

Statistics Release



Department of
**Health, Social Services
and Public Safety**

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AN ROINN

**Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta
agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí**

MÁNNYSTRIE O

**Poustie, Resydènter Heisin
an Fowk Siccar**

03 June 2010

Northern Ireland Waiting Lists – March 2010

This statistics release gives details of the number of people waiting for either a first outpatient assessment, a diagnostic service or inpatient treatment at hospitals in Northern Ireland at the end of March 2010, the most recent quarter for which figures are available.

Outpatients

Headline Totals¹

The number of patients waiting for a first outpatient appointment at the end of March 2010 stood at 86,501, 3,931 (4.8%) more than at the end of December 2009 (82,570) and 17,746 (25.8%) more than at the end of March 2009 (68,755).

Table 1 Quarterly Outpatient Waiting Lists – 31st March 2010¹

	Quarter Ending March 2010	Change compared with end of previous quarter	Change compared with end same quarter - previous year
Total Waiting	86,501	+ 3,931	+ 17,746

Source: Departmental Return CH3 parts 1 & 2.

¹ Refer to Technical Notes - points 1 - 4.

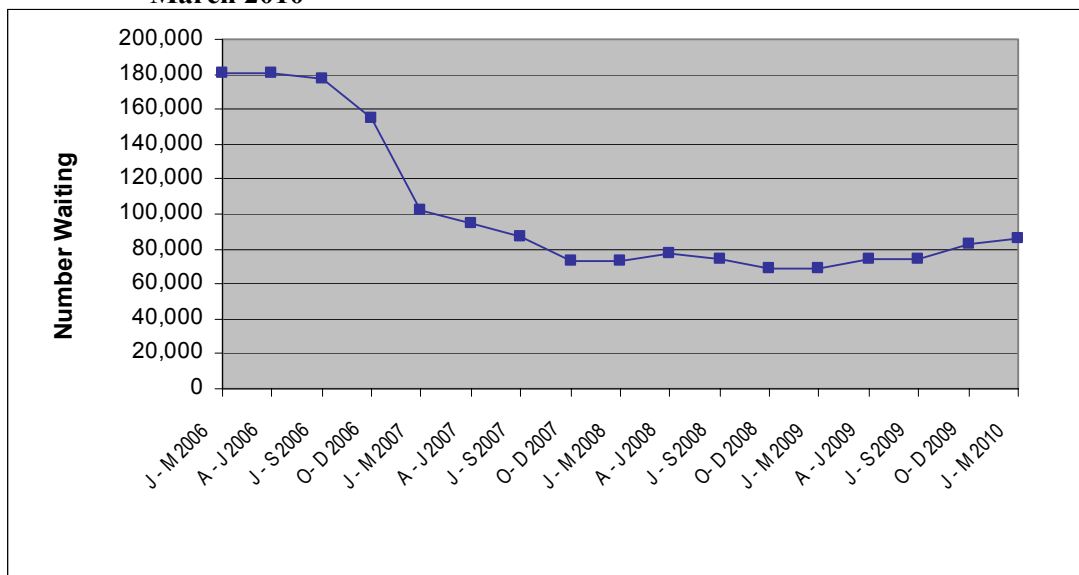
Detailed notes and definitions are provided in the Technical Notes.



Total Outpatients Waiting – Trends

The total number of people waiting for a first outpatient appointment was on a downward trend from March 2006 until March 2008. The outpatient waiting lists total remained fairly constant over the next eight quarters from June 2008 to March 2010, but has been increasing over the past two quarters.

Figure 1 Outpatients Waiting for a First Appointment: Quarterly Trends March 2006 – March 2010



Source: Departmental Return CH3 parts 1 & 2.

Outpatients Waiting More than 9 Weeks

The 2009/10 Priority For Action Target relating to Waiting Times for a first outpatient appointment states that ‘from April 2009, no patient should wait longer than 9 weeks for a first outpatient appointment’.

At the end of March 2010, the number of patients waiting more than 9 weeks for a first outpatient appointment was 8,581 - 7,134 less than at the end of December 2009 (15,715 waiting more than 9 weeks) and 8,093 more than at the same time last year (488 waiting more than 9 weeks). Some 9.9% of those waiting for a first outpatient appointment were waiting more than nine weeks. Of this number, 4,570 (53.3%) were waiting more than 13 weeks.

Table 2 Patients Waiting More than 9 Weeks² - 31st March 2010

	Quarter Ending March 2010	Change compared with end of previous quarter	Change compared with end same quarter - previous year
Total Waiting	8,581	-7,134	+8,093

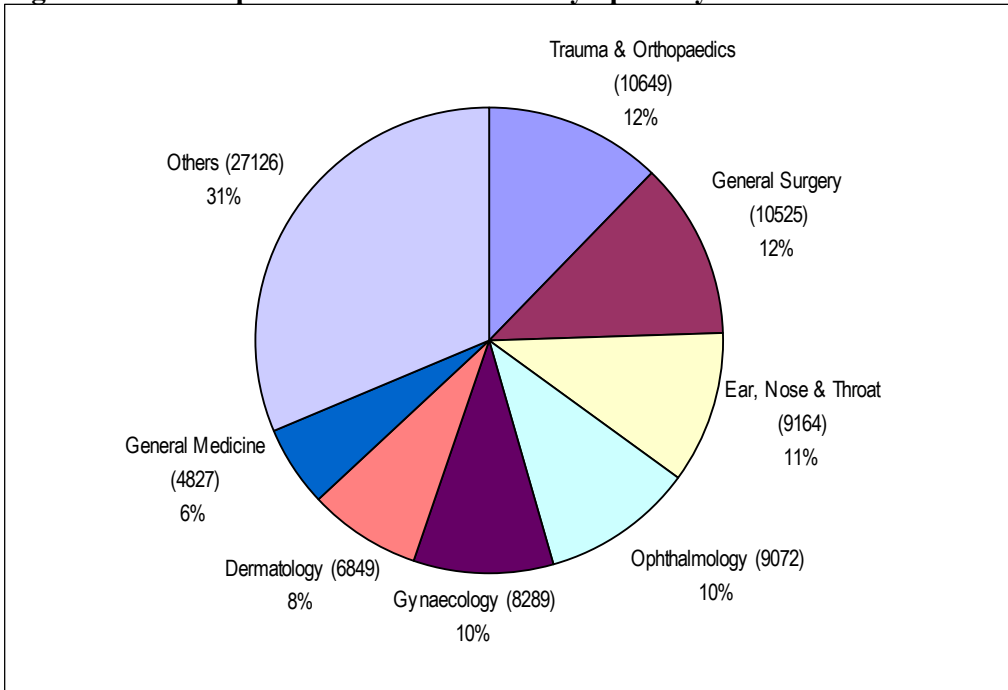
Source: Departmental Return CH3 parts 1 & 2.

² Refer to Technical Notes – points 4 - 6.

Outpatients Waiting by Specialty

Almost 70% of the 86,501 patients waiting for a first outpatient appointment were within seven specialties: Trauma & Orthopaedics; General Surgery; Ear, Nose & Throat (ENT); Ophthalmology; Gynaecology (Gynae); Dermatology and General Medicine (Figure 2a).

