

# Information Release

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

4<sup>th</sup> September 2003

## Northern Ireland Waiting Lists – June 2003

This information release gives details of the number of people waiting for inpatient or outpatient treatment at hospitals in Northern Ireland at the end of June 2003, 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 June 2003 stood at 55,414.

Over the quarter, comparing the end of June 2003 with the end of March 2003 (55,577), the total number waiting has decreased by 163 (-0.3%).

Over the year, comparing the end of June 2003 with the end of June 2002 (59,951), the total number waiting decreased by 4,537 (- 7.6%).

**Table 1: Quarterly Waiting Lists – June 2003**

Waiting for:	Quarter ending June 2003	Change compared with end previous quarter	Change compared with end same quarter – previous year
Ordinary Admissions	24,669	- 431	- 4,681
Day case Admissions	30,745	+ 268	+ 144
Total Waiting	55,414	- 163	- 4,537

Source: CH1

**Detailed notes and definitions are shown in the attached Notes to editors.**



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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 55,414 people waiting for admission to hospital at the end of June 2003, 24,669 (44.5%) were waiting for ordinary admission and 30,745 (55.5%) were waiting for day case admission (Table 1).

Since the end of March 2003, the number of cases waiting for ordinary admission has decreased by 431 (-1.7%) and the number waiting for day case admission has increased by 268 (0.9%).

In comparison with June 2002, the number of cases waiting for ordinary admission has decreased by 4,681 (-16%) and the number waiting for day case admission has increased by 144 (0.5%).

### Excess Waiters<sup>1</sup> – 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 June 2003 stood at 6,684 or 12.1% of the total waiting.

Over the quarter, comparing the end of June 2003 with the end of March 2003, the number of excess waiters increased by 25 (0.4%).

Over the year, comparing the end of June 2003 with the end of June 2002, the number of excess waiters decreased by 2,239 (- 25.1%).

**Table 2 Excess Waiters<sup>1</sup> – June 2003**

Waiting for:	Quarter Ending June 2003	Change compared with end of previous quarter	Change compared with end same quarter previous year
Ordinary admissions	5,096	- 62	- 1,512
Day case admissions	1,588	+ 87	- 727
Total Waiting	6,684	+ 25	- 2,239

<sup>1</sup>See Notes to Editors (paragraph 5) for definition of Excess waiters.

Source: CHI

## Peak Figures

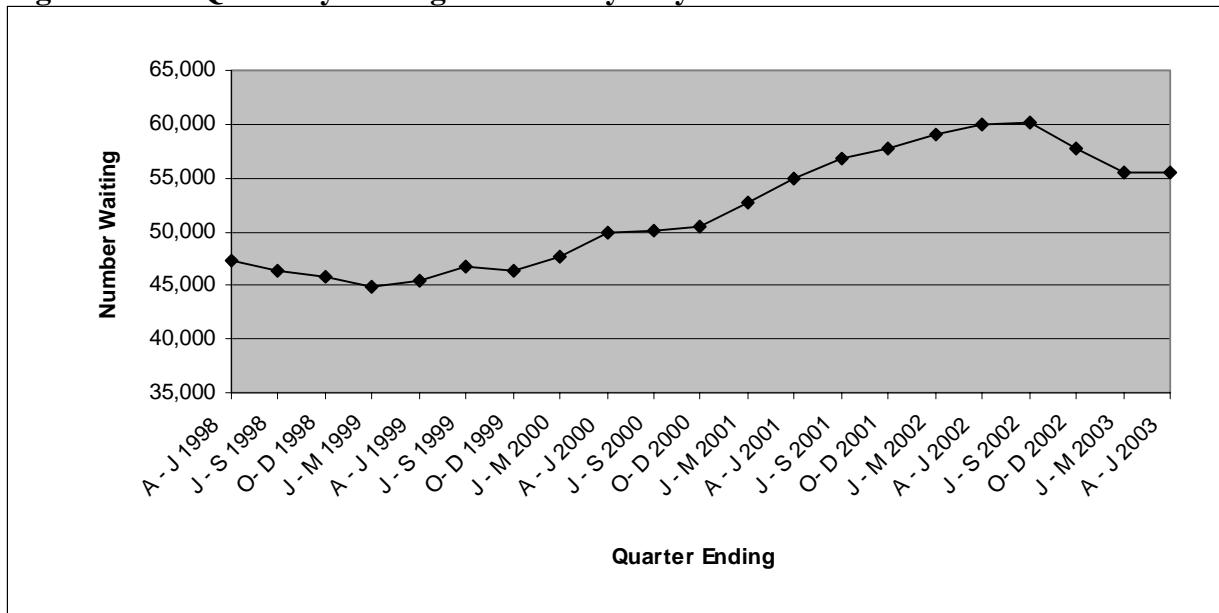
The end of June 2003 total of 55,414 on the inpatient waiting list represents a decrease of 4,776 (-7.9%) on the peak waiting list figure of 60,190 (end September 2002).

The number of excess waiters has fallen to 6,684 at the end of June 2003, and represents a decrease of 2,474 (-27%) on the peak figure of 9,158 recorded at the end of September 2002.

