	3.5%	1.7%	1.2%	0.7%	0.4%	1.1%	35,605
O - D 2003	72.7%	12.3%	5.4%	3.7%	2.0%	1.2%	0.9%	0.5%	1.5%	38,906
J - D 2003	73.0%	12.7%	5.1%	3.3%	2.0%	1.3%	0.8%	0.5%	1.2%	152,010
J - M 2004	74.4%	11.6%	4.8%	3.5%	1.9%	1.3%	0.6%	0.5%	1.3%	40,924
A - J 2004	74.6%	11.4%	5.9%	3.1%	1.9%	1.2%	0.6%	0.3%	0.9%	38,507
J - S 2004	73.1%	13.1%	5.5%	3.7%	1.9%	1.1%	0.7%	0.3%	0.7%	37,025
O - D 2004	73.4%	12.3%	5.5%	3.7%	2.3%	1.1%	0.7%	0.4%	0.7%	41,116
J - D 2004	73.9%	12.1%	5.4%	3.5%	2.0%	1.2%	0.7%	0.4%	0.9%	157,572

Source: CH2 Part 1

Monthly Inpatient Waiting Lists

The Department also collects monthly data on the size of the inpatient waiting list excluding private patients and non-NI residents. These figures are shown in Tables 5 and 6.

Table 5 Monthly Inpatient Waiting Lists

Month Ending	Admission Method		Total Waiting	Excess Waiters	
	Ordinary	Day Case		Number	% of Total
December 2003	23,562	28,203	51,765	5,379	10.4%
January 2004	23,008	28,341	51,349	4,733	9.2%
February 2004	22,404	28,053	50,457	4,290	8.5%
March 2004	21,965	27,069	49,034	3,597	7.3%
April 2004	22,143	27,965	50,108	3,490	7.0%
May 2004	21,873	28,120	49,993	3,451	6.9%
June 2004	21,621	28,383	50,004	3,197	6.4%
July 2004	21,737	28,883	50,620	3,266	6.5%
August 2004	21,422	28,873	50,295	3,163	6.3%
September 2004	20,942	28,877	49,819	3,084	6.2%
October 2004	20,505	28,777	49,282	2,800	5.7%
November 2004	19,947	28,127	48,074	2,465	5.1%
December 2004	19,996	28,288	48,284	2,375	4.9%

Source: CHA

The monthly waiting list figures have shown an overall decrease in the 3-month period since September 2004.

Patients resident in a Health Board Area may receive treatment in any of the four Health Boards. Table 6 shows the number of residents in each Health Board Area waiting for admission to hospitals in their own and other Health Board Areas.

Table 6 Monthly Inpatient Waiting Lists by Board of Residence and Board of Treatment – December 2004

Board of Residence	Board of Treatment			
	EHSSB	NHSSB	SHSSB	WHSSB
Eastern	18,327	74	129	0
Northern	5,779	5,585	417	574
Southern	3,488	12	7,240	105
Western	1,151	37	64	5,302
Northern Ireland	28,745	5,708	7,850	5,981