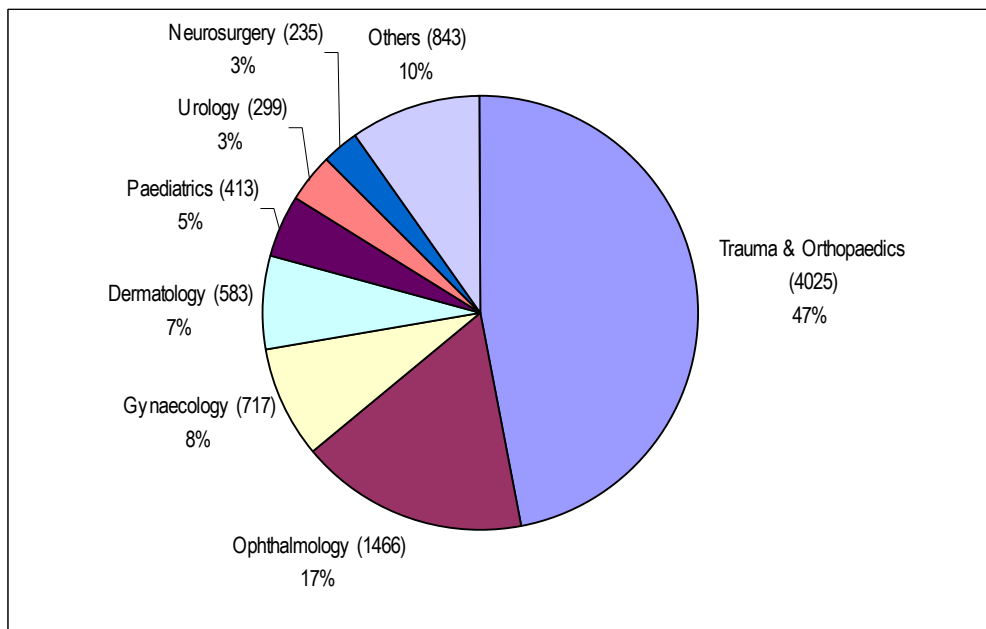
Figure 2a Outpatients – Total Waiters by Specialty at 31st March 2010



Source: Departmental Return CH3 parts 1 & 2.

90% of the 8,581 patients waiting more than nine weeks were within seven specialties as shown in Figure 2b below.

Figure 2b Outpatients – Patients Waiting More than 9 Weeks by Specialty at 31st March 2010



Source: Departmental Return CH3 parts 1 & 2.

Outpatient Waiting Time by Specialty

Waiting times for outpatients by specialty are shown in Table 3. Overall 90.1% of those waiting for treatment were waiting less than nine weeks.

Table 3 Number of Patients Waiting for a First Appointment by Weeks Waiting and Specialty – 31st March 2010²

Specialty	Patients Waiting for an Appointment by Weeks Waiting					Total Number of Patients Waiting
	0-6	>6-9	>9-13	>13-26	26+	
Trauma & Orthopaedics	4,776	1,848	1437	2588	0	10,649
General Surgery	8,643	1,882	0	0	0	10,525
Ear, Nose & Throat	7,260	1,904	0	0	0	9,164
Ophthalmology	5,806	1,800	852	613	1	9,072
Gynaecology	5,953	1,619	373	344	0	8,289
Dermatology	4,989	1,277	381	202	0	6,849
General Medicine	3,771	841	64	151	0	4,827
Other:-	20,324	5,227	904	616	55	27,126
Paediatrics	2,682	676	113	245	55	3,771
Cardiology	2,556	702	32	22	0	3,312
Urology	1,667	570	264	35	0	2,536
Neurology	1,879	594	3	2	0	2,478
Rheumatology	1,633	348	15	24	0	2,020
Oral Surgery	1,599	327	0	0	0	1,926
Pain Management	1,057	377	135	0	0	1,569
Gastroenterology	1,096	289	0	0	0	1,385
Plastic Surgery	760	177	0	0	0	937
Thoracic Medicine	705	171	0	0	0	876
Geriatric Medicine	730	77	0	0	0	807
Restorative Dentistry	587	158	0	0	0	745
Dental Medicine Specialities	359	118	101	72	0	650
Other	3,014	643	241	216	0	4,114
All Specialties	61,522	16,398	4,011	4,514	56	86,501

Source: Departmental Return CH3 parts 1 & 2.

² Refer to Technical Notes – points 4 - 6.

Outpatient Waiting Times by Provider Trust

Waiting times for outpatients by HSC Trust are shown in Table 4.

Around 44% (37,636) of patients waiting for a first appointment were waiting in the Belfast HSC Trust. 15% (13,220) of those waiting were waiting in the South Eastern HSC Trust, 14% (12,344) in the Western HSC Trust, 14% (11,926) in the Southern HSC Trust and 13% (11,375) in the Northern HSC Trust.

Table 4 Number of Patients Waiting for a First Appointment by Provider Trust and Weeks Waiting – 31st March 2010²

Provider Trust	Patients Waiting for an Appointment by Weeks Waiting					Total Number of Patients Waiting
	0-6	>6-9	>9-13	>13-26	26+	
Belfast	22,715	6,953	3,564	4,348	56	37,636
Northern	9,035	2,150	189	1	0	11,375
South Eastern	10,521	2,699	0	0	0	13,220
Southern	9,222	2,463	184	57	0	11,926
Western	10,029	2,133	74	108	0	12,344
Total	61,522	16,398	4,011	4,514	56	86,501

Source: Departmental Return CH3 parts 1 & 2.

²Refer to Technical Notes – points 5 & 6.

Of the 8,581 patients waiting more than nine weeks for a first outpatient appointment, 93% (7,968) were waiting in the Belfast HSC Trust, with 3% (241), 2% (190) and 2% (182) waiting at the Southern, Northern and Western HSC Trusts respectively. There were no patients waiting more than nine weeks for a first outpatient appointment at the South Eastern HSC Trust at 31st March 2010.

Completed Outpatient Waits

The number of completed outpatient waits, for patients treated within Health Service hospitals in Northern Ireland, is shown in Table 5. A total of 121,924 patients attended a first outpatient appointment within Health Service hospitals during the March 2010 quarter.

Table 5 Completed Outpatient Waits for First Appointment – QE March 2010³

Quarter	Total Number of Completed Outpatient Waits
J - M 2007	120,388
A - J 2007	117,021
J - S 2007	112,569
O- D 2007	121,090
J - D 2007	471,068
J - M 2008	114,002
A - J 2008	122,401
J - S 2008	113,478
O- D 2008	122,883
J - D 2008	472,764
J - M 2009	122,149
A - J 2009 ^P	122,628
J - S 2009 ^P	120,089
O- D 2009 ^P	120,135
J - D 2009	485,001
J - M 2010 ^P	121,924

Source: Departmental Return QOAR.

³Refer to Technical Note – point 8.

P – Provisional

121,924 patients attended a first outpatient appointment in a Health Service hospital during the quarter ending 31st March 2010, compared with 120,135 in the quarter ending 31st December 2009 and 122,149 in the quarter ending 31st March 2009. The number of completed outpatients waits has remained fairly constant in each quarter during the year 2009-2010.

Completed Outpatient Waits including Independent Sector Activity

During the March 2010 quarter, a number of patients attended a first outpatient appointment, commissioned by the Health Service, within the Independent Sector. The number of such patients attending a first outpatient appointment within the Independent Sector has been provided by the Health and Social Care Board, split by commissioning Trust.

Table 6a Completed Outpatient Waits by Trust including Independent Sector Activity – QE March 2010⁴

Provider Trust	Number of Completed Outpatient Waits within Health Service Hospitals ^P	Number of Completed Outpatient Waits in Independent Sector	Total Number of Completed Outpatient Waits Commissioned by Health Service
Belfast	48,878	540	49,418
Northern	15,795	3,329	19,124
South Eastern	18,786	4,865	23,651
Southern	17,617	267	17,884
Western	20,848	2,240	23,088
Total Treated	121,924	11,241	133,165

Source: Departmental Returns QOAR and IS1 part1.

⁴Refer to Technical Notes – points 8 - 10.

P – Provisional

11,241 Health Service patients attended a first outpatient appointment, within the Independent Sector, during the quarter ending March 2010. When this number is combined with that for outpatients attending a first appointment in Health Service hospitals during the same period (121,924), it is estimated that approximately 133,165 (121,924 + 11,241) outpatients attended a first appointment in Northern Ireland for an assessment commissioned by the Health Service.

Approximately 37% (49,418) of completed waits for the quarter ending 31st March 2010 occurred in the Belfast HSC Trust with, 18% (23,651), 17% (23,088), 14% (19,124) and 13% (17,884) occurring in the South Eastern, Western, Northern and Southern Trusts respectively.

