

Statistics Release



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

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**Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta
agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí**

MÁNNYSTRIE O

**Poustie, Resydènter Heisin
an Fowk Siccar**

04 March 2010

Northern Ireland Waiting Lists – December 2009

This statistics release gives details of the number of people waiting for either a first outpatient assessment, a selected diagnostic service or inpatient treatment at hospitals in Northern Ireland at the end of December 2009, 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 December 2009 stood at 82,571.

Over the quarter, comparing the end of December 2009 with the end of September 2009 (73,707), the total number has increased by 8,864 (12.0%).

Over the year, comparing the end of December 2009 with the end of December 2008 (68,734), the total number waiting increased by 13,837 (20.1%).

Table 1 Quarterly Outpatient Waiting Lists – December 2009¹

| | Quarter Ending December 2009 | Change compared with end of previous quarter | Change compared with end same quarter - previous year |
|----------------------|---|---|--|
| Total Waiting | 82,571 | + 8,864 | + 13,837 |

Source: Departmental Return CH3 parts 1 & 2

¹ Refer to Technical Notes - points 3 & 4.

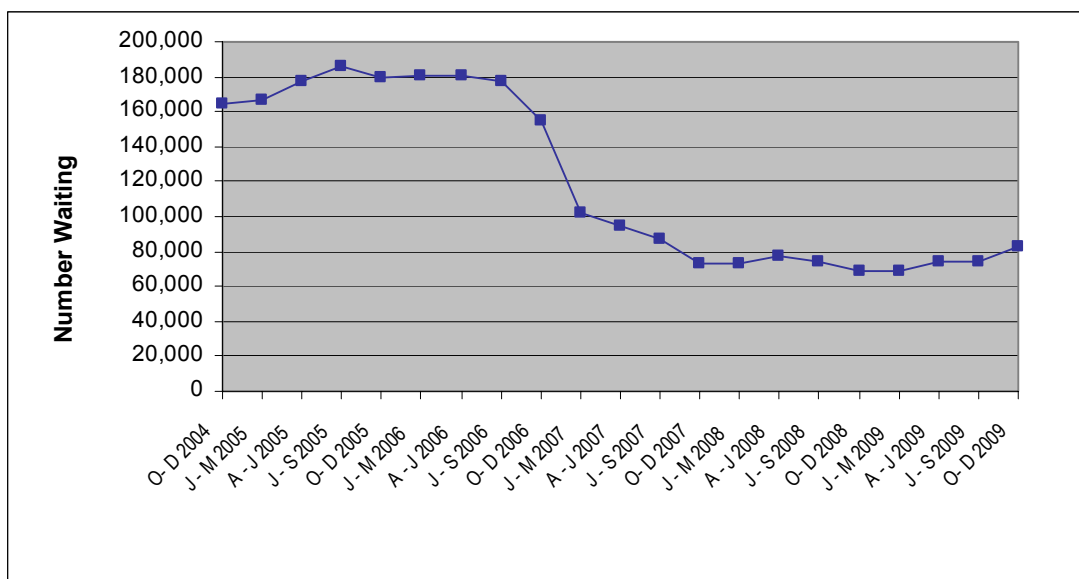
Detailed notes and definitions are provided in the Technical Notes.



Trends

The total number of people waiting for a first outpatient appointment peaked in September 2005 and there was a downward trend in the subsequent nine quarters. The outpatient waiting lists total had remained fairly constant over the next seven quarters but has increased this quarter.

Figure 1 Outpatients Waiting for a First Appointment: Quarterly Trends December 2004 – December 2009



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 ‘Trusts should ensure that, from April 2009, no patient waits longer than 9 weeks for a first outpatient appointment’. At the end of December 2009, the number of patients waiting more than 9 weeks for a first outpatient appointment was 15,716, 19.0% of the total waiting. Of this number, 6,379 were waiting more than 13 weeks.

Table 2 Patients Waiting More than 9 Weeks² - December 2009

| | Quarter Ending December 2009 | Change compared with end of previous quarter | Change compared with end same quarter - previous year |
|----------------------|------------------------------|--|---|
| Total Waiting | 15,716 | + 11,157 | + 9,885 |

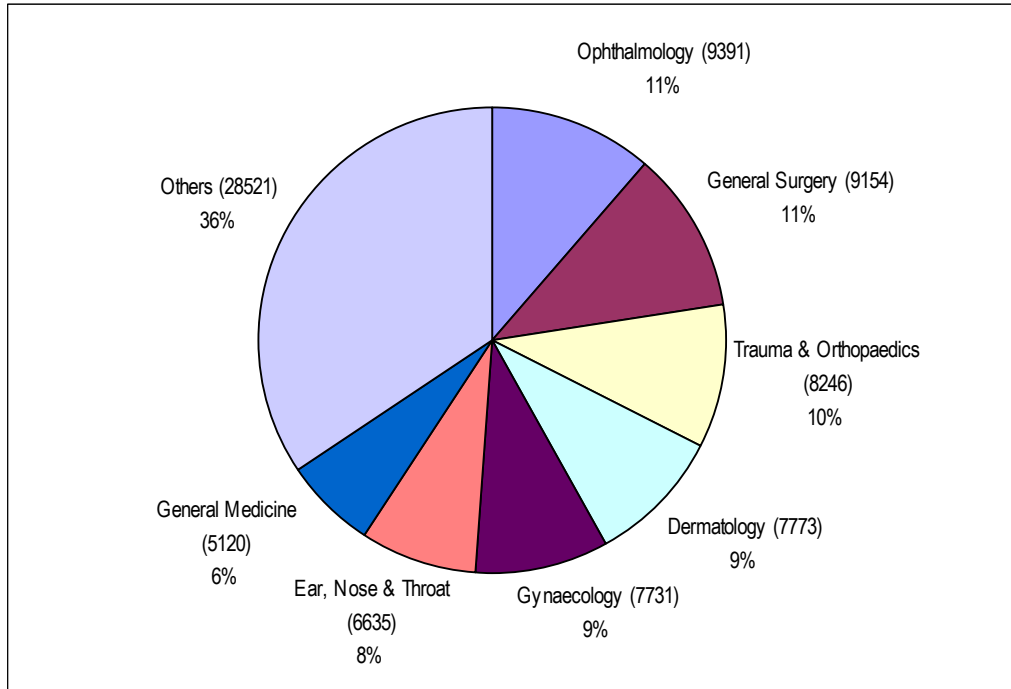
Source: Departmental Return CH3 parts 1 & 2.