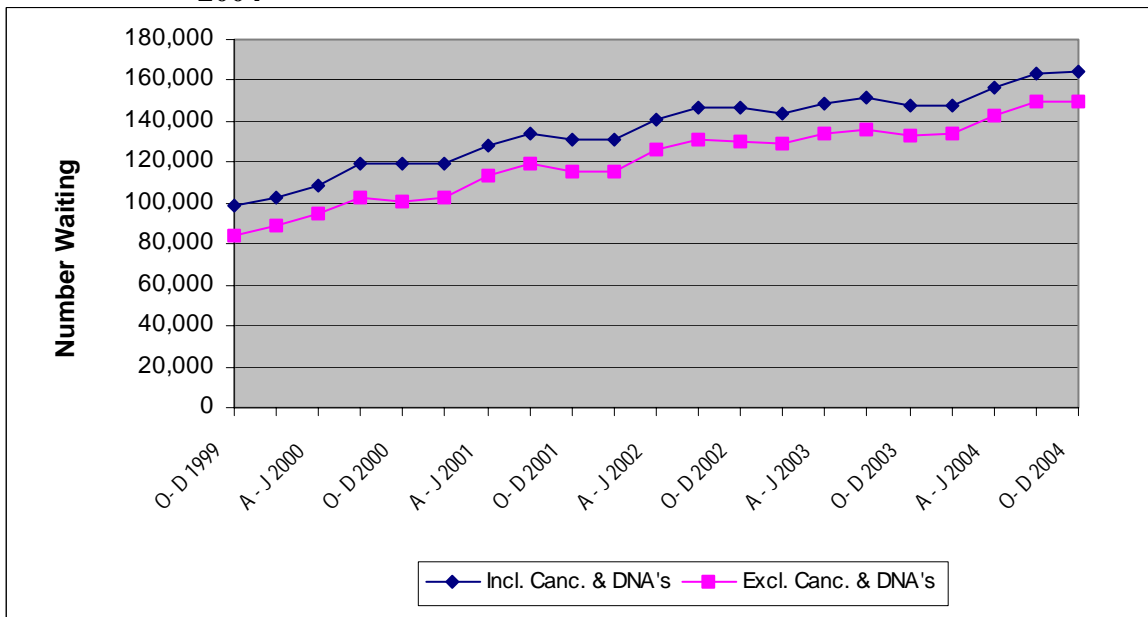
Source: CHA

Outpatients

Headline Totals

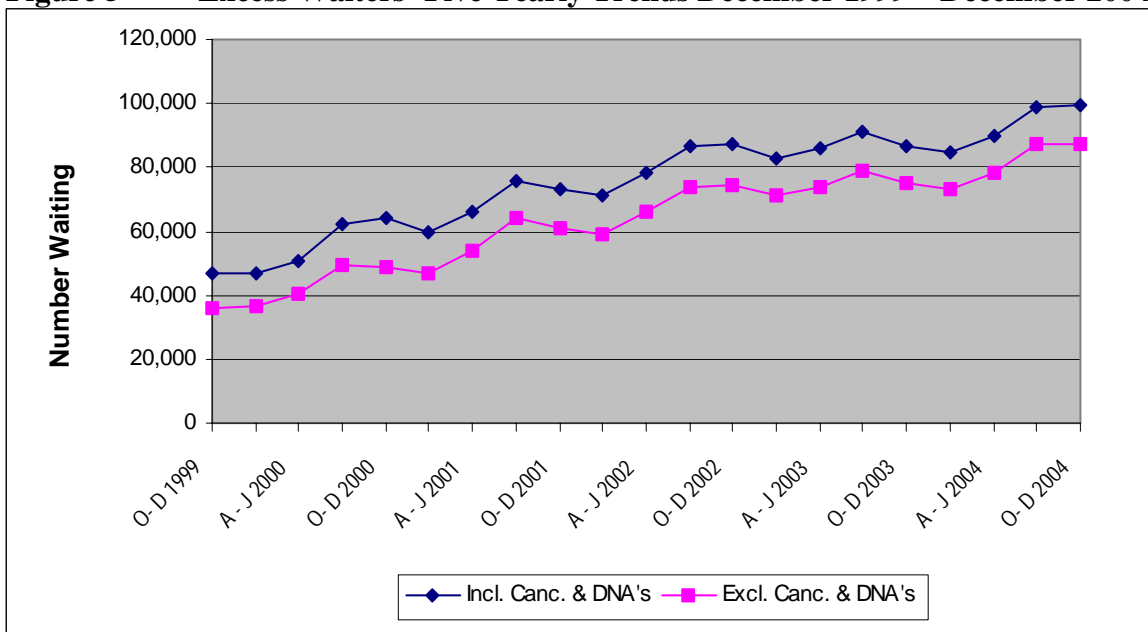
The number of patients waiting for a first outpatient appointment (including cancellations and deferrals) at the end of December 2004 stood at 164,672 representing an increase of 863 (0.5%) over the quarter and an increase of 17,145 (11.6%) compared with the same quarter in the previous year. Corresponding quarterly and annual changes (excluding cancellations and deferrals) were -0.5% and +11.9% respectively. Figure 4 shows five yearly trends in the number of outpatients waiting for a first appointment, Figure 5 shows the same trends information for excess waiters (excess waiters are defined as patients waiting more than 3 months for a first outpatient appointment).