## Trends

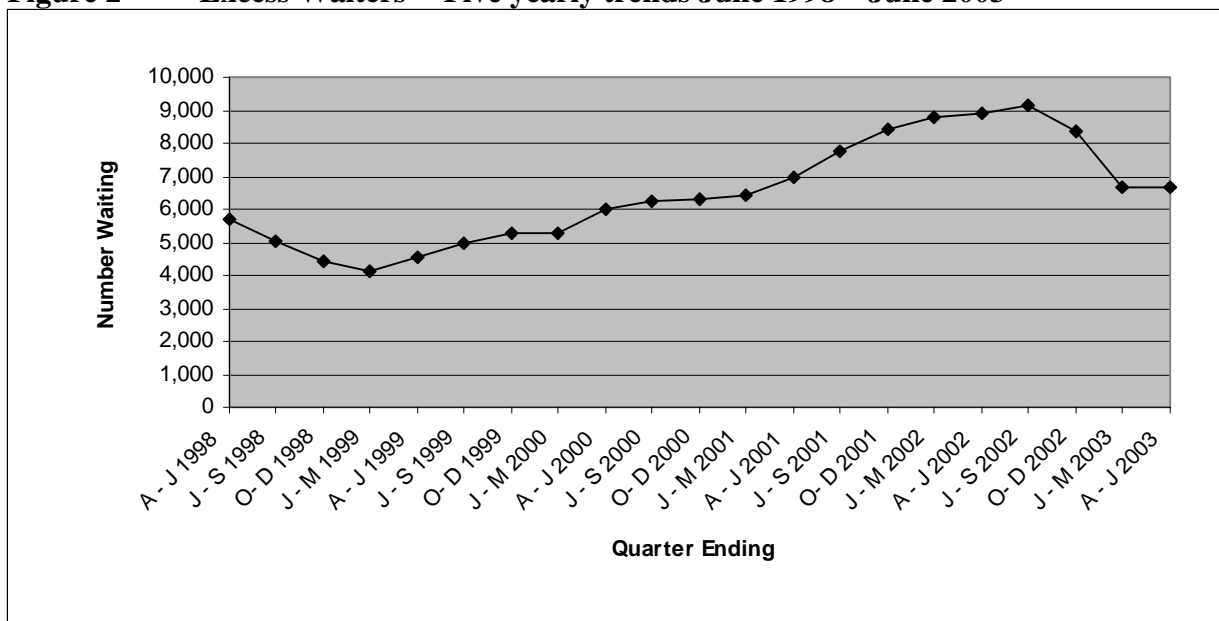
Since June 1998 the total waiting was on a generally downward trend until March 1999, when the trend reversed and total waiting rose to peak in September 2002. The total waiting decreased during the quarters ending December 2002 and March 2003 and has continued to decrease in the current quarter (Figure 1). Excess waiters have followed a similar trend (Figure 2).

**Figure 1 Quarterly waiting lists – Five yearly trends June 1998 – June 2003**



Source: CH1

**Figure 2 Excess Waiters<sup>1</sup> - Five yearly trends June 1998 – June 2003**



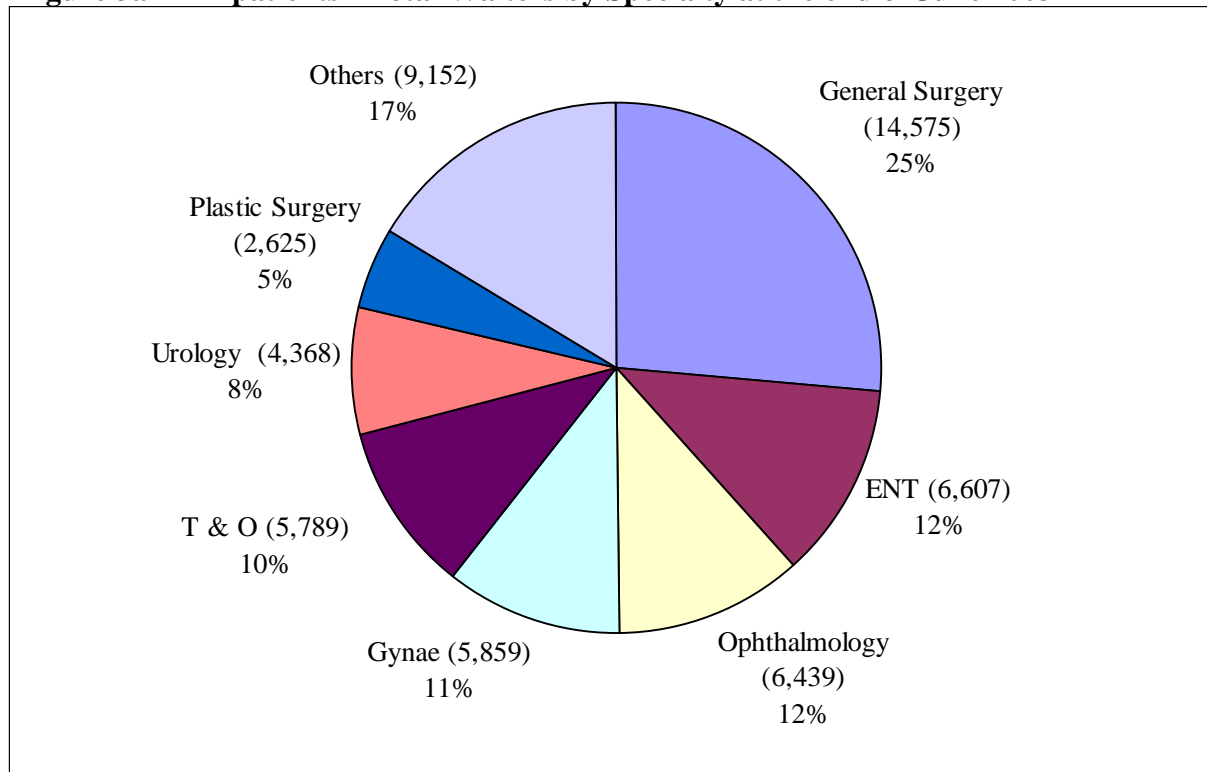
<sup>1</sup>See Notes to Editors (paragraph 5) for definition of Excess waiters.