² Refer to Technical Notes – points 5 & 6.

Outpatients Waiting by Specialty

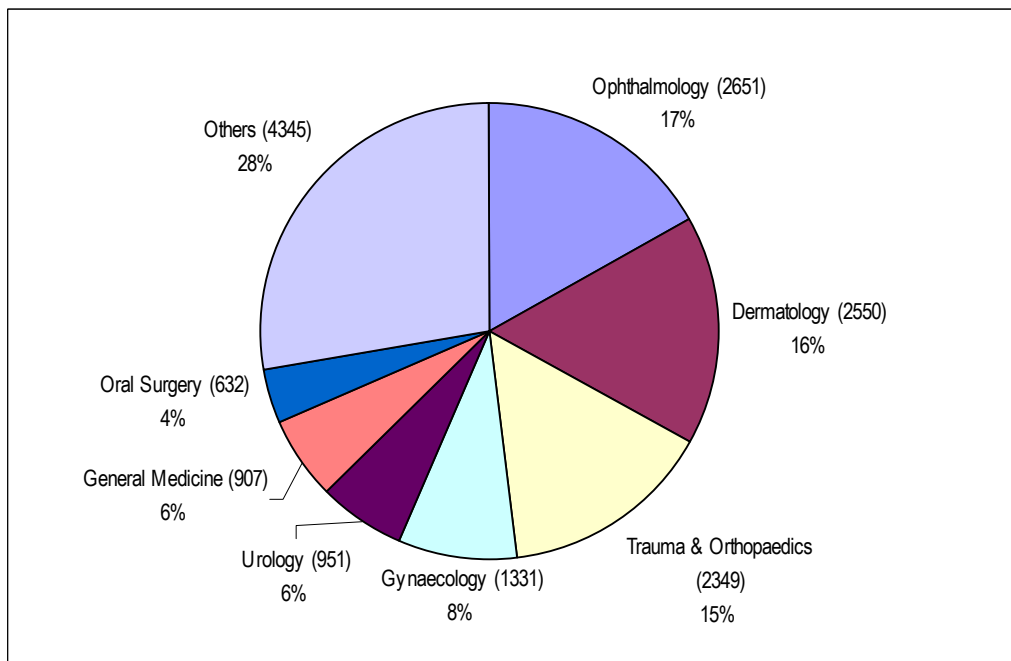
The majority of those waiting (64.0%) were within seven specialties: Ophthalmology; General Surgery; Trauma & Orthopaedics; Dermatology; Gynaecology (Gynae); Ear, Nose & Throat (ENT); and General Medicine (Figure 2a). Figures represent the total number waiting for their first outpatient appointment during the December 2009 quarter including those who have cancelled or missed a previous appointment.

Figure 2a Outpatients – Total Waiters by Specialty at the end of December 2009



Source: Departmental Return CH3 Parts 1 & 2.

Figure 2b Outpatients – Patients Waiting More than 9 Weeks by Specialty at the end of December 2009



Source: Departmental Return CH3 Parts 1 & 2.

Outpatient Waiting Time by Specialty

Waiting times for outpatients by specialty are shown in Table 3. Overall 81.0% of those waiting for treatment were waiting less than 9 weeks.

Table 3 Number of Patients Waiting for a First Appointment by Weeks Waiting and Specialty – December 2009²

| Specialty | Patients Waiting for an Appointment by Weeks Waiting | | | | | Total Number of Patients Waiting |
|------------------------|--|---------------|--------------|--------------|------------|----------------------------------|
| | 0-6 | >6-9 | >9-13 | >13-26 | 26+ | |
| Ophthalmology | 4,715 | 2,025 | 1561 | 1080 | 10 | 9,391 |
| General Surgery | 6,905 | 1,792 | 323 | 122 | 12 | 9,154 |
| Trauma & Orthopaedics | 4,175 | 1,722 | 1547 | 797 | 5 | 8,246 |
| Dermatology | 3,787 | 1,436 | 1417 | 1133 | 0 | 7,773 |
| Gynaecology | 4,705 | 1,695 | 890 | 440 | 1 | 7,731 |
| Ear, Nose & Throat | 5,319 | 1,229 | 83 | 4 | 0 | 6,635 |
| General Medicine | 3,124 | 1,089 | 551 | 351 | 5 | 5,120 |
| Urology | 1,601 | 646 | 594 | 336 | 21 | 3,198 |
| Cardiology | 2,180 | 737 | 166 | 73 | 4 | 3,160 |
| Paediatrics | 2,040 | 642 | 186 | 151 | 137 | 3,156 |
| Neurology | 1,600 | 698 | 317 | 255 | 1 | 2,871 |
| Oral Surgery | 1,255 | 516 | 403 | 229 | 0 | 2,403 |
| Rheumatology | 1,332 | 457 | 254 | 140 | 50 | 2,233 |
| Pain Management | 873 | 397 | 199 | 160 | 0 | 1,629 |
| Gastroenterology | 1,007 | 406 | 66 | 0 | 0 | 1,479 |
| Thoracic Medicine | 643 | 185 | 73 | 50 | 0 | 951 |
| Plastic Surgery | 432 | 158 | 204 | 154 | 0 | 948 |
| Geriatric Medicine | 696 | 152 | 14 | 0 | 0 | 862 |
| Restorative Dentistry | 370 | 230 | 44 | 2 | 0 | 646 |
| Clinical Genetics | 207 | 114 | 173 | 123 | 29 | 646 |
| Other | 2,807 | 756 | 272 | 355 | 149 | 4,339 |
| All Specialties | 49,773 | 17,082 | 9,337 | 5,955 | 424 | 82,571 |

Source: Departmental Return CH3 Parts 1 & 2

² Refer to Technical Notes – points 5 & 6.