Figure 4 Outpatients Waiting for a First Appointment (including and excluding cancellations and deferrals) – Five Yearly Trends December 1999 – December 2004



Source: CH3 Parts 1 & 2.

Figure 5 Excess Waiters² Five Yearly Trends December 1999 – December 2004



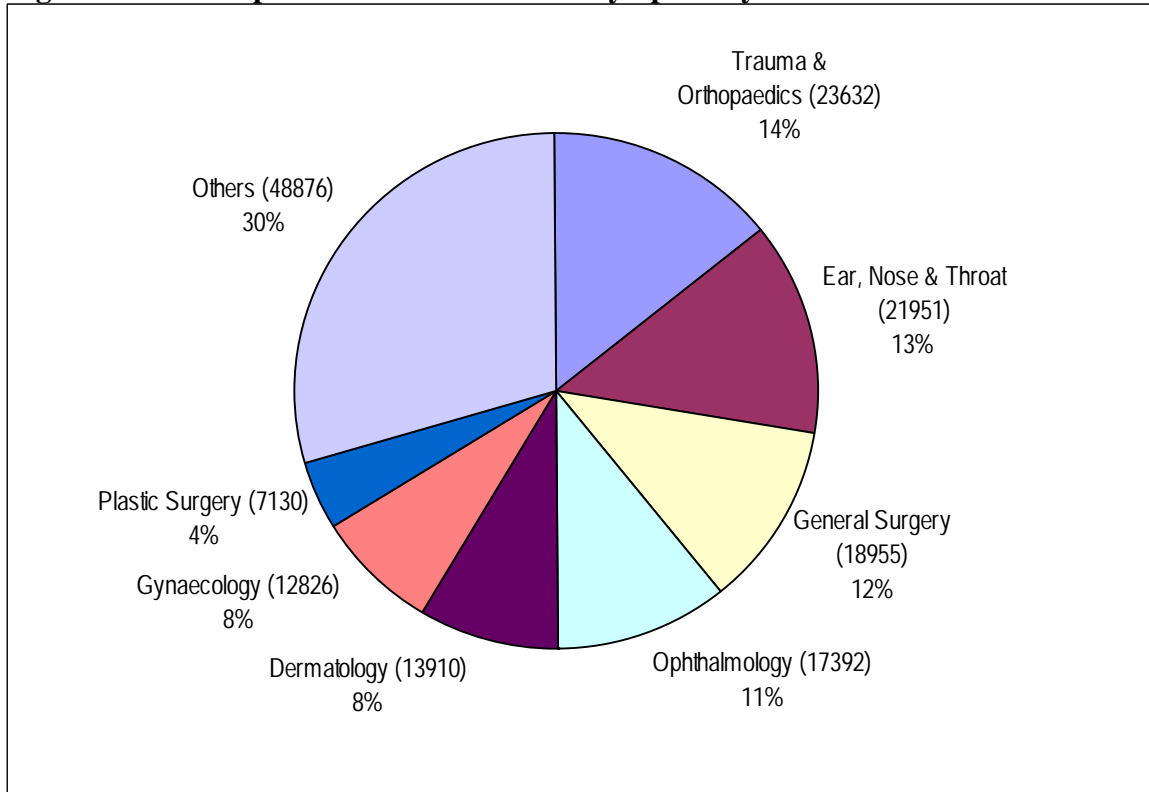
Source: CH3 Parts 1 & 2

² Refer to Technical Notes – Point 18.