Source: CH1

## Inpatients Waiting by Specialty

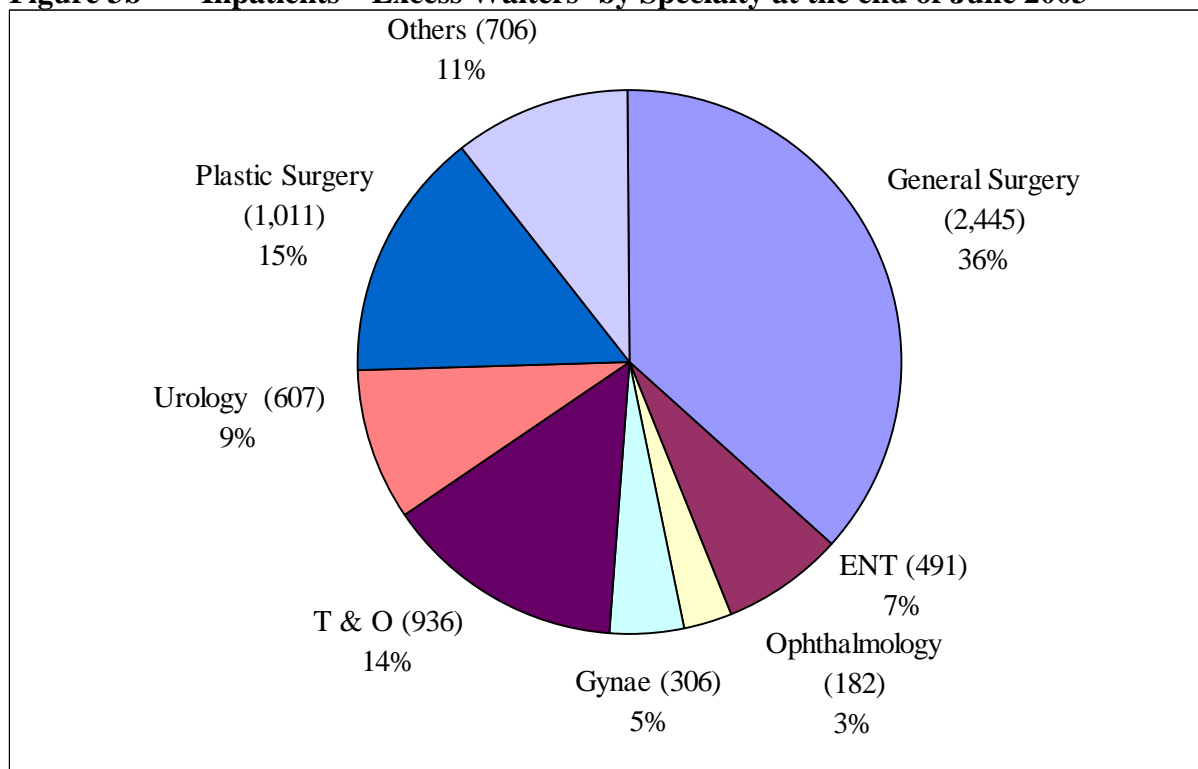
The overwhelming majority of those waiting (83%) were within seven specialties: General Surgery; Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT); Ophthalmology; Gynaecology (Gynae); Trauma and Orthopaedic Surgery (T&O); Urology and Plastic Surgery (Figure 3a). Corresponding figures for excess waiters are shown in Figure 3b.

**Figure 3a Inpatients - Total Waiters by Specialty at the end of June 2003**



Source: CH1

**Figure 3b Inpatients – Excess Waiters<sup>1</sup> by Specialty at the end of June 2003**



<sup>1</sup>See notes to editors (paragraph 5) for definition of Excess Waiters.

Source: CH1

## 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 99.5% in Rheumatology to 39% in Neurosurgery. Overall over three quarters (79%) of those waiting for admission were waiting less than 12 months.

**Table 3a Number of Patients Waiting for Admission by Months Waiting and Specialty**

SPECIALTY	Patients Waiting for Admission by Months Waiting					Total Number of Patients awaiting admission
	0 - 2	3 - 11	12 - 17	18 - 23	24+	
General Surgery	6,200	4,796	1,134	790	1,655	14,575
ENT	2,498	3,088	530	235	256	6,607
Ophthalmology	2,379	3,191	687	133	49	6,439
Gynaecology	2,737	2,268	548	212	94	5,859
Trauma & Orthopaedic Surgery	1,490	2,642	721	325	611	5,789
Urology	1,869	1,491	401	203	404	4,368
Plastic Surgery	631	729	254	158	853	2,625
General Medicine	1,598	632	60	11	21	2,322
Cardiology	585	434	215	88	41	1,363
Gastroenterology	722	153	10	2	16	903
Neurosurgery	78	186	93	50	277	684
Paediatric Surgery	271	259	33	4	4	571
Oral Surgery	229	223	22	17	2	493
Pain Management	258	184	27	4	15	488
Rheumatology	382	47	2	0	0	431
Cardiac Surgery	164	208	29	12	17	430
Dermatology	214	142	19	6	27	408
Neurology	96	142	50	10	4	302
Thoracic Surgery	87	51	37	16	32	223
Paediatric Dentistry	103	56	10	0	0	169
Other	292	66	6	0	1	365
<b>ALL SPECIALTIES</b>	<b>22,883</b>	<b>20,988</b>	<b>4,888</b>	<b>2,276</b>	<b>4,379</b>	<b>55,414</b>