Completed Outpatient Waits including Independent Sector Activity – Trends

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

Table 6b Completed Outpatient Waits by Trust Including Independent Sector Activity⁴, QE March 2009 – QE March 2010^P

Provider Trust	Total Number of Completed Outpatient Waits Commissioned by Health Service				
	QE March 2009 ^R	QE June 2009 ^R	QE September 2009 ^R	QE December 2009 ^R	QE March 2010 ^P
Belfast	54,740	51,800	52,363	48,853	49,418
Northern	18,904	18,818	18,390	16,327	19,124
South Eastern	21,756	25,086	21,148	18,881	23,651
Southern	19,095	19,188	20,634	17,524	17,884
Western	20,914	20,982	20,353	20,752	23,088
Total	135,409	135,874	132,888	122,337	133,165

Source: Departmental Returns QOAR and IS1 part 1.

⁴ Refer to Technical Notes – points 8 - 10.

R - Revised

P - Provisional

Completed outpatient waits have decreased by 1.7% (2,244) from March 2009 (135,409) to March 2010 (133,165). There has been an 8.9% (10,828) increase in the total number of completed outpatient waits between December 2009 (122,337) and March 2010 (135,409).

Since the number of completed outpatient waits in Health Service hospitals has remained fairly constant, the increase in completed outpatients waits between the quarter ending 31st December 2009 and the quarter ending 31st March 2010 is largely due to an increase in independent sector activity. The number of patients who attended a first outpatient appointment, commissioned by the Health Service, within the Independent Sector increased by more than five-fold this quarter compared with the previous quarter, from 2,202 (QE December 2009) to 11,241 (QE March 2010).

Diagnostic Services

Tables 7 -10 provide details of the number of people waiting for diagnostic services, carried out at hospitals in Northern Ireland, and covered by the maximum waiting time Ministerial target for 2009/10⁵. The 2009/10 waiting time target for diagnostic services states that from April 2009, no patient should wait longer than nine weeks for one of the selected 16 diagnostic services (13 weeks for a day case endoscopy) and by 31st March 2010, no longer than nine weeks (13 weeks for a day case endoscopy) for all diagnostic services.

From this quarter, the number of patients reported as waiting for diagnostic services relates to patients waiting for all diagnostic services, whereas data reported for previous quarters related solely to patients waiting for one of the selected 16 diagnostic services. Consequently, care should be taken when comparing diagnostic waiting times for the quarter ending March 2010 with those published for previous quarters.

Headline Totals

The total number of patients waiting for diagnostic services at hospitals in Northern Ireland at the end of March 2010 stood at 48,371.

Table 7 Quarterly Diagnostic Services Waiting List – 31st March 2010⁵

Diagnostic Service Category	Number of Patients Waiting for one of the 16 selected tests - Quarter Ending March 2010	Number of Patients Waiting for one of the other diagnostic tests - Quarter Ending March 2010	Total number of Patients Waiting for a diagnostic test - Quarter Ending March 2010
Nine week target: Imaging (excluding Interventional Imaging)	21,765	3,681	25,446
Physiological Measurement	6,753	4,447	11,200
13 week target: Endoscopy (Day Case)	9,918	1,807	11,725
Total waiting for diagnostic tests	38,436	9,935	48,371

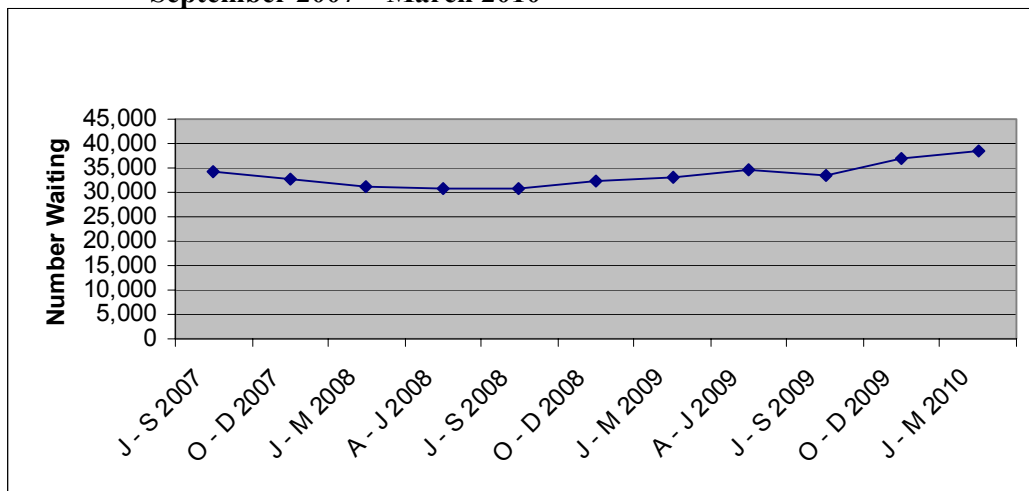
Source: Departmental Return SDR1 parts 1 & 2.

⁵Refer to Technical Notes – points 1, 2 & 11 - 18.

Total waiting for one of the 16 selected Diagnostic Services – Trends

Figure 3 shows the trends in the total number of people waiting for one of the 16 selected diagnostic services. Between September 2007 and September 2008, the total number of people waiting for one of the 16 selected diagnostic services was on a downward trend and then for the following three quarters the total was increasing. The number waiting fell slightly at the end of the September 2009 quarter, but there was a sharp increase in the total number waiting at the end of December 2009, and a further increase at 31st March 2010.

Figure 3 Patients waiting for one of the 16 selected Diagnostic Services, Quarterly Trends September 2007 – March 2010⁵



⁵Refer to Technical Notes – points 1, 2 & 11 - 18.

Diagnostic Services Waiting over 9/13 Weeks⁵

The 2009/10 waiting time target for diagnostic services states that from April 2009, patients should wait no longer than nine weeks for one of the selected 16 diagnostic services (13 weeks for a day case endoscopy) and by 31st March 2010, no longer than nine weeks (13 weeks for a day case endoscopy) for all diagnostic services.

There were 783 (2%) patients waiting over the target for the 16 selected diagnostic services. That is 2,127 less than at the end of December 2009 (2,910 waiting) and 655 more than at the same time last year (1,28 waiting). Taking all diagnostic services into consideration, 3.5% (1,687 out of 48,371) of patients were waiting more than the maximum waiting time outlined in the target.

Table 8 Patients Waiting More than the Target - 31st March 2010⁵

Waiting Over Target Waiting Time:	Number of Patients Waiting Quarter Ending December 2009	Change compared with the end of the previous quarter	Change compared with the same quarter previous year
16 Selected Services	783	-2,127	+655
Other Services	904	N/A	N/A
Total	1,687	N/A	N/A