Outpatients Waiting by Specialty

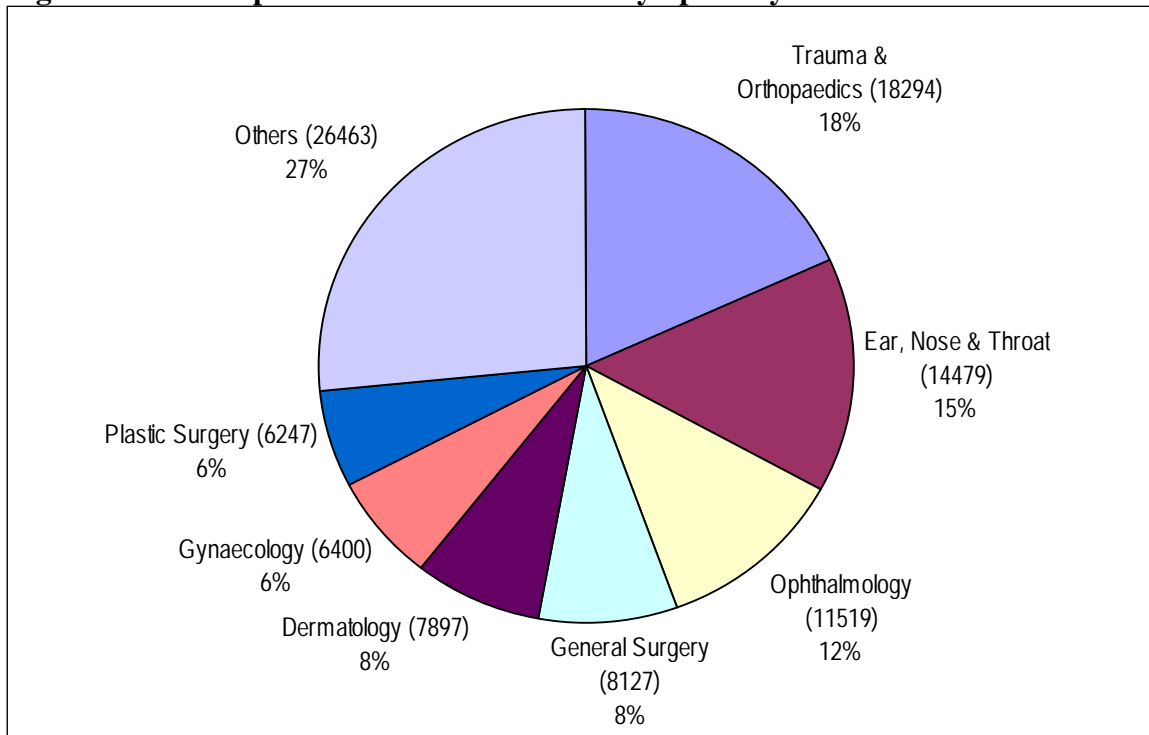
The majority of those waiting (70%) were within seven specialties: Trauma and Orthopaedic Surgery (T&O); Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT); General Surgery; Ophthalmology; Dermatology, Gynaecology (Gynae) and Plastic Surgery (Figure 6a). Corresponding figures for excess waiters are shown in Figure 6b. All figures include those who are waiting for their first appointment including those who have cancelled or missed a previous appointment during the December 2004 quarter.

Figure 6a Outpatients – Total Waiters by Specialty at the end of December 2004



Source: CH3.

Figure 6b Outpatients – Excess Waiters² by Specialty at the end of December 2004



Source: CH3.

² Refer to Technical Notes – Point 18.

Outpatient Waiting Time by Specialty

Waiting times for outpatients by specialty are shown in Tables 7a and 7b. The proportion of those waiting less than 12 months ranged from 99.0% in Gastroenterology to 28.4% in Plastic Surgery. Overall four fifths (80.3%) of those waiting for treatment were waiting less than 12 months.

Table 7a Number of Patients Waiting for a First Appointment by Months Waiting and Specialty – December 2004