Source: CHI

**Table 3b Percentage of Patients Waiting for Admission by Months Waiting and Specialty**

SPECIALTY	Patients Waiting for Admission by Months Waiting				
	0 - 2	3 - 11	12 - 17	18 - 23	24+
General Surgery	42.5%	32.9%	7.8%	5.4%	11.4%
ENT	37.8%	46.7%	8.0%	3.6%	3.9%
Ophthalmology	36.9%	49.6%	10.7%	2.1%	0.8%
Gynaecology	46.7%	38.7%	9.4%	3.6%	1.6%
Trauma & Orthopaedic Surgery	25.7%	45.6%	12.5%	5.6%	10.6%
Urology	42.8%	34.1%	9.2%	4.6%	9.2%
Plastic Surgery	24.0%	27.8%	9.7%	6.0%	32.5%
General Medicine	68.8%	27.2%	2.6%	0.5%	0.9%
Cardiology	42.9%	31.8%	15.8%	6.5%	3.0%
Gastroenterology	80.0%	16.9%	1.1%	0.2%	1.8%
Neurosurgery	11.4%	27.2%	13.6%	7.3%	40.5%
Paediatric Surgery	47.5%	45.4%	5.8%	0.7%	0.7%
Oral Surgery	46.5%	45.2%	4.5%	3.4%	0.4%
Pain Management	52.9%	37.7%	5.5%	0.8%	3.1%
Rheumatology	88.6%	10.9%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Cardiac Surgery	38.1%	48.4%	6.7%	2.8%	4.0%
Dermatology	52.5%	34.8%	4.7%	1.5%	6.6%
Neurology	31.8%	47.0%	16.6%	3.3%	1.3%
Thoracic Surgery	39.0%	22.9%	16.6%	7.2%	14.3%
Paediatric Dentistry	60.9%	33.1%	5.9%	0.0%	0.0%
Other	80.0%	18.1%	1.6%	0.0%	0.3%
<b>ALL SPECIALTIES</b>	<b>41.3%</b>	<b>37.9%</b>	<b>8.8%</b>	<b>4.1%</b>	<b>7.9%</b>

Source: CHI

## Completed Waits

Waiting times for completed inpatient waits are shown in Table 4. A total of 37,948 inpatients were admitted to hospital (excluding those who had previously refused an offer of attendance) during the June 2003 quarter. Seventy four percent of patients received their treatment within 3 months of being placed on the waiting list and 95% received their treatment within 12 months.

**Table 4 Completed Inpatient Waits**

QUARTER	Time Waiting in Months (Percentage of total waits in each time band)					TOTAL
	0 - 2	3 - 11	12 - 17	18 - 23	24+	
J - M 2000	75.4%	20.1%	3.0%	0.8%	0.7%	35,637
A - J 2000	76.4%	19.5%	2.6%	0.8%	0.7%	36,307
J - S 2000	74.2%	21.2%	2.9%	1.0%	0.7%	33,322
O- D 2000	76.7%	18.9%	2.9%	0.8%	0.7%	37,183
<b>J - D 2000</b>	<b>75.7%</b>	<b>19.9%</b>	<b>2.9%</b>	<b>0.8%</b>	<b>0.7%</b>	<b>142,449</b>
J - M 2001	76.9%	18.7%	2.7%	0.8%	0.8%	36,377
A - J 2001	76.6%	19.4%	2.5%	0.8%	0.7%	35,858
J - S 2001	74.4%	20.8%	3.1%	1.0%	0.8%	33,271
O- D 2001	75.0%	20.0%	3.1%	1.0%	0.9%	37,656
<b>J - D 2001</b>	<b>75.7%</b>	<b>19.7%</b>	<b>2.9%</b>	<b>0.9%</b>	<b>0.8%</b>	<b>143,162</b>
J - M 2002	74.9%	19.7%	3.6%	1.1%	0.8%	38,042
A - J 2002	74.4%	20.4%	3.3%	1.0%	0.9%	36,885
J - S 2002	72.9%	21.9%	3.3%	1.1%	0.7%	33,522
O- D 2002	74.1%	20.3%	3.5%	1.2%	0.9%	38,009
<b>J - D 2002</b>	<b>74.1%</b>	<b>20.5%</b>	<b>3.4%</b>	<b>1.1%</b>	<b>0.8%</b>	<b>146,458</b>
J - M 2003	74.1%	19.5%	3.8%	1.4%	1.2%	38,371
A - J 2003	74.3%	20.7%	3.1%	1.0%	1.0%	37,948

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
June 2002 <sup>2</sup>	29,161	29,711	58,872	9,125	15.5%
July 2002 <sup>2</sup>	29,102	30,867	59,969	9,385	15.6%
August 2002 <sup>2</sup>	29,141	30,589	59,730	9,673	16.2%
September 2002 <sup>2,3</sup>	28,534	30,512	59,046	9,254	15.7%
October 2002 <sup>2,3</sup>	27,830	30,311	58,141	8,809	15.2%
November 2002 <sup>2,3</sup>	26,857	29,916	56,773	8,371	14.7%
December 2002 <sup>2</sup>	26,483	30,040	56,523	8,260	14.6%
January 2003 <sup>2</sup>	25,702	29,967	55,669	7,450	13.4%
February 2003 <sup>2</sup>	25,061	30,238	55,299	6,863	12.4%
March 2003 <sup>2</sup>	24,502	29,828	54,330	6,600	12.1%
April 2003 <sup>2</sup>	24,480	29,862	54,342	6,620	12.2%
May 2003 <sup>2</sup>	24,309	30,147	54,456	6,702	12.3%
June 2003 <sup>2</sup>	24,250	30,299	54,549	6,646	12.2%

Source: CHA

<sup>2</sup> Estimated Figures – See Note 14

<sup>3</sup> Estimated Figures – See Note 15

The monthly waiting list figures have shown an overall increase in the 3 month period since March 2003.