Outpatient Waiting Times by Provider Trust

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

Table 4 Number of Patients Waiting for a First Appointment by Provider Trust and Weeks Waiting – December 2009²

| 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 | 18,695 | 7,387 | 4,101 | 2,616 | 381 | 33,180 |
| Northern | 7,282 | 2,392 | 1,453 | 759 | 1 | 11,887 |
| South Eastern | 8,014 | 2,545 | 1,876 | 1,202 | 2 | 13,639 |
| Southern | 7,882 | 2,258 | 62 | 30 | 0 | 10,232 |
| Western | 7,900 | 2,500 | 1,845 | 1,348 | 40 | 13,633 |
| Total | 49,773 | 17,082 | 9,337 | 5,955 | 424 | 82,571 |

Source: Departmental Return CH3 Parts 1 & 2

²Refer to Technical Notes – points 5 & 6.

Completed Outpatient Waits – QE December 2009

The number of completed outpatient waits, for patients treated within Health Service hospitals in Northern Ireland, is shown in Table 5. A total of 121,310 patients attended a first outpatient appointment within Health Service hospitals during the December 2009 quarter.

Table 5 Completed Outpatient Waits for First Appointment³

| Quarter | Total Number of Completed Outpatient Waits |
|-------------------------|---|
| O- D 2006 | 115,747 |
| J - D 2006 | 426,814 |
| 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 | 122,339 |
| J - S 2009 ^P | 120,018 |
| O- D 2009 ^P | 121,310 |
| J - D 2009 | 485,816 |

Source: Departmental Return QOAR

³Refer to Technical Note – point 8.

P – Provisional

Completed Outpatient Waits including Independent Sector Activity– QE December 2009

During the December 2009 quarter, a number of patients attended a first outpatient appointment, commissioned by the Health Service, within the Independent Sector. Estimates of the number of such patients attending a first outpatient appointment within the Independent Sector have been provided by the Health and Social Care Board, split by commissioning Trusts.

It is estimated that approximately 6,684 Health Service patients attended a first outpatient appointment, within the Independent Sector, during the quarter ending December 2009. When this number is combined with that for outpatients attending a first appointment in Health Service hospitals during the same period, it is estimated that approximately 127,994 outpatients attended a first appointment in Northern Ireland for an assessment commissioned by the Health Service.

Table 6a Completed Outpatient Waits by Trust including Independent Sector Activity – QE December 2009⁴

| 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 | 46,500 | 2,141 | 48,641 |
| Northern | 16,019 | 1,434 | 17,453 |
| South Eastern | 18,825 | 161 | 18,986 |
| Southern | 18,531 | 1,905 | 20,436 |
| Western | 21,435 | 1,043 | 22,478 |
| Total Treated | 121,310 | 6,684 | 127,994 |

Source: Departmental Returns QOAR and IS1.

⁴Refer to Technical Notes – points 8 - 10.

P – Provisional

Completed Outpatient Waits including Independent Sector Activity, Quarter Ending 31 December 2008 – Quarter Ending 31 December 2009

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 31 December 2008 – QE 31 December 2009^P

| Provider Trust | Total Number of Completed Outpatient Waits Commissioned by Health | | | | |
|----------------|---|----------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| | 31 December 2008 ^R | 31 March 2009 ^R | 30 June 2009 ^P | 30 September 2009 ^P | 31 December 2009 ^P |
| Belfast | 49,482 | 55,210 | 52,322 | 52,256 | 48,641 |
| Northern | 20,035 | 19,163 | 18,952 | 18,440 | 17,453 |
| South Eastern | 26,790 | 22,032 | 25,641 | 27,792 | 18,986 |
| Southern | 18,740 | 19,095 | 18,922 | 18,415 | 20,436 |
| Western | 21,719 | 21,126 | 22,746 | 21,825 | 22,478 |
| Total | 136,766 | 136,626 | 138,583 | 138,728 | 127,994 |

Source: Departmental Returns QOAR and IS1.

⁴ Refer to Technical Notes – points 8 - 10.

R - Revised

P - Provisional

Diagnostic Services

Tables 7 -10 provide details of the number of people waiting for the 16 selected diagnostic services, carried out at hospitals in Northern Ireland, and covered by the maximum waiting time Ministerial target for 2009/10⁵.

Headline Totals

The total number of patients waiting for one of the 16 selected diagnostic services at hospitals in Northern Ireland at the end of December 2009 stood at 36,831, an increase of 3,366 (10.1%) on the position at 30th September 2009 (33,465) and an increase of 4,627 (14.4%) on the number waiting at the end of December 2008 (32,204).