Specialty	Patients Waiting for an Appointment by Months Waiting									Total Number of Patients Awaiting Appointment
	0 - 2	3 - 5	6 - 8	9 - 11	12 - 14	15 - 17	18 - 20	21 - 23	24 +	
Trauma & Orthopaedics	5,338	4,666	3,065	1,983	1,384	1,209	1,062	968	3,957	23,632
Ear, Nose & Throat	7,472	4,653	3,227	2,345	1,434	1,045	714	394	667	21,951
General Surgery	10,828	4,294	2,178	724	378	246	182	88	37	18,955
Ophthalmology	5,873	3,650	2,508	1,748	1,292	939	555	268	559	17,392
Dermatology	6,013	3,299	1,727	876	490	375	282	194	654	13,910
Gynaecology	6,426	3,315	1,659	876	300	126	42	47	35	12,826
Plastic Surgery	883	472	371	296	242	239	175	159	4,293	7,130
General Medicine	3,625	1,516	811	472	291	160	75	47	76	7,073
Cardiology	2,741	1,333	722	254	51	50	43	40	181	5,415
Urology	1,428	864	656	580	345	210	188	154	353	4,778
Rheumatology	1,292	896	725	528	336	199	183	86	63	4,308
Neurology	1,444	1,020	605	460	260	112	50	13	39	4,003
Paediatrics	1,921	547	348	105	66	48	36	45	420	3,536
Mental Illness	2,072	392	168	118	37	16	10	9	53	2,875
Oral Surgery	713	456	276	252	186	84	95	144	576	2,782
Pain Management	675	465	369	240	116	103	92	76	292	2,428
Gastroenterology	736	284	123	78	8	1	1	2	0	1,233
Paediatric Surgery	458	351	104	44	20	35	26	26	121	1,185
Child & Adolescent Psychiatry	455	252	148	103	43	19	21	16	63	1,120
Geriatric Medicine	741	182	27	12	9	8	2	2	3	986
Other	4,112	1,410	566	212	121	111	75	62	485	7,154
All Specialties	65,246	34,317	20,383	12,306	7,409	5,335	3,909	2,840	12,927	164,672

Source: CH3

Table 7b Percentage of Patients Waiting for a First Appointment by Months Waiting and Specialty – December 2004

Specialty	Patients Waiting for an Appointment by Months								
	0 - 2	3 - 5	6 - 8	9 - 11	12 - 14	15 - 17	18 - 20	21 - 23	24+
Trauma & Orthopaedics	22.6%	19.7%	13.0%	8.4%	5.9%	5.1%	4.5%	4.1%	16.7%
Ear, Nose & Throat	34.0%	21.2%	14.7%	10.7%	6.5%	4.8%	3.3%	1.8%	3.0%
General Surgery	57.1%	22.7%	11.5%	3.8%	2.0%	1.3%	1.0%	0.5%	0.2%
Ophthalmology	33.8%	21.0%	14.4%	10.1%	7.4%	5.4%	3.2%	1.5%	3.2%
Dermatology	43.2%	23.7%	12.4%	6.3%	3.5%	2.7%	2.0%	1.4%	4.7%
Gynaecology	50.1%	25.8%	12.9%	6.8%	2.3%	1.0%	0.3%	0.4%	0.3%
Plastic Surgery	12.4%	6.6%	5.2%	4.2%	3.4%	3.4%	2.5%	2.2%	60.2%
General Medicine	51.3%	21.4%	11.5%	6.7%	4.1%	2.3%	1.1%	0.7%	1.1%
Cardiology	50.6%	24.6%	13.3%	4.7%	0.9%	0.9%	0.8%	0.7%	3.3%
Urology	29.9%	18.1%	13.7%	12.1%	7.2%	4.4%	3.9%	3.2%	7.4%
Rheumatology	30.0%	20.8%	16.8%	12.3%	7.8%	4.6%	4.2%	2.0%	1.5%
Neurology	36.1%	25.5%	15.1%	11.5%	6.5%	2.8%	1.2%	0.3%	1.0%
Paediatrics	54.3%	15.5%	9.8%	3.0%	1.9%	1.4%	1.0%	1.3%	11.9%
Mental Illness	72.1%	13.6%	5.8%	4.1%	1.3%	0.6%	0.3%	0.3%	1.8%
Oral Surgery	25.6%	16.4%	9.9%	9.1%	6.7%	3.0%	3.4%	5.2%	20.7%
Pain Management	27.8%	19.2%	15.2%	9.9%	4.8%	4.2%	3.8%	3.1%	12.0%
Gastroenterology	59.7%	23.0%	10.0%	6.3%	0.6%	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%	0.0%
Paediatric Surgery	38.6%	29.6%	8.8%	3.7%	1.7%	3.0%	2.2%	2.2%	10.2%
Child & Adolescent Psychiatry	40.6%	22.5%	13.2%	9.2%	3.8%	1.7%	1.9%	1.4%	5.6%
Geriatric Medicine	75.2%	18.5%	2.7%	1.2%	0.9%	0.8%	0.2%	0.2%	0.3%
Other	57.5%	19.7%	7.9%	3.0%	1.7%	1.6%	1.0%	0.9%	6.8%
All Specialties	39.6%	20.8%	12.4%	7.5%	4.5%	3.2%	2.4%	1.7%	7.9%