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**

Board of Residence	Board of Treatment			
	EHSSB	NHSSB	SHSSB	WHSSB
Eastern	20,784	99	79	0
Northern	6,080	8,217	451	754
Southern	3,774	26	7,895	171
Western	1,158	59	47	4,955
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>31,796</b>	<b>8,401</b>	<b>8,472</b>	<b>5,880</b>

Source: CHA

# Outpatients

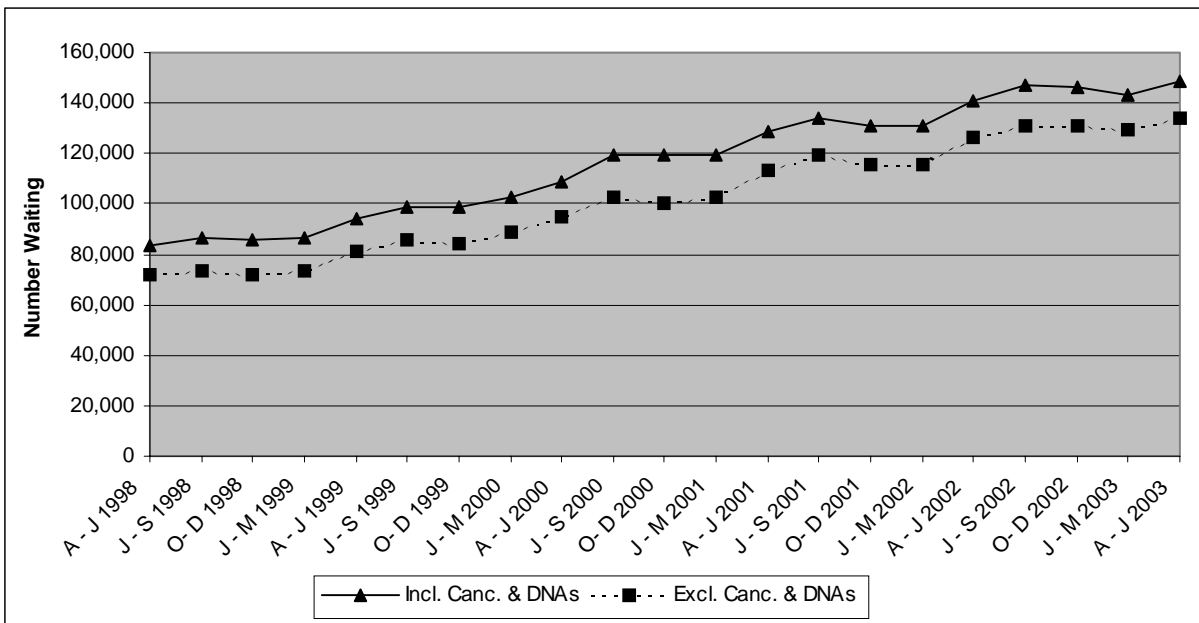
## Headline Totals

The number of patients waiting for admission as outpatients (including cancellations and deferrals) at the end of June 2003 stood at 148,808<sup>4</sup> representing an increase of 5,421 (3.8%) over the quarter and an increase of 7,864 (5.6%) compared with the same quarter in the previous year.

Corresponding quarterly and annual changes (excluding cancellations and deferrals) were +4.0% and +6.2% 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).

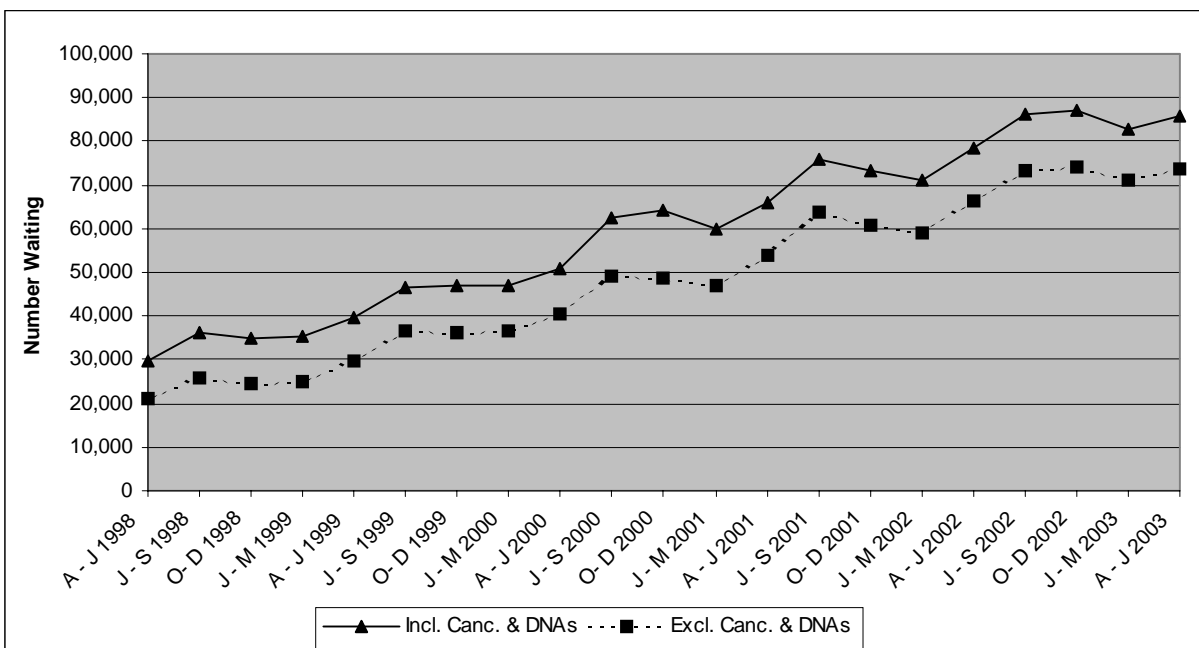
<sup>4</sup>Outpatient figures for the four previous quarters have been revised to include estimates – see note 16.