Table 7 Quarterly Diagnostic Services Waiting List – December 2009⁵

| Diagnostic Service Category: | 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 |
|--|--|---|--|
| Imaging (excluding Interventional Imaging) | 19,040 | 845 | 2,509 |
| Physiological Measurement | 7,317 | 1,364 | 1,600 |
| Endoscopy (Other) | 63 | -2 | -9 |
| Endoscopy (Day Case) | 10,411 | 1,159 | 527 |
| Total waiting for selected diagnostic tests | 36,831 | + 3,366 | + 4,627 |

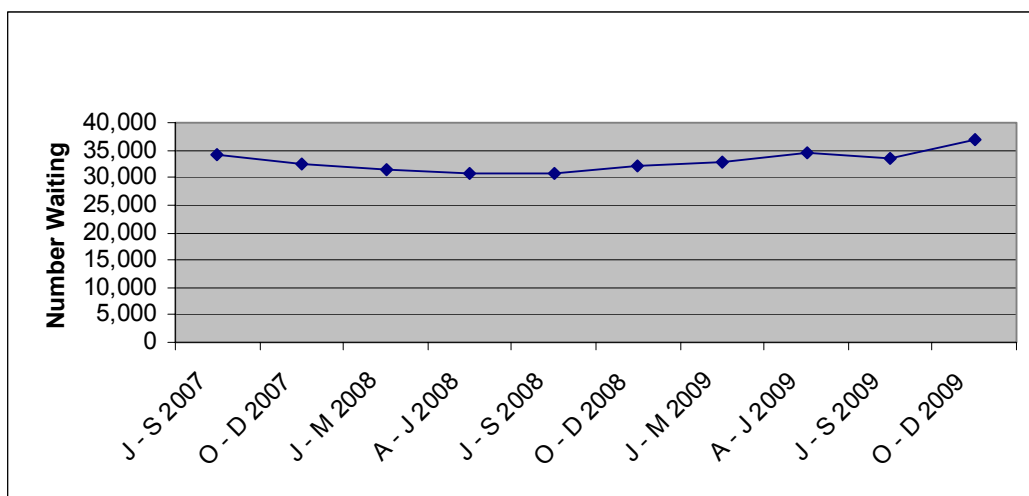
Source: Departmental Return SDR1

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

Trends

Between September 2007 and September 2008, the total number of people waiting for a diagnostic service was on a downward trend and then for the following three quarters the total was increasing. The number waiting fell slightly in the September 2009 quarter, but there was a sharp increase in the total number waiting in the December 2009 quarter.

Figure 3 Patients waiting for a Diagnostic Service, Quarterly Trends September 2007 – December 2009



Diagnostic Services Waiting over 9/13 Weeks⁵

The 2009/10 Ministerial target for diagnostic services states that from April 2009, no patient should wait longer than 9 weeks for one of the selected diagnostic tests (13 weeks for a day case endoscopy). There were 2,925 patients waiting over the target for the 16 selected diagnostic services.

Table 8 Patients Waiting More than the Target - December 2009⁵

| | Quarter Ending December 2009 | Change compared with end of previous quarter | Change compared with end same quarter - previous year |
|----------------------|---------------------------------|---|--|
| Total Waiting | 2,925 | + 2,119 | + 712 |