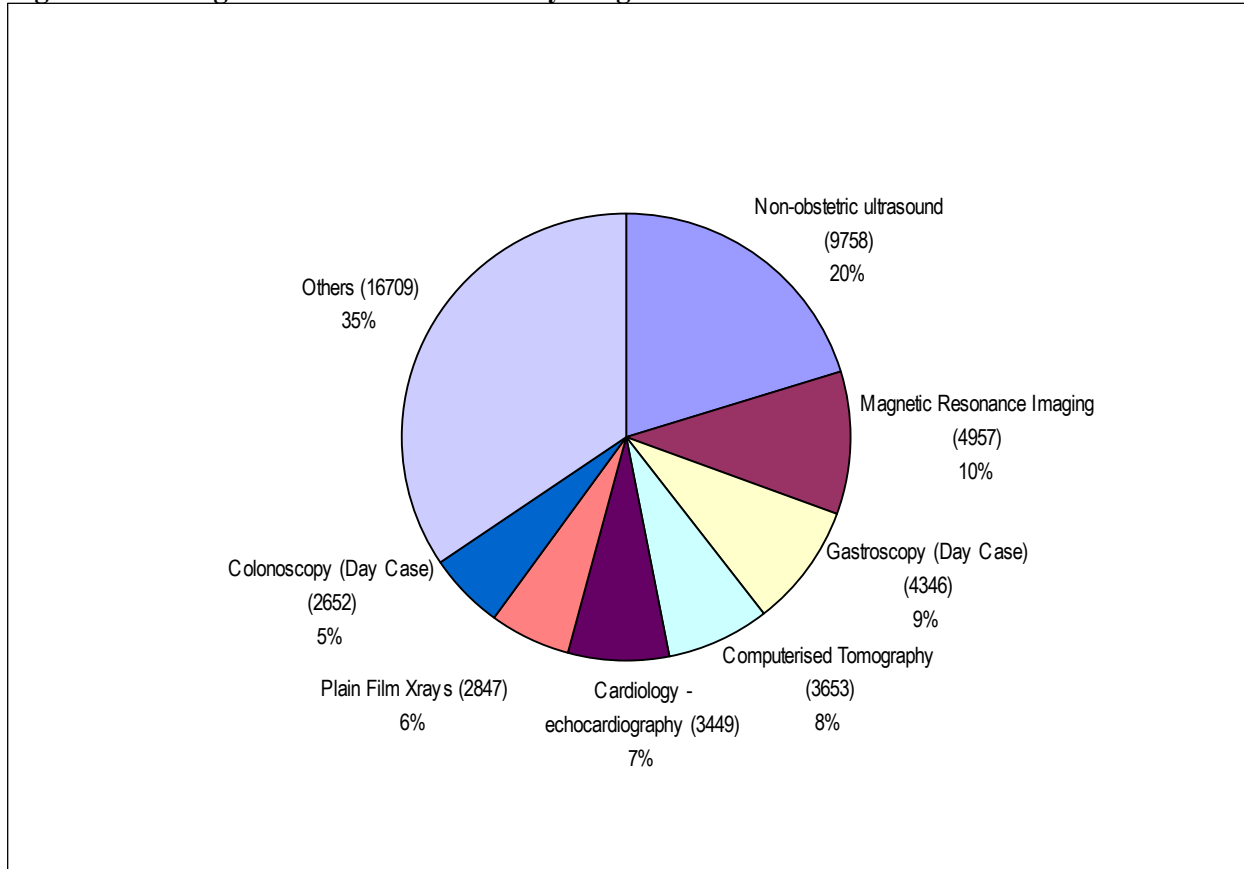
Source: Departmental Return SDR1 parts 1 & 2.

⁵Refer to Technical Notes – points 1, 2 & 11-18.

Patients Waiting by Diagnostic Service

Some 65% of the 48,371 patients waiting for a diagnostic service were waiting for one of the following seven diagnostic services: Non-obstetric Ultrasound; Magnetic Resonance Imaging; Gastroscopy (Day Case); Computerised Tomography; Echocardiography; Colonoscopy (Day Case) and Plain Film X-ray (Figure 4a). Figures represent the total number waiting for a diagnostic service at the end of the March 2010 quarter.

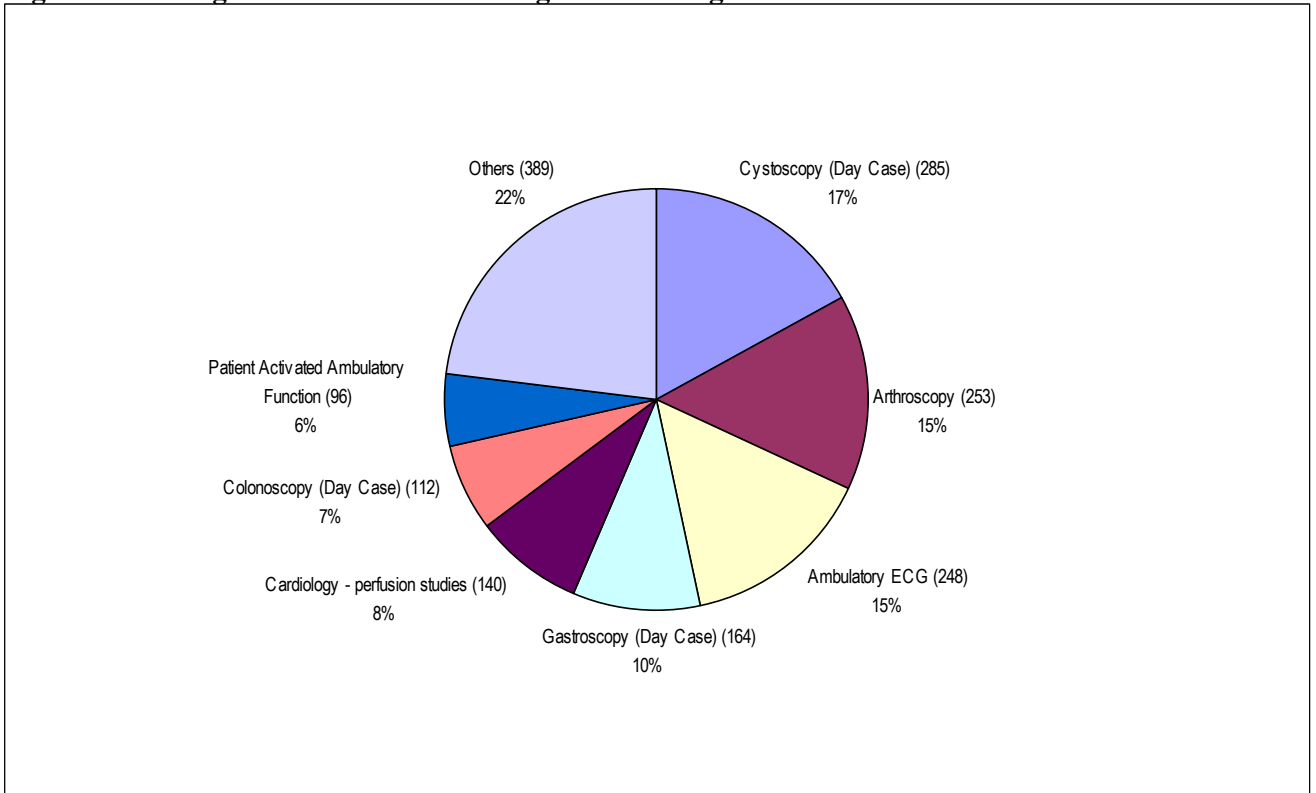
Figure 4a Diagnostics – Total Waiters by Diagnostic Test at 31st March 2010



Source: Departmental Return SDR1 parts 1 & 2.

A total of 78% of the 1,687 patients waiting more than the 9/13 week target were for one of the seven diagnostic services shown in Figure 4b below: Cystoscopy (Day Case); Arthroscopy; Ambulatory ECG; Gastroscopy (Day Case); Cardiology – Perfusion Studies; Colonoscopy (Day Case) and Patient Activated Ambulatory Function.

Figure 4b Diagnostics – Patients waiting over the target at 31st March 2010



Source: Departmental Return SDR1 parts 1 & 2.

Table 9 Diagnostic Services Waiting Times by Diagnostic Test and Weeks Waiting – 31st March 2010⁵

Diagnostic Test	Patients Waiting for a Diagnostic Test by Weeks Waiting						Total Number of Patients Waiting
	0 - 6	>6 - 9	>9 - 13	>13 - 21	>21 - 26	26 +	
9 week target							
Magnetic Resonance Imaging	3,983	922	52	0	0	0	4,957
Computerised Tomography	3,128	525	0	0	0	0	3,653
Non Obstetric Ultrasound	8,168	1,590	0	0	0	0	9,758
Barium Studies	1,007	43	0	0	0	0	1,050
DEXA Scan	1,531	209	0	0	0	0	1,740
Radio Nuclide Imaging	597	10	0	0	0	0	607
Audiology - Pure Tone	652	105	0	0	0	0	757
Cardiology - Echocardiography	2,825	617	5	2	0	0	3,449
Cardiology - Perfusion Studies	477	229	132	8	0	0	846
Neurophysiology - Peripheral Neurophysiology	815	264	0	0	0	0	1,079
Respiratory Physiology - Sleep Studies	203	43	0	0	0	0	246
Urodynamics - Pressures & Flows	296	80	0	0	0	0	376
Other	6,657	846	575	38	2	10	8,128
	30,339	5,483	764	48	2	10	36,646
13 week target							
Colonoscopy (Day Case)	1,497	542	501	112	0	0	2,652
Flexi sigmoidoscopy (Day Case)	684	296	207	23	0	0	1,210
Cystoscopy (Day Case)	871	341	213	164	87	34	1,710
Gastroscopy (Day Case)	2,471	922	789	164	0	0	4,346
Other (Day Case)	920	330	278	228	47	4	1,807
	6,443	2,431	1,988	691	134	38	11,725
Total waiting for selected diagnostic tests	36,782	7,914	2,752	739	136	48	48,371

Source: Departmental Return SDR1 parts 1 & 2.