**Figure 4 Outpatients Waiting for a First Appointment (including and excluding cancellations and deferrals) – Five Yearly Trends June 1998 – June 2003**



Source: CH3 Parts 1&2.

**Figure 5 Excess Waiters Five Yearly Trends June 1998 – June 2003**

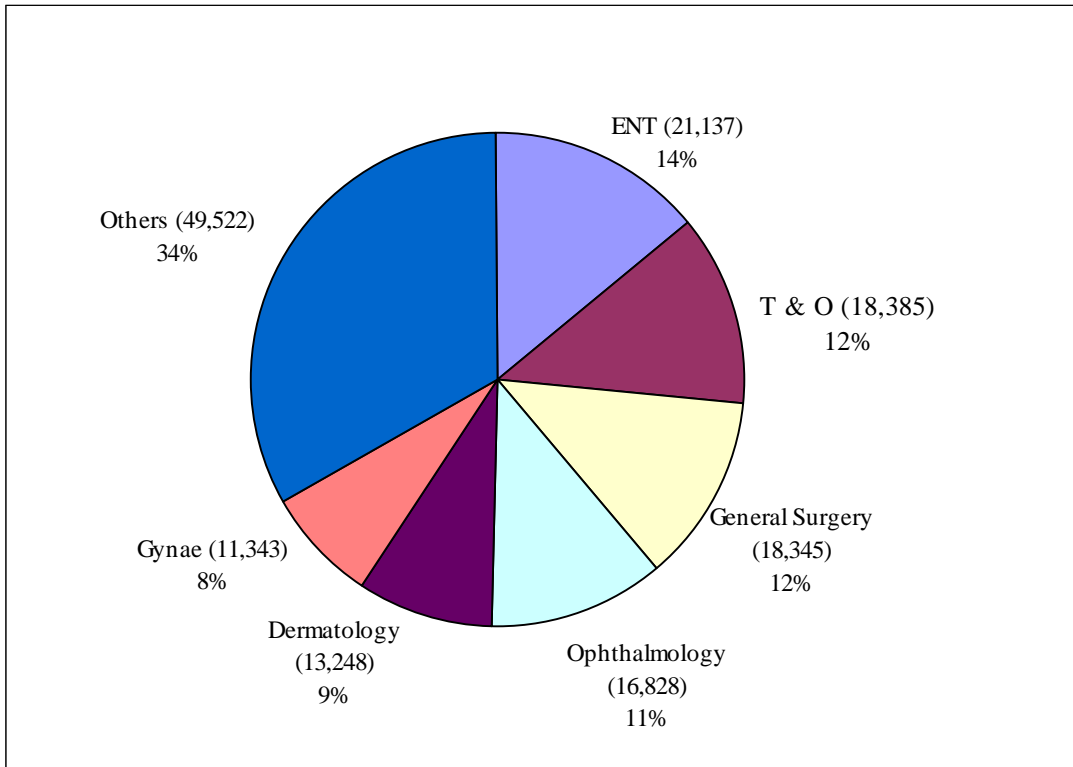


Source: CH3 Parts 1 & 2

## Outpatients Waiting by Specialty

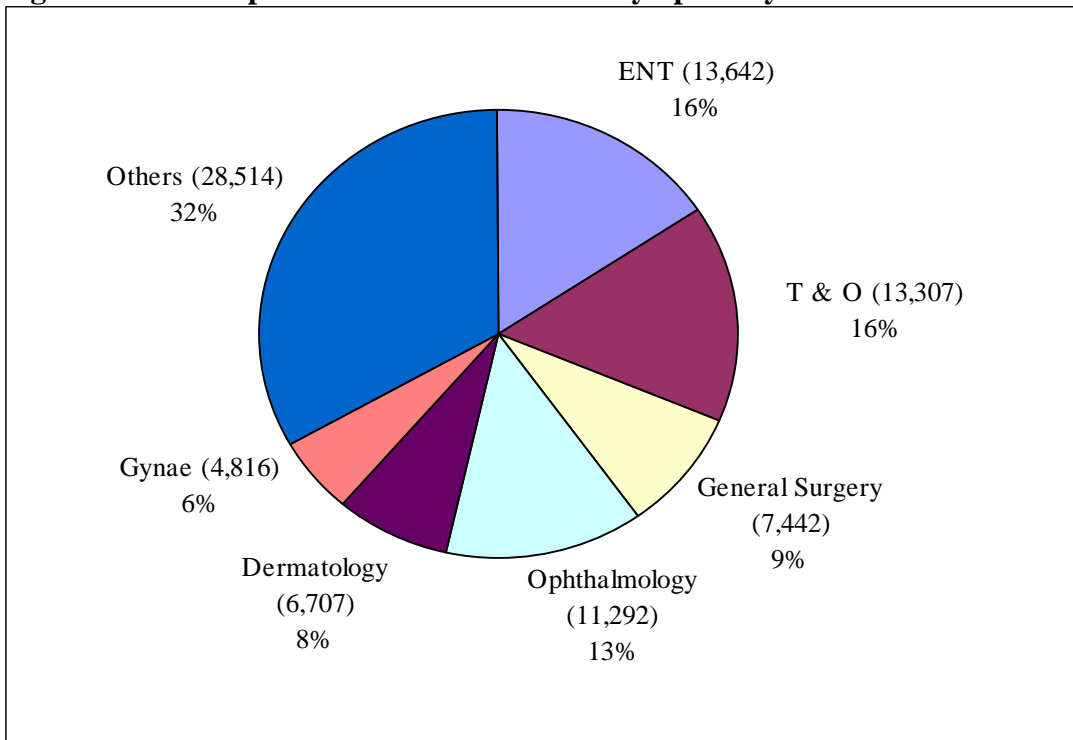
The majority of those waiting (67%) were within six specialties: Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT); General Surgery; Trauma and Orthopaedic Surgery (T&O); Ophthalmology; Dermatology and Gynaecology (Gynae) (Figure 5a). Corresponding figures for excess waiters are shown in Figure 5b. All figures include those who are waiting for their first appointment including those who have cancelled or missed a previous appointment during the June 2003 quarter.