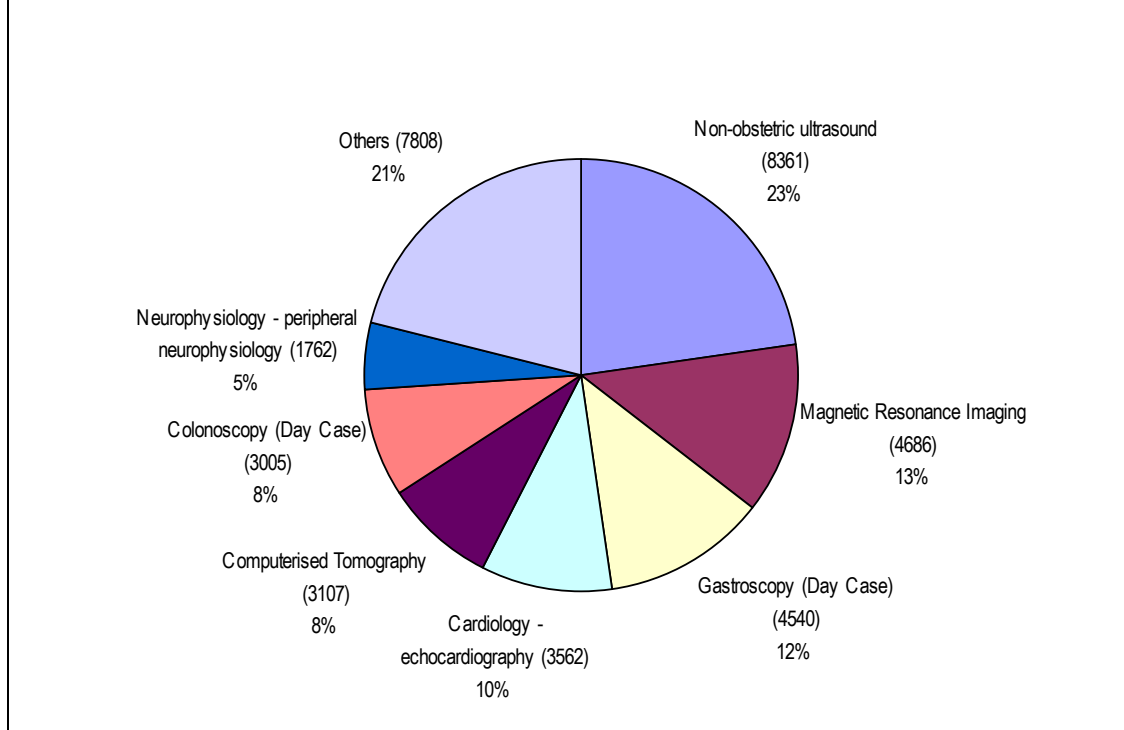
Source: Departmental Return SDR1

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

Patients Waiting by Diagnostic Service

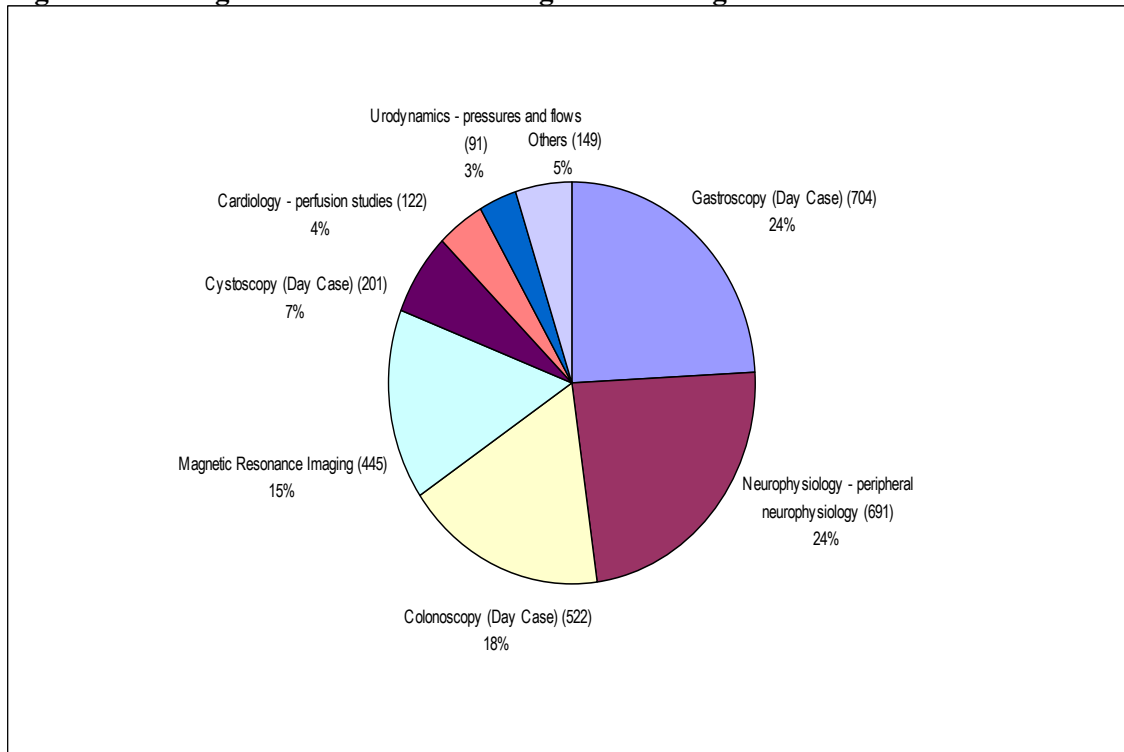
The majority of those waiting (79.0%) were within seven diagnostic services: Non-obstetric Ultrasound; Magnetic Resonance Imaging; Gastroscopy; Echocardiography; Computerised Tomography; Colonoscopy (Day Case) and Peripheral Neurophysiology (Figure 4a). Figures represent the total number waiting for a diagnostic service at the end of the December 2009 quarter.

Figure 4a Diagnostics – Total Waiters by Diagnostic Test at the end of December 2009



Source: Departmental Return SDR1

Figure 4b Diagnostics – Patients waiting over the target at the end of December 2009



Source: Departmental Return SDR1

Table 9 Diagnostic Services Waiting Times by Diagnostic Test and Weeks Waiting – December 2009⁵

| 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 | 3,183 | 1,058 | 433 | 7 | 4 | 1 | 4,686 |
| Computerised Tomography | 2,632 | 475 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3,107 |
| Non Obstetric Ultrasound | 7,011 | 1,343 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 8,361 |
| Barium Studies | 971 | 61 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1,032 |
| DEXA Scan | 1,112 | 252 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1,364 |
| Radio Nuclide Imaging | 431 | 49 | 10 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 490 |
| Audiology - Pure Tone | 541 | 69 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 610 |
| Cardiology - Echocardiography | 2,584 | 921 | 57 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3,562 |
| Cardiology - Perfusion Studies | 325 | 149 | 106 | 16 | 0 | 0 | 596 |
| Neurophysiology - Peripheral Neurophysiology | 754 | 317 | 373 | 317 | 1 | 0 | 1,762 |
| Respiratory Physiology - Sleep Studies | 213 | 91 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 305 |
| Urodynamics - Pressures & Flows | 301 | 90 | 67 | 24 | 0 | 0 | 482 |
| Colonoscopy (Other) | 8 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 20 |
| Flexi sigmoidoscopy (Other) | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Cystoscopy (Other) | 11 | 10 | 9 | 4 | 4 | 1 | 39 |
| Gastroscopy (Other) | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 3 |
| 13 week target | | | | | | | |
| Colonoscopy (Day Case) | 1,370 | 561 | 552 | 389 | 122 | 11 | 3,005 |
| Flexi sigmoidoscopy (Day Case) | 746 | 327 | 242 | 30 | 9 | 4 | 1,358 |
| Cystoscopy (Day Case) | 721 | 319 | 267 | 151 | 25 | 25 | 1,508 |
| Gastroscopy (Day Case) | 2,276 | 776 | 784 | 578 | 120 | 6 | 4,540 |
| Total waiting for selected diagnostic tests | 25,191 | 6,870 | 2,914 | 1,519 | 287 | 50 | 36,831 |

Source: Departmental Return SDR1

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

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

Table 10a Diagnostic Services Waiting Times by Provider Trust for Diagnostic Tests (9 week target) – December 2009⁵

| Diagnostic Test | 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 | 7,074 | 2,646 | 666 | 342 | 5 | 1 | 10,734 |
| Northern | 2,757 | 268 | 35 | 28 | 6 | 3 | 3,097 |
| South Eastern | 2,663 | 373 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3,040 |
| Southern | 4,084 | 786 | 7 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 4,878 |
| Western | 3,500 | 814 | 357 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4,671 |
| Total | 20,078 | 4,887 | 1,069 | 371 | 11 | 4 | 26,420 |