Source: CH3

Outpatient Waiting Time by Programme of Care

Waiting times for a first outpatient appointment by programme of care are shown in Table 8. The vast majority (96.7%) of patients were awaiting their first outpatient appointment in the Acute Services Programme of Care.

Table 8 Number of Patients Waiting for a First Appointment by Months Waiting and Programme of Care – December 2004

Programme of Care	Patients Waiting for an Appointment by Months Waiting									Total Number of Patients Awaiting Appointment
	0 - 2	3 - 5	6 - 8	9 - 11	12 - 14	15 - 17	18 - 20	21 - 23	24 +	
Acute Services	61,779	33,320	20,006	12,066	7,318	5,289	3,874	2,813	12,807	159,272
Elderly Care	861	285	43	17	10	9	2	2	4	1,233
Mental Health	2,586	670	324	223	80	37	33	25	116	4,094
Learning Disability	20	42	10	0	1	0	0	0	0	73
All POCs	65,246	34,317	20,383	12,306	7,409	5,335	3,909	2,840	12,927	164,672

Source: CH3

Outpatient Completed Waits

Waiting times for completed outpatient waits are shown in Table 9. During the December 2004 quarter a total of 91,920 outpatients attended their first appointment without having cancelled or missed a previous appointment. 68.9% of patients attended their first outpatient appointment within 3 months of being placed on the waiting list and 95.8% had their first outpatient appointment within 12 months.

Table 9 Completed Outpatient Waits for First Appointment³

Quarter	Time Waiting in Months									Total
	0 - 2	3 - 5	6 - 8	9 - 11	12 - 14	15 - 17	18 - 20	21 - 23	24+	
J - M 2001	75.6%	15.5%	4.9%	2.1%	0.7%	0.5%	0.3%	0.1%	0.2%	86,024
A - J 2001	77.2%	14.7%	4.4%	1.8%	0.8%	0.4%	0.3%	0.1%	0.2%	82,161
J - S 2001	74.4%	17.4%	4.6%	1.7%	0.7%	0.5%	0.2%	0.3%	0.3%	77,880
O - D 2001	72.4%	16.9%	5.7%	2.1%	1.1%	0.7%	0.5%	0.3%	0.3%	88,331
J - D 2001	74.9%	16.1%	4.9%	1.9%	0.8%	0.5%	0.3%	0.2%	0.3%	334,396
J - M 2002	72.4%	17.0%	5.5%	2.9%	0.9%	0.5%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	85,856
A - J 2002	74.9%	15.3%	4.9%	2.5%	0.9%	0.5%	0.3%	0.2%	0.4%	82,282
J - S 2002	71.0%	18.5%	5.1%	2.7%	1.3%	0.5%	0.2%	0.2%	0.4%	79,986
O - D 2002	70.2%	17.9%	6.1%	2.7%	1.3%	0.7%	0.4%	0.3%	0.6%	88,056
J - D 2002	72.1%	17.2%	5.4%	2.7%	1.1%	0.6%	0.3%	0.2%	0.4%	336,180
J - M 2003	70.0%	17.2%	5.6%	2.8%	1.5%	0.9%	0.5%	0.4%	1.2%	85,054
A - J 2003	72.1%	15.8%	5.8%	2.8%	1.4%	0.8%	0.4%	0.3%	0.7%	84,963
J - S 2003	69.5%	18.4%	5.7%	2.5%	1.5%	0.7%	0.5%	0.3%	0.9%	80,128
O - D 2003	69.6%	17.9%	5.6%	2.6%	1.7%	0.8%	0.5%	0.4%	0.9%	88,711
J - D 2003	70.3%	17.3%	5.7%	2.7%	1.5%	0.8%	0.5%	0.3%	0.9%	338,856
J - M 2004	69.8%	17.1%	5.2%	2.9%	1.7%	1.3%	0.6%	0.4%	1.1%	91,496
A - J 2004	71.8%	15.9%	5.5%	2.7%	1.7%	0.9%	0.6%	0.3%	0.6%	88,192
J - S 2004	70.6%	17.9%	5.4%	2.5%	1.4%	0.8%	0.4%	0.3%	0.6%	84,462
O - D 2004	68.9%	17.3%	7.0%	2.6%	1.4%	0.9%	0.7%	0.4%	0.7%	91,920
J - D 2004	70.3%	17.1%	5.8%	2.7%	1.6%	1.0%	0.6%	0.3%	0.8%	356,070