**Figure 6a Outpatients – Total Waiters by Specialty at the end of June 2003**



Source: CH3.

**Figure 6b Outpatients – Excess Waiters<sup>1</sup> by Specialty at the end of June 2003**



<sup>1</sup> See notes to editors (paragraph 6) for definition of Excess Waiters.

Source: CH3.

## 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 100% in Old Age Psychiatry to 27.7% in Plastic Surgery. Overall four fifths (80.4%) 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**

SPECIALTY	Patients Waiting for Appointment by Months Waiting and Specialty					Total Number of Patients Waiting for an Appointment
	0 - 2	3 - 11	12 - 17	18 - 23	24+	
ENT	7,495	9,043	2,471	1,110	1,018	21,137
Trauma & Orthopaedic Surgery	5,078	6,930	1,971	1,383	3,023	18,385
General Surgery	10,903	6,111	824	269	238	18,345
Ophthalmology	5,536	7,732	1,728	813	1,019	16,828
Dermatology	6,541	4,820	884	458	545	13,248
Gynaecology	6,527	4,380	333	37	66	11,343
General Medicine	3,950	2,781	448	155	193	7,527
Plastic Surgery	665	997	562	486	3,291	6,001
Urology	1,566	2,442	664	366	527	5,565
Cardiology	2,380	1,469	189	83	60	4,181
Rheumatology	1,281	1,793	472	113	30	3,689
Paediatrics	1,764	932	203	111	262	3,272
Neurology	1,142	1,399	315	66	41	2,963
Oral Surgery	642	1,077	341	172	197	2,429
Mental Illness	1,821	471	13	1	0	2,306
Pain Management <sup>4</sup>	675	985	289	77	151	2,177
Geriatric Medicine	779	693	14	9	0	1,495
Paediatric Surgery	489	377	42	17	77	1,002
Gastroenterology	491	192	42	50	9	784
Thoracic Medicine	467	272	20	2	0	761
Child & Adolescent Psychiatry	326	307	51	3	0	687
Restorative Dentistry	218	217	100	43	83	661
Nephrology	426	164	25	9	31	655
Orthodontics	267	281	24	13	3	588
Endocrinology	379	156	12	0	0	547
Neurosurgery	161	150	21	5	3	340
Audiological Medicine	142	67	25	14	23	271
Haematology (Clinical)	229	6	3	0	1	239
Anaesthetics	35	59	35	28	60	217
Old Age Psychiatry	132	66	0	0	0	198
Paediatric Dentistry	52	45	20	16	56	189
Cardiac Surgery	97	32	9	1	0	139
Clinical Oncology	124	6	0	1	0	131
Accident & Emergency	104	13	0	0	0	117
Chemical Pathology	42	59	6	0	2	109
Other	162	81	16	7	16	282
<b>ALL SPECIALTIES</b>	<b>63,088</b>	<b>56,605</b>	<b>12,172</b>	<b>5,918</b>	<b>11,025</b>	<b>148,808</b>