Source: Departmental Return SDR1

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

Table 10b Diagnostic Services Waiting Times by Provider Trust for Day Case Endoscopies (13 week target) – December 2009⁵

| Diagnostic Test | 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 | 1,627 | 617 | 499 | 334 | 64 | 24 | 3,165 |
| Northern | 984 | 390 | 366 | 542 | 204 | 20 | 2,506 |
| South Eastern | 953 | 285 | 259 | 144 | 0 | 0 | 1,641 |
| Southern | 687 | 308 | 373 | 21 | 3 | 2 | 1,394 |
| Western | 862 | 383 | 348 | 107 | 5 | 0 | 1,705 |
| Total | 5,113 | 1,983 | 1,845 | 1,148 | 276 | 46 | 10,411 |

Source: Departmental Return SDR1

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

Table 10c Diagnostic Services Waiting Times by Provider Trust for all Diagnostic Tests – December 2009⁵

| Diagnostic Test | Patients Waiting for all Diagnostic Tests by Weeks Waiting | | | | | | Total Number of Patients Waiting |
|-----------------|--|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------|-----------|----------------------------------|
| | 0 - 6 | >6 - 9 | >9 - 13 | >13 - 21 | 21- 26 | 26 + | |
| Belfast | 8,701 | 3,263 | 1,165 | 676 | 69 | 25 | 13,899 |
| Northern | 3,741 | 658 | 401 | 570 | 210 | 23 | 5,603 |
| South Eastern | 3,616 | 658 | 263 | 144 | 0 | 0 | 4,681 |
| Southern | 4,771 | 1,094 | 380 | 22 | 3 | 2 | 6,272 |
| Western | 4,362 | 1,197 | 705 | 107 | 5 | 0 | 6,376 |
| Total | 25,191 | 6,870 | 2,914 | 1,519 | 287 | 50 | 36,831 |

Source: Departmental Return SDR1

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

Inpatients

Headline Totals⁶

The total number of patients waiting to be admitted to hospitals in Northern Ireland at the end of December 2009 stood at 36,808.

Over the quarter, comparing the end of December 2009 with the end of September 2009 (32,765), the total number waiting has increased by 4,043 (12.3%). Comparing the end of December 2009 with the end of December 2008 (36,972), the total number waiting has decreased by 164 (-0.4%).

Table 11 Quarterly Inpatient Waiting Lists – December 2009

| Waiting for: | Quarter Ending December 2009 | Change compared with end of previous quarter | Change compared with end same quarter – previous year |
|----------------------|---|---|--|
| Ordinary Admissions | 11,811 | + 1,505 | -151 |
| Day case Admissions | 24,997 | + 2,538 | -13 |
| Total Waiting | 36,808 | + 4,043 | -164 |

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

⁶ Refer to technical notes – points 1, 2 & 21-25.

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.

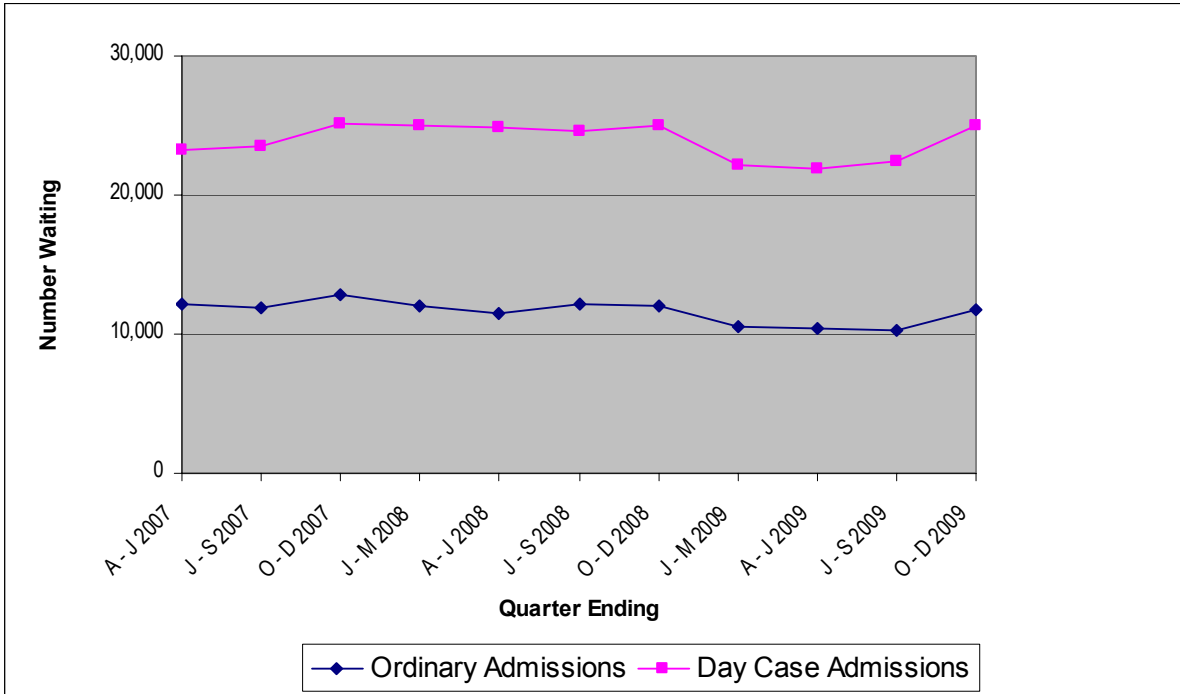
Of the 36,808 people waiting for admission to hospital at the end of December 2009, 11,811 (32.1%) were waiting for ordinary admission and 24,997 (67.9%) were waiting for day case admission (Table 11).