Source: CH4 Part 1

³ Refer to Technical Notes – point 19.

Technical Notes

1. Unless otherwise stated hospitals and patients mentioned in this release refer only to HPSS hospitals and patients.
2. The sources for the data contained in this release are the Charter Monitoring Returns CH1, CH2, CH3 and CH4. These returns collect information from Hospital Trusts on a quarterly basis. The CHA return collects information from Health Boards on a monthly basis.
3. There is a fundamental difference in coverage between Board based and Trust based information. Board based (CHA) returns exclude all patients living outside Northern Ireland and all privately funded patients waiting for treatment in Health Service hospitals.
4. Apart from Tables 5 and 6, figures include all privately funded patients waiting for treatment in Health Service hospitals and those patients who are resident outside Northern Ireland.
5. South and East Belfast HSS Trust now provide inpatient waiting list figures in the Mental Illness specialty. Figures for the quarters ending September 2004 and December 2004 have been included in the inpatient waiting list figures shown in Tables 1 and 2 and Figures 1 and 2.
6. In Northern Ireland, inpatient excess waiters are defined as those having to wait 12 months or more for admission to the Cardiac Surgery specialty and those having to wait 18 months or more to other specialties.
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 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. Outpatient waiting list figures presented do not include maternity specialties 510 and 520.
11. 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 self-deferred cases and are included in the total waiting.
12. The source for the monthly waiting list figures is the monthly CHA return. The monthly figures presented here are produced from an ad-hoc reporting system which does not go through the

more stringent validation processes which produce the quarterly figures. For this reason and the fact that the two sets of figures are run-off at different points in time mean that there may be anomalies when comparing the monthly figures with the quarterly figures.

13. Health Board residents included in Table 6 are not always assigned a Health Board of treatment as some patients may be waiting for admission to a hospital outside Northern Ireland.
14. Green Park Healthcare HSS Trust now provide outpatient waiting list figures in the Rheumatology and Geriatric Medicine specialties. These figures have been included in the outpatient waiting list figures shown in Figures 4 and 5.
15. The Royal Group of Hospitals HSS Trust now provide outpatient waiting list figures in the Genito-Urinary Medicine specialty. These figures have been included in the outpatient waiting list figures shown in Figures 4 and 5.
16. Newry and Mourne HSS Trust now provide outpatient waiting list figures in the Genito-Urinary Medicine specialty. These figures have been included in the outpatient waiting list figures shown in Figures 4 and 5.
17. Altnagelvin Group HSS Trust now provide outpatient waiting list figures in the Genito-Urinary Medicine specialty. These figures have been included in the outpatient waiting list figures shown in Figures 4 and 5.
18. For outpatients, excess waiters are defined as those having to wait more than 3 months for a first outpatient appointment.
19. Due to reasons beyond the control of the Trust, United Hospitals HSS Trust has been unable to produce CH4 data for all quarters between December 2001 and December 2004. This Trust has provided estimated totals for these quarters and estimates for each time band have been calculated. These new estimates for the missing data for the United Group of Hospitals have been included in the data shown in Table 9. When CH4 data becomes available these estimates will be recast.
20. 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.
21. 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.
22. Figures relating to the quarter ending March 2005 will be released on Thursday, 2nd June 2005.
23. For general enquiries about National Statistics, contact the National Statistics Public Service on

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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
Regional Information Branch
Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety
Annexe 2
Castle Buildings
Stormont
BT4 3UD

Internet address: <http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/stats&research/order.asp#waiting>