⁵Refer to Technical Notes – points 1, 2 & 11 - 18.

With 824 patients waiting longer than the nine week target for a diagnostic test and 863 patients waiting longer than 13 weeks for a day case endoscopy, there were a total of 1,687 patients waiting more than the target for a diagnostic service.

Diagnostic Waiting Times by Provider Trust

Waiting times for diagnostic services by HSC Trust are shown in Tables 10a, 10b and 10c.

Table 10a Number of patients waiting for a Diagnostic Service by Provider Trust for all Diagnostic Tests – 31st March 2010⁵

Provider Trust	All Patients Waiting for a Diagnostic Test by Weeks Waiting						Total Number of Patients Waiting
	0 - 6	>6 - 9	>9 - 13	>13 - 21	> 21 - 26	26 +	
Belfast	11,138	3,578	1,290	287	87	48	16,428
Northern	7,344	1,089	430	215	0	0	9,078
South Eastern	5,895	940	208	0	0	0	7,043
Southern	6,970	1,095	402	141	0	0	8,608
Western	5,435	1,212	422	96	49	0	7,214
Total	36,782	7,914	2,752	739	136	48	48,371

Source: Departmental Return SDR1 parts 1 & 2.

⁵Refer to Technical Notes – points 1, 2 & 11-18.

34% (16,428) of patients waiting for a diagnostic service were waiting in the Belfast HSC Trust, with 19% (9,078) waiting in the Northern HSC Trust, 18% (8,608) waiting in the Southern HSC Trust, 15% (7,214) waiting in the Western HSC Trust and 15% (7,043) waiting in the South Eastern HSC Trust.

Table 10b Number of patients waiting for a Diagnostic Service by Provider Trust for a Diagnostic Service (9 week target) – 31st March 2010⁵

Provider Trust	Patients Waiting for a Diagnostic Test (9 week target) by Weeks Waiting						Total Number of Patients Waiting
	0 - 6	>6 - 9	>9 - 13	>13 - 21	> 21 - 26	26 +	
Belfast	9,176	2,788	664	33	2	10	12,673
Northern	6,088	657	0	0	0	0	6,745
South Eastern	4,693	561	0	0	0	0	5,254
Southern	5,942	676	0	0	0	0	6,618
Western	4,440	801	100	15	0	0	5,356
Total	30,339	5,483	764	48	2	10	36,646
Total breaching nine week target:			824				

Source: Departmental Return SDR1 parts 1 & 2.

⁵Refer to Technical Notes – points 1, 2 & 11-18.

There were 824 patients waiting longer than the target for a diagnostic service (excluding day case endoscopies). The majority of these patients, 86% (709) were waiting in the Belfast HSC Trust, with 14% (115) of these patients waiting in the Western HSC Trust. In Northern Ireland as a whole, there were 60 patients waiting longer than 13 weeks for one of these diagnostic tests. There were no patients exceeding the nine week target in the Northern, South Eastern or Southern HSC Trusts at 31st March 2010.

Table 10c Number of patients waiting for a Diagnostic Service by Provider Trust for Day Case Endoscopies (13 week target) – 31st March 2010⁵

Provider Trust	Patients Waiting for a Diagnostic Test (13 week target) by Weeks Waiting						Total Number of Patients Waiting
	0 - 6	>6 - 9	>9 - 13	>13 - 21	> 21 - 26	26 +	
Belfast	1,962	790	626	254	85	38	3,755
Northern	1,256	432	430	215	0	0	2,333
South Eastern	1,202	379	208	0	0	0	1,789
Southern	1,028	419	402	141	0	0	1,990
Western	995	411	322	81	49	0	1,858
Total	6,443	2,431	1,988	691	134	38	11,725
Total breaching 13 week target:				863			

Source: Departmental Return SDR1 parts 1 & 2.

⁵Refer to Technical Notes – points 1, 2 & 11-18.

There were 863 patients waiting longer than the target for a day case endoscopy. The majority of these patients, 44% (377), were waiting in the Belfast HSC Trust, with 25% (215) of these patients waiting in the Northern HSC Trust, 16% (141) in the Southern HSC Trust and 15% (130) in the Western HSC Trust. In Northern Ireland as a whole, there were 172 patients waiting longer than 21 weeks for one of these diagnostic tests. There were no patients waiting more than thirteen weeks for a day case endoscopy at the South Eastern HSC Trust at 31st March 2010.

Inpatients

Headline Totals⁶

The total number of patients waiting to be admitted to hospitals in Northern Ireland at 31st March 2010 stood at 36,052.

Comparing the end of March 2010 (36,052) with the end of December 2009 (36,808), the total number waiting has decreased by 756 (2.1%). Comparing the end of March 2010 with the end of March 2009 (32,663), the total number waiting has increased by 3,389 (10.4%).

Table 11 Quarterly Inpatient Waiting Lists – 31st March 2010

Waiting for:	Quarter Ending March 2010	Change compared with end of previous quarter	Change compared with end same quarter – previous year
Ordinary Admissions	10,860	- 951	+ 355
Day case Admissions	25,192	+ 195	+ 3,034
Total Waiting	36,052	- 756	+ 3,389

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset.

⁶ Refer to technical notes – points 1, 2 & 21-26.

Numbers Waiting for Ordinary Admission and Day Case Treatment

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

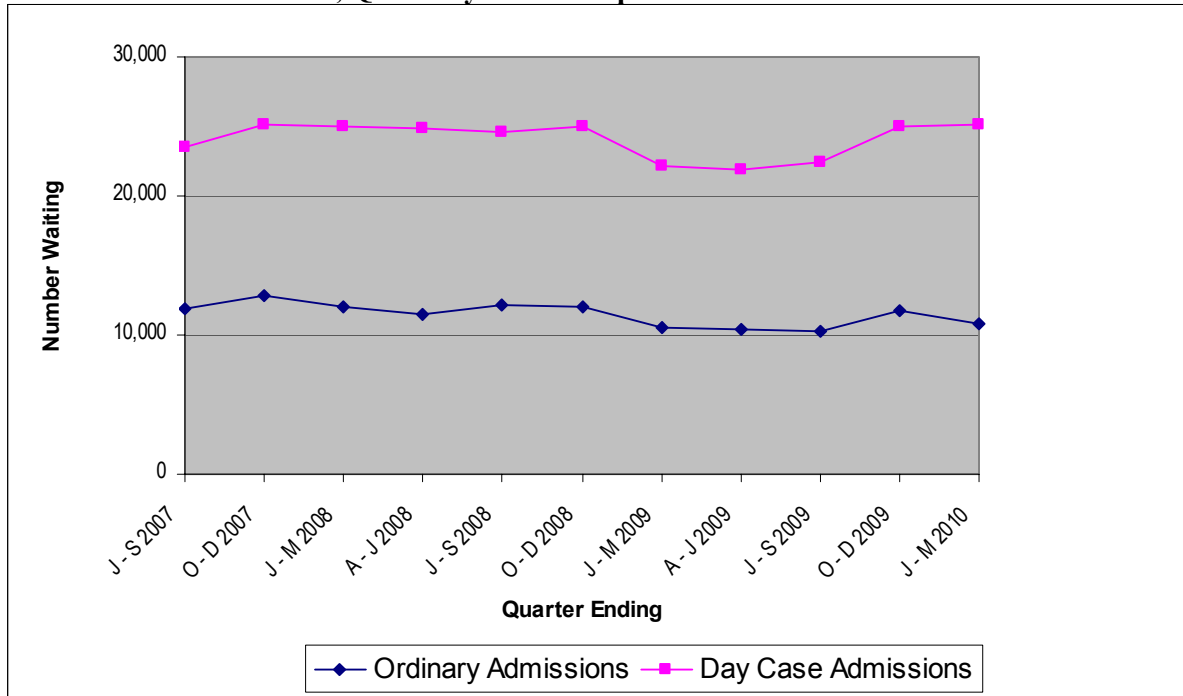
Of the 36,052 people waiting for admission to hospital at the end of March 2010, 10,860 (30.1%) were waiting for ordinary admission and 25,192 (69.9%) were waiting for day case admission (Table 11).