Source: CH3

<sup>4</sup> Estimated Figures – See Note 16

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

SPECIALTY	Patients Waiting for an Appointment by Months				
	0 - 2	3 - 11	12 - 17	18 - 23	24+
ENT	35.5%	42.8%	11.7%	5.3%	4.8%
Trauma & Orthopaedic Surgery	27.6%	37.7%	10.7%	7.5%	16.4%
General Surgery	59.4%	33.3%	4.5%	1.5%	1.3%
Ophthalmology	32.9%	45.9%	10.3%	4.8%	6.1%
Dermatology	49.4%	36.4%	6.7%	3.5%	4.1%
Gynaecology	57.5%	38.6%	2.9%	0.3%	0.6%
General Medicine	52.5%	36.9%	6.0%	2.1%	2.6%
Plastic Surgery	11.1%	16.6%	9.4%	8.1%	54.8%
Urology	28.1%	43.9%	11.9%	6.6%	9.5%
Cardiology	56.9%	35.1%	4.5%	2.0%	1.4%
Rheumatology	34.7%	48.6%	12.8%	3.1%	0.8%
Paediatrics	53.9%	28.5%	6.2%	3.4%	8.0%
Neurology	38.5%	47.2%	10.6%	2.2%	1.4%
Oral Surgery	26.4%	44.3%	14.0%	7.1%	8.1%
Mental Illness	79.0%	20.4%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%
Pain Management <sup>4</sup>	31.0%	45.2%	13.3%	3.5%	6.9%
Geriatric Medicine	52.1%	46.4%	0.9%	0.6%	0.0%
Paediatric Surgery	48.8%	37.6%	4.2%	1.7%	7.7%
Gastroenterology	62.6%	24.5%	5.4%	6.4%	1.1%
Thoracic Medicine	61.4%	35.7%	2.6%	0.3%	0.0%
Child & Adolescent Psychiatry	47.5%	44.7%	7.4%	0.4%	0.0%
Restorative Dentistry	33.0%	32.8%	15.1%	6.5%	12.6%
Nephrology	65.0%	25.0%	3.8%	1.4%	4.7%
Orthodontics	45.4%	47.8%	4.1%	2.2%	0.5%
Endocrinology	69.3%	28.5%	2.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Neurosurgery	47.4%	44.1%	6.2%	1.5%	0.9%
Audiological Medicine	52.4%	24.7%	9.2%	5.2%	8.5%
Haematology (Clinical)	95.8%	2.5%	1.3%	0.0%	0.4%
Anaesthetics	16.1%	27.2%	16.1%	12.9%	27.6%
Old Age Psychiatry	66.7%	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Paediatric Dentistry	27.5%	23.8%	10.6%	8.5%	29.6%
Cardiac Surgery	69.8%	23.0%	6.5%	0.7%	0.0%
Clinical Oncology	94.7%	4.6%	0.0%	0.8%	0.0%
Accident & Emergency	88.9%	11.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Chemical Pathology	38.5%	54.1%	5.5%	0.0%	1.8%
Other	57.4%	28.7%	5.7%	2.5%	5.7%
<b>ALL SPECIALTIES</b>	<b>42.4%</b>	<b>38.0%</b>	<b>8.2%</b>	<b>4.0%</b>	<b>7.4%</b>

Source: CH3

<sup>4</sup> Estimated Figures – See Note 16

## Outpatient Completed Waits

Waiting times for completed outpatient waits are shown in Table 8. During the June 2003 quarter a total of 85,963 outpatients attended their first appointment without having cancelled or missed a previous appointment. Seventy two percent of patients attended their first outpatient appointment within 3 months of being placed on the waiting list and 96.5% had their first outpatient appointment within 12 months.

**Table 8 Completed Outpatient Waits for First Appointment**

QUARTER	Time Waiting in Months (Percentage of total waits in each time band)					TOTAL
	0 - 2	3 - 11	12 - 17	18 - 23	24+	
J - M 2000	77.0%	21.7%	0.9%	0.2%	0.1%	84,604
A - J 2000	78.5%	20.1%	0.9%	0.3%	0.2%	77,699
J - S 2000	75.4%	23.1%	1.2%	0.2%	0.1%	75,721
O - D 2000	74.5%	23.5%	1.6%	0.3%	0.2%	84,326
<b>J - D 2000</b>	<b>76.3%</b>	<b>22.1%</b>	<b>1.2%</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>322,350</b>
J - M 2001	75.6%	22.5%	1.3%	0.4%	0.2%	86,024
A - J 2001	77.2%	21.0%	1.2%	0.4%	0.2%	82,161
J - S 2001	74.4%	23.7%	1.2%	0.5%	0.3%	77,880
O - D 2001 <sup>5</sup>	72.4%	24.7%	1.8%	0.7%	0.3%	88,331
<b>J - D 2001<sup>5</sup></b>	<b>74.9%</b>	<b>23.0%</b>	<b>1.4%</b>	<b>0.5%</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>334,396</b>
J - M 2002 <sup>5</sup>	72.4%	25.3%	1.4%	0.6%	0.3%	85,856
A - J 2002 <sup>5</sup>	74.9%	22.7%	1.4%	0.5%	0.4%	82,282
J - S 2002 <sup>5</sup>	71.0%	26.3%	1.8%	0.4%	0.4%	79,986
O - D 2002 <sup>5</sup>	70.2%	26.6%	2.0%	0.6%	0.6%	88,056
<b>J - D 2002<sup>5</sup></b>	<b>72.1%</b>	<b>25.2%</b>	<b>1.7%</b>	<b>0.5%</b>	<b>0.4%</b>	<b>336,180</b>
J - M 2003 <sup>5</sup>	70.0%	25.6%	2.4%	0.9%	1.2%	85,054
A - J 2003 <sup>5</sup>	72.1%	24.4%	2.2%	0.7%	0.7%	84,963

Source: CH4 Part 1

<sup>5</sup> Estimated Figures – See note 17.

## Notes to Editors

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. 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.
6. For outpatients, excess waiters are defined as those having to wait more than 3 months for a first outpatient appointment.
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. Western Board have now provided figures for Western Board residents awaiting admission to hospital as a day case in the General Medicine specialty. Estimated data was supplied for months ending April 2002 to May 2003 and figures for these months have been revised to include the estimated data. Revised figures are included in Tables 5 and 6.
15. Green Park HSS Trust was unable to provide waiting list figures for long waiters in the Trauma and Orthopaedic Specialty by Health Board of Residence for months ending September, October and November 2002. Estimated figures have been included in the monthly data shown in Tables 5 and 6.
16. Green Park HSS Trust now provide outpatient waiting list figures in the Pain Management specialty. Estimated totals were provided for quarters ending June, September and December 2002 and March 2003 and estimates for each time band have been calculated. These new estimates have been included in the outpatient figures shown in Figures 4 and 5.
17. 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 June 2003. 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 8. When CH4 data becomes available these estimates will be recast.
18. Some of the data is provisional and may be subject to revision in subsequent quarters.
19. Figures relating to the quarter ending September 2003 will be released on Thursday, 4<sup>th</sup> December 2003.
20. 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](http://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: [www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/publications/index.html](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/publications/index.html)