Since the end of December 2009, the number of cases waiting for ordinary admission has decreased by 951 (8.1%) and the number waiting for day case admission has increased by 195 (0.7%). Compared with the end of March 2009, the number waiting for ordinary admission increased by 355 (3.4%), while the number waiting for day case admission increased by 3,034 (13.7%).

Total waiting for Inpatient Admission – Trends

The total number of patients waiting for both ordinary and day case admission showed a decrease in the quarter ending March 2009. It remained fairly constant for the next two quarters, before increasing at 31st December 2009. The number of patients waiting for day case admission remained fairly constant in the quarter ending March 2010, however, the number of patients waiting for ordinary admission fell back down to a similar level to that in the quarters ending March 2009, June 2009 and September 2009.

Figure 5 Number of patients waiting for (i) Ordinary Admissions and (ii) Day case Admissions, Quarterly Trends September 2007 – March 2010



Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset.

Ordinary Admission and Day Cases Waiting More Than 13 Weeks⁷

The 2009/10 Priority for Action target relating to waiting times for inpatient treatment, states that from April 2009 no patient should wait longer than 13 weeks for inpatient or day case treatment.

At the end of March 2010, there were 3,289 patients waiting more than 13 weeks for inpatient treatment, of which 662 were waiting more than 21 weeks. Of the 3,289 patients waiting more than 13 weeks, 1,901 (57.8%) were awaiting ordinary admission and 1,388 (42.2%) were awaiting day case procedures.

Table 12 Patients Waiting More Than 13 Weeks⁷ – 31st March 2010

Waiting for:	Quarter Ending March 2010	Change compared with end of previous quarter	Change compared with end same quarter - previous year
Ordinary Admissions	1,901	- 865	+ 1,633
Day Case Admissions	1,388	- 1,856	+ 1,269
Total Waiting	3,289	- 2,721	+ 2,902

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset.

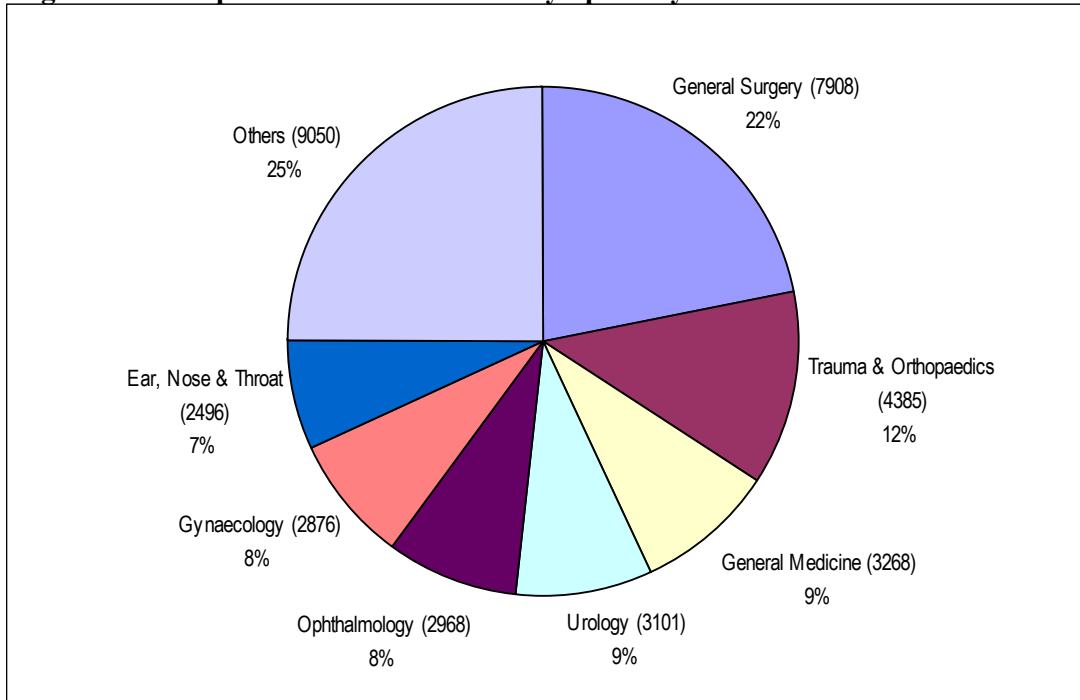
⁷ Refer to Technical Notes – points 1 & 2 and 19 - 26.

At the end of March 2010, the number of patients waiting more than 13 weeks was 2,721 less than at the end of December 2009 (6,010 waiting more than 13 weeks) and 2,902 more than at the same time last year (387 waiting more than 13 weeks).

Inpatients Waiting by Specialty

A total of 75% of the 36,052 patients waiting for inpatient treatment were within seven specialties: General Surgery; Trauma and Orthopaedic Surgery (T&O); General Medicine; Urology; Ophthalmology; Gynaecology (Gynae) and Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) (Figure 6a).

Figure 6a Inpatients - Total Waiters by Specialty at 31st March 2010⁷

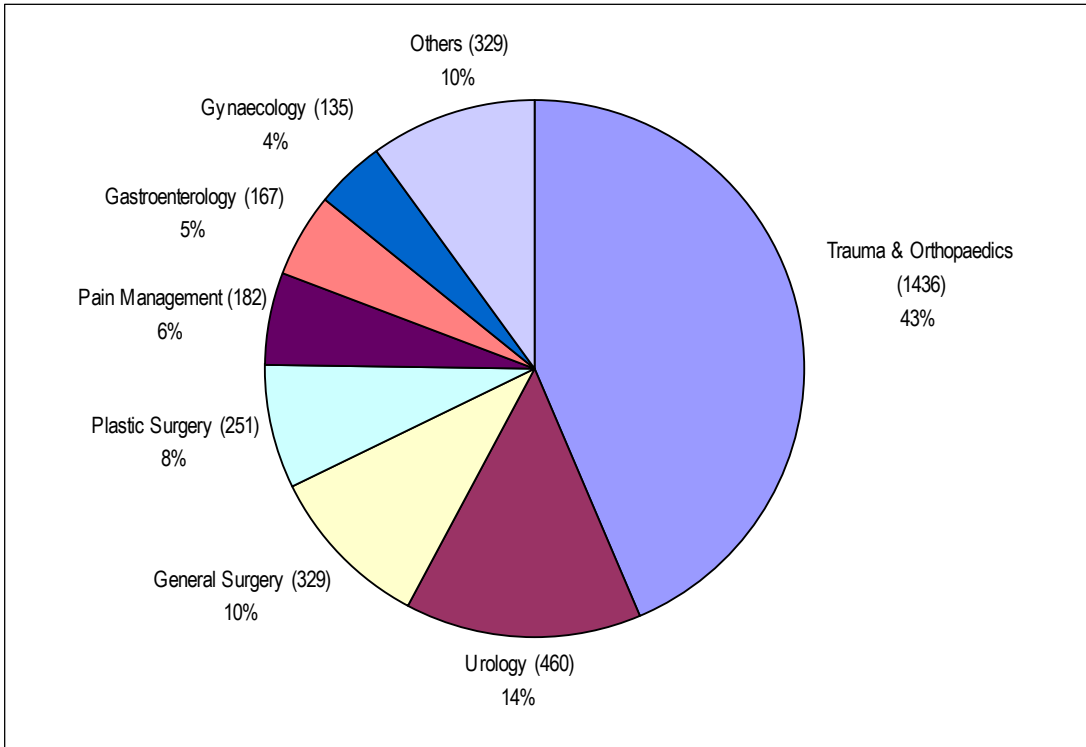


Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset.

⁷ Refer to Technical Notes – points 1 & 2 and 19 - 26.

Almost 90% of the 3,289 patients waiting more than 13 weeks were within seven specialties as shown in Figure 6b below: Trauma and Orthopaedic Surgery (T&O); Urology; General Surgery; Plastic Surgery; Pain Management; Gastroenterology and Gynaecology (Gynae).

Figure 6b Inpatients – Patients waiting more than 13 weeks by Specialty at 31st March 2010⁷



Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset.
⁷ Refer to Technical Notes – points 1 & 2 and 19-26.

Inpatient Waiting Time by Specialty

Waiting times for inpatients by specialty are shown in Table 13. Overall 90.9% of those waiting for admission were waiting 13 weeks or less.

Table 13 Number of Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting and Specialty – 31st March 2010⁷

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	4,429	3,150	286	30	13	7,908
Trauma & Orthopaedics	1,426	1,523	1,032	374	30	4,385
General Medicine	2,027	1,188	52	0	1	3,268
Urology	1,717	924	361	74	25	3,101
Ophthalmology	1,519	1,437	6	0	6	2,968
Gynaecology	1,580	1,161	135	0	0	2,876
Ear, Nose & Throat	1,299	1,163	24	10	0	2,496
Other:-	5,085	3,135	731	83	16	9,050
Gastroenterology	1,336	898	161	1	5	2,401
Cardiology	770	415	21	5	0	1,211
Pain Management	463	398	172	5	5	1,043
Plastic Surgery	319	264	193	56	2	834
Dermatology	465	264	0	0	0	729
Oral Surgery	484	193	27	0	0	704
Rheumatology	280	203	0	0	0	483
General Practice (Other)	333	61	0	0	0	394
Cardiac Surgery	85	121	83	0	0	289
Paediatric Surgery	167	109	0	0	0	276
Neurosurgery	73	73	26	15	1	188
Neurology	37	47	37	0	0	121
Nephrology	33	24	0	1	3	61
Other	240	65	11	0	0	316
All Specialties	19,082	13,681	2,627	571	91	36,052

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset.

⁷ Refer to Technical Notes – points 1 & 2 and 19-26.

Inpatient Waiting Times by Provider Trust

Waiting times for inpatients by HSC Trust are shown in Table 14.

Around 40% (14,271) of patients waiting for admission were waiting in the Belfast HSC Trust. 18.1% (6,529) of those waiting were waiting in the Western HSC Trust, 15.3% (5,521) in the Northern HSC Trust, 14.7% (5,291) in the Southern HSC Trust and 12.3% (4,440) in the South Eastern HSC Trust.

Table 14 Number of Patients Waiting for Admission by Provider Trust and by Weeks Waiting – March 2010⁷

Provider Trust	Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting					Total Number of Patients Waiting
	0 - 6	>6 - 13	>13 - 21	>21 - 26	26+	
Belfast	6,634	5,837	1,516	212	72	14,271
Northern	3,264	1,929	302	7	19	5,521
South Eastern	2,770	1,499	115	56	0	4,440
Southern	2,814	2,274	202	1	0	5,291
Western	3,600	2,142	492	295	0	6,529
Total	19,082	13,681	2,627	571	91	36,052

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset.

⁷ Refer to Technical Notes – points 1 & 2 and 19-26.

Of the 3,289 patients waiting more than 13 weeks for inpatient admission, 55% (1,800) were waiting for admission in the Belfast HSC Trust, with 24% (787) waiting in the Western HSC Trust, and 10% (328), 6% (203) and 5% (171) waiting at the Northern, Southern and South Eastern HSC Trusts respectively.

Completed Inpatient Waits

The number of completed inpatient waits, for patients treated within Health Service hospitals in Northern Ireland, is shown in Table 15. A total of 47,537 inpatients were admitted to Health Service hospitals during the March 2010 quarter.

Table 15 Completed Inpatient Waits – QE 31st March 2010⁸

Quarter	Total Number of Completed Inpatient Waits ^P
J - M 2007	46,173
A - J 2007	46,022
J - S 2007	43,640
O - D 2007	46,492
J - D 2007	182,327
J - M 2008	45,145
A - J 2008	48,566
J - S 2008	44,626
O - D 2008	47,741
J - D 2008	186,078
J - M 2009	47,223
A - J 2009 ^P	47,180
J - S 2009 ^P	44,652
O - D 2009 ^P	45,611
J - D 2009	184,666
J - M 2010 ^P	47,537

Source: Hospital Inpatient System.

⁸ Refer to Technical Notes – point 27.

P - Provisional

47,537 patients were admitted to Health Service hospitals during the quarter ending 31st March 2010, compared with 45,611 in the quarter ending 31st December 2009 and 47,223 in the quarter ending 31st March 2009.

Completed Inpatient Waits including Independent Sector Activity

During the March 2010 quarter, a number of patients received inpatient treatment commissioned by the Health Service, within the Independent Sector. The number of such patients admitted for inpatient treatment within the Independent Sector has been provided by the Health and Social Care Board, split by commissioning Trust.

Table 16a Completed Inpatient Waits by Trust including Independent Sector Activity – QE 31st March 2010⁹

Provider Trust	Number of Completed Inpatient Waits within Health Service Hospitals^P	Number of Completed Inpatient Waits in Independent Sector	Total Number of Completed Inpatient Waits Commissioned by Health Service
Belfast	19,360	2,238	21,598
Northern	5,851	1,125	6,976
South Eastern	7,299	95	7,394
Southern	7,386	230	7,616
Western	7,641	472	8,113
Total Treated	47,537	4,160	51,697

Source: Hospital Inpatient System & Departmental Return IS1 part 2.

⁹ Refer to Technical Notes – point 28.

P - Provisional

4,160 Health Service patients received inpatient treatment within the Independent Sector during the quarter ending 31st March 2010. When this number is combined with that for inpatients treated in Health Service hospitals during the same period (47,537), it is estimated that approximately 51,697 (47,537 + 4,160) inpatients received treatment in Northern Ireland commissioned by the Health Service.

Approximately 42% (21,598) of completed waits for the quarter ending 31st March 2010 occurred in the Belfast HSC Trust, with 16% (8,113), 15% (7,616), 14% (7,394) and 13% (6,976) occurring in the Western, Southern, South Eastern and Northern HSC Trusts respectively.

Completed Inpatient Waits including Independent Sector Activity – Trends

Table 16b has been included to reflect the total completed inpatient waits for Health Service patients for the past five quarters.

Table 16b Completed Inpatient Waits by Trust Including Independent Sector Activity¹⁰, QE March 2009 – QE March 2010^P

Provider Trust	Total Number of Completed Inpatient Waits Commissioned by Health Service				
	QE March 2009	QE June 2009 ^{R,P}	QE September 2009 ^{R,P}	QE December 2009 ^{R,P}	QE March 2010 ^P
Belfast	25,557	22,510	20,963	19,646	21,598
Northern	7,534	7,307	6,917	5,986	6,976
South Eastern	8,670	8,378	8,951	7,539	7,394
Southern	7,952	7,632	7,816	7,857	7,616
Western	9,054	8,219	7,458	7,508	8,113
Total	58,767	54,046	52,105	48,536	51,697

Source: Hospital Inpatient System & Departmental Return IS1 part 2.

¹⁰ Refer to Technical Notes – points 28 & 29.

R - Revised

P – Provisional

Completed inpatient waits have decreased by 12% from QE March 2009 (58,767) to QE March 2010 (51,697). There has been a 6.5% (3,161) increase in the number of completed inpatient waits commissioned by the Health Service between December 2009 (48,536) and March 2010 (51,697). 61% (1,926) of this increase was due to increased activity in Health Service hospitals and 39% (1,235) was due to increased Independent Sector activity.

Technical Notes

1. The sources for the data contained in this release are the Departmental Returns CH3, Quarterly Outpatient Activity Return (QOAR), SDR1, DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset, Hospital Inpatient System Dataset and the Departmental Return IS1. These returns collect information from Health and Social Care Trusts and the Health and Social Care Board on a quarterly basis.
2. Trust based information (CH3, QOAR, SDR1, DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset, Hospital Inpatients System Dataset and the Departmental Return IS1) returns include all patients living outside Northern Ireland and all privately funded patients waiting for treatment in Health Service hospitals in Northern Ireland.
3. Outpatient waiters are defined as patients still waiting for their first outpatient appointment at the end of the quarter, including those who have cancelled or missed a previous appointment. An outpatient appointment is to enable a patient to see a consultant, a member of their firm or locum for such a member, in respect of one referral. Waiting time for a first outpatient appointment begins on the date the HSC Trust receives a referral for a first appointment and ends on the date the patient attends a first outpatient appointment. Patients who cannot attend (CNA) have their waiting time adjusted to commence on the date they informed the HSC Trust they could not attend, while patients who do not attend (DNA) have their waiting time adjusted to commence on the date of the DNA.
4. The outpatient waiting time figure for the position at 31st December 2009 has been revised since the December bulletin due to an amendment received from the Southern HSC Trust. Consequently, there was one less patient breaching the target than had been reported in the bulletin for the December 2009 quarter.
5. For Tables 2, 3, 4 and Figure 2b, outpatient waiting time relates to the number of completed weeks a patient has been waiting for outpatient assessment. For example, a patient waiting exactly 6 weeks would be included in the 0-6 week timeband and a patient waiting exactly 6 weeks and 1 day would be included in the >6-9 (greater than 6 weeks but waiting no longer than 9 weeks) timeband.
6. The current ministerial target for outpatient waiting times states that from April 2009 no patient should wait longer than 9 weeks for a first outpatient appointment. Patients waiting 'more than 9 weeks' includes all patients in the >9-13, >13-26 and 26+ week timebands. Patients waiting 'more than 13 weeks' includes all patients in the >13-26 and 26+ week timebands.
7. Due to technical difficulties it is not currently possible to accurately report on the total number of patients waiting for a first Integrated Clinical Assessment and Treatment Services (ICATS) appointment at 31st March 2010. The HSC Board instructed HSC Trusts to record details of all patients waiting for ICATS appointments on PAS from December 2009. HIB are currently testing these data with the intention of collecting and publishing waiting time information for ICATS from the beginning of 2010/11.
8. The total number of completed outpatient waits each quarter is derived as the total number of attendances at a first outpatient appointment from the Departmental Quarterly Outpatient Activity Return. This methodology has been used to produce historical data for comparison. Data on length of time a patient waited for a first outpatient appointment is no longer collected by Hospital Information Branch.

9. The number of patients that received an outpatient assessment, commissioned by the Health Service, in the Independent Sector is provided in Tables 6a and 6b. These figures are provided by the HSC Board. They are published for each transferring Health and Social Care Trust (Trust responsible for the patient's waiting time). They are not National Statistics and they have not been validated by the Department, however, they have been included to provide users with a comprehensive view of completed outpatient waits during each quarter.
10. The number of patients that received an outpatient assessment, commissioned by the Health Service, in the Independent Sector, has been revised for the quarters ending June 2009, September 2009, and December 2009 due to the receipt of amendments from the HSC Board.
11. The 2009/10 waiting time target for diagnostic services states that from April 2009, patients should wait no longer than nine weeks for one of the selected 16 diagnostic services (13 weeks for a day case endoscopy) and by 31st March 2010, no longer than nine weeks (13 weeks for a day case endoscopy) for all diagnostic services.
12. From this quarter, the number of patients reported as waiting for diagnostic services relates to patients waiting for all diagnostic services, whereas previous quarters related solely to patients waiting for one of the 16 selected diagnostic services. Consequently, comparisons with the current quarter and the previous quarter or the same quarter in the previous year are not available, except in Figure 3 and Table 8, where trends and comparisons have been shown for the 16 selected diagnostic services only. The source for the diagnostic waiting time data for the 16 selected diagnostic services is the Departmental Return SDR1 part 1. The waiting time data for all other diagnostic services is provided by the HSC Board on the SDR1 part 2 return. The data are not National Statistics and they have had limited validation by the Department, however, they have been included to provide users with a comprehensive view of waiting times for diagnostic services subject to the 2009/10 Ministerial target.
13. The Northern and South Eastern HSC Trusts have recently introduced the Northern Ireland Picture Archive and Communications System (NIPACS) as the mechanism for managing imaging services within their respective Trust areas. Due to technical limitations with NIPACS, these two HSC Trusts were unable to extract waiting time information from the system for submission to the Department. However, the HSC Board was able to provide estimates for the Northern and South Eastern HSC Trust waiting time position at 31st March 2010 for Magnetic Resonance Imaging, Computerised Tomography, Non Obstetric Ultrasound, Barium Studies, DEXA Scan and Radio Nuclide Imaging services. These estimates have been included in the published waiting time position for 31st March 2010. With regard to these estimates for imaging services provided by the HSC Board, only the figures for the number of patients breaching the target were validated by the HSC Board with the Northern and South Eastern HSC Trusts.
14. 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.
15. 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.
16. 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. Patients who cannot attend (CNA) have their waiting time adjusted to commence on the date they informed the HSC Trust they could not attend, while patients who do not attend (DNA) have their waiting time adjusted to commence on the date of the DNA.

17. A number of the diagnostic services reported on the SDR 1 return are managed as either an ordinary admission or a day case. As such, they will be included in both the inpatient and diagnostic services waiting time figures. Due to the risk of multiple counting, these two sets of data should not be combined to give an estimate of the total number of patients waiting for either inpatient admission or a diagnostic service.
18. Waiting time statistics for day case endoscopies also include patients waiting for endoscopies that are managed as ordinary admissions. For the Northern HSC Trust, day case/ordinary admission endoscopies were being recorded as 'other' endoscopies since the quarter ending 30th September 2008. However, all figures have been correctly recorded this quarter and comparisons with previous quarters also reflect corrected figures.
19. For Tables 12, 13, 14 and Figure 6b, inpatient waiting time relates to the number of completed weeks a patient has been waiting for inpatient admission. For example, a patient waiting exactly 6 weeks would be included in the 0-6 week timeband and a patient waiting exactly 6 weeks and 1 day would be included in the >6-13 (greater than 6 weeks but waiting no longer than 13 weeks) week timeband.
20. The current ministerial target for inpatient waiting times states that from April 2009 no patient should wait longer than 13 weeks for inpatient or day case treatment. Patients waiting 'more than 13 weeks' include all patients in the >13 - 21, >21 - 26 and 26+ week timebands. Patients waiting 'more than 21 weeks' includes all patients in the >21 - 26 and 26+ week timebands.
21. 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.
22. 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.
23. 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.
24. 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.

25. 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.
26. Independent sector waits in the South Eastern HSC Trust have not previously been included in the published figures as they were not recorded on PAS. However, updates to the system have meant that independent sector waits for the South Eastern Trust are included this quarter and will be in future quarters.
27. The total number of completed inpatient waits each quarter is sourced from Hospital Inpatients System. This methodology has been used to produce historical data for comparison. Data on length of time a patient waited for inpatient admission is no longer collected by Hospital Information Branch.
28. The number of patients that received inpatient treatment, commissioned by the Health Service, in the Independent Sector are provided in Tables 16a and 16b. These figures are provided by the HSC Board. They are published for each transferring Health and Social Care Trust (Trust responsible for the patient's waiting time). They are not National Statistics and they have not been validated by the Department, however, they have been included to provide users with a comprehensive view of completed in patient waits during each quarter.
29. The number of patients that received an inpatient assessment, commissioned by the Health Service, in the Independent Sector, has been revised for the quarters ending June 2009, September 2009, and December 2009 due to the receipt of amendments from the HSC Board.
30. 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.
31. Data contained within this bulletin are now available in a downloadable file at the following link:

http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/waiting_times.htm
32. Figures relating to the quarter ending 30th June 2010 will be released on Thursday 2nd September 2010.
33. 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
Fax: 01633 652747
Letters: room DG/18, Drummond Gate,
LONDON SW1V 2QQ

You can also find National Statistics on the internet – Go to www.statistics.gov.uk.

Additional Information

Further information on waiting lists in Northern Ireland is available from:

Kerri Burgess

Hospital Information Branch

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

Annexe 2

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Internet address: http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats_research/waiting_times.htm