Since the end of September 2009, the number of cases waiting for ordinary admission has increased by 1,505 (14.6%) and the number waiting for day case admission has increased by 2,538 (11.3%). Compared with the end of December 2008, the number waiting for ordinary admission decreased by 151 (-1.3%), while the number waiting for day case admission decreased by 13 (-0.1%).

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 the end of December 2009.

Figure 5 Number of patients waiting for (i) Ordinary Admissions and (ii) Day case Admissions, Quarterly Trends June 2007 – December 2009



Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

Ordinary Admission and Day Cases Waiting More Than 13 Weeks⁷ – Table 12

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 December 2009, there were 6,010 patients waiting more than 13 weeks for inpatient treatment, of which 1,648 were waiting more than 21 weeks. Of the 6,010 patients waiting more than 13 weeks, 2,766 (46.0%) were awaiting ordinary admission and 3,244 (54.0%) were awaiting day case procedures.

Table 12 Patients Waiting More Than 13 Weeks⁷ – December 2009

| Waiting for: | Quarter Ending December 2009 | Change compared with end of previous quarter | Change compared with end same quarter - previous year |
|----------------------|---|---|--|
| Ordinary Admissions | 2,766 | + 1,358 | + 1,009 |
| Day Case Admissions | 3,244 | + 1,677 | + 631 |
| Total Waiting | 6,010 | + 3,035 | + 1,640 |

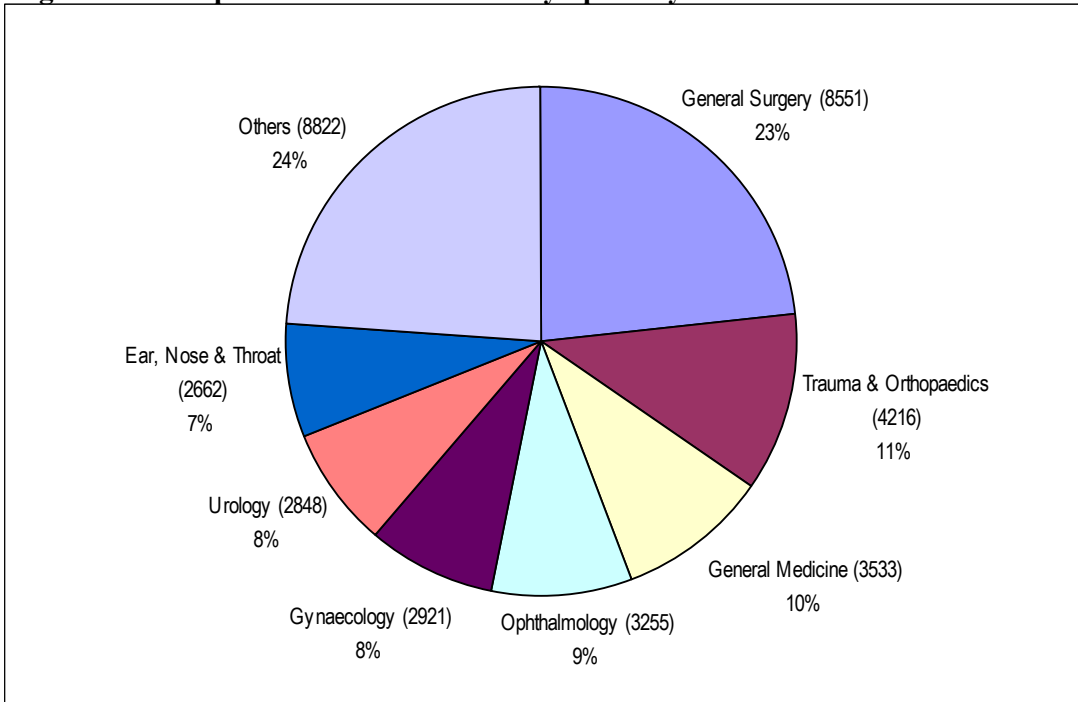
Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

⁷ Refer to Technical Notes – points 1 & 2 and 19 - 25.

Inpatients Waiting by Specialty

The overwhelming majority of those waiting (76%) were within seven specialties: General Surgery; Trauma and Orthopaedic Surgery (T&O); General Medicine; Ophthalmology; Gynaecology (Gynae); Urology and Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) (Figure 6a).

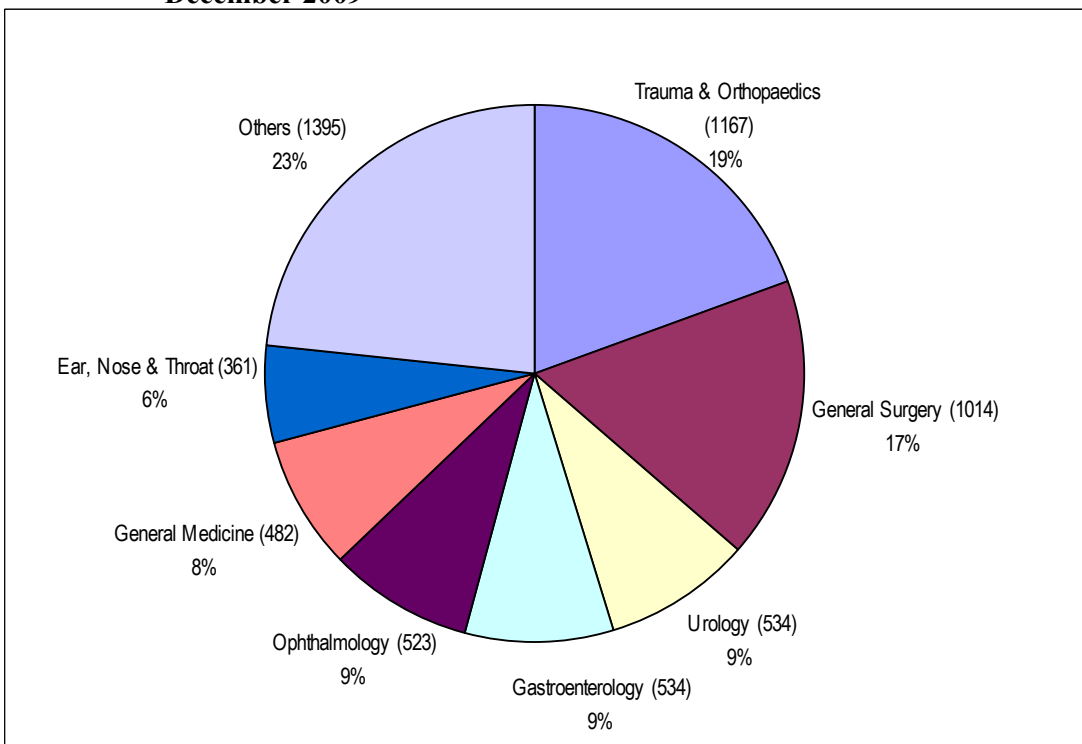
Figure 6a Inpatients - Total Waiters by Specialty at the end of December 2009⁷



Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

⁷ Refer to Technical Notes – points 1 & 2 and 19 - 25.

Figure 6b Inpatients – Patients waiting more than 13 weeks by Specialty at the end of December 2009⁷



Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

⁷ Refer to Technical Notes – points 1 & 2 and 19-25.

Inpatient Waiting Time by Specialty

Waiting times for inpatients by specialty are shown in Table 13. Overall 83.7% of those waiting for admission were waiting 13 weeks or less.

Table 13 Number of Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting and Specialty – December 2009⁷

| 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 | 4,327 | 3,210 | 775 | 169 | 70 | 8,551 |
| Trauma & Orthopaedics | 1,342 | 1,707 | 754 | 192 | 221 | 4,216 |
| General Medicine | 1,662 | 1,389 | 392 | 79 | 11 | 3,533 |
| Ophthalmology | 1,206 | 1,526 | 346 | 90 | 87 | 3,255 |
| Gynaecology | 1,374 | 1,199 | 270 | 56 | 22 | 2,921 |
| Urology | 1,317 | 997 | 347 | 89 | 98 | 2,848 |
| Ear, Nose & Throat | 1,202 | 1,099 | 312 | 42 | 7 | 2,662 |
| Gastroenterology | 1,205 | 837 | 411 | 120 | 3 | 2,576 |
| Cardiology | 684 | 521 | 90 | 7 | 4 | 1,306 |
| Pain Management | 339 | 300 | 185 | 65 | 21 | 910 |
| Plastic Surgery | 284 | 265 | 197 | 56 | 19 | 821 |
| Oral Surgery | 406 | 180 | 51 | 2 | 0 | 639 |
| Dermatology | 247 | 201 | 42 | 19 | 28 | 537 |
| Rheumatology | 158 | 227 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 387 |
| Cardiac Surgery | 114 | 122 | 107 | 7 | 0 | 350 |
| General Practice (Other) | 286 | 42 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 332 |
| Neurosurgery | 42 | 124 | 39 | 11 | 28 | 244 |
| Paediatric Surgery | 120 | 115 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 236 |
| Neurology | 40 | 44 | 35 | 0 | 0 | 119 |
| Nephrology | 42 | 47 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 90 |
| Other | 207 | 42 | 3 | 5 | 18 | 275 |
| All Specialties | 16,604 | 14,194 | 4,362 | 1,011 | 637 | 36,808 |

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

⁷ Refer to Technical Notes – points 1 & 2 and 19-25.

Inpatient Waiting Times by Provider Trust

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

Table 14 Number of Patients Waiting for Admission by Provider Trust and by Weeks Waiting – December 2009⁷

| Provider Trust | Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting | | | | | Total Number of Patients Waiting |
|----------------|---|---------------|--------------|--------------|------------|----------------------------------|
| | 0 - 6 | >6 - 13 | >13 - 21 | >21 - 26 | 26+ | |
| Belfast | 5,953 | 5,968 | 1,983 | 436 | 335 | 14,675 |
| Northern | 2,779 | 2,073 | 1,069 | 332 | 84 | 6,337 |
| South Eastern | 2,219 | 1,451 | 379 | 49 | 6 | 4,104 |
| Southern | 2,615 | 2,232 | 94 | 15 | 8 | 4,964 |
| Western | 3,038 | 2,470 | 837 | 179 | 204 | 6,728 |
| Total | 16,604 | 14,194 | 4,362 | 1,011 | 637 | 36,808 |

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

⁷ Refer to Technical Notes – points 1 & 2 and 19-25.

Completed Inpatient Waits – QE December 2009

The number of completed inpatient waits, for patients treated within Health Service hospitals in Northern Ireland, is shown in Table 15. A total of 45,591 inpatients were admitted to Health Service hospitals during the December 2009 quarter.

Table 15 Completed Inpatient Waits⁸

| Quarter | Total Number of Completed Inpatient Waits^P |
|-------------------------|--|
| O - D 2006 | 46,111 |
| J - D 2006 | 177,300 |
| 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 | 47,189 |
| J - S 2009 ^P | 44,647 |
| O - D 2009 ^P | 45,591 |
| J - D 2009 | 184,650 |

Source: Hospital Inpatient System

⁸ Refer to Technical Notes – point 26.

P - Provisional

Completed Inpatient Waits including Independent Sector Activity – QE December 2009

During the December 2009 quarter, a number of patients received inpatient treatment commissioned by the Health Service, within the Independent Sector. Estimates of the number of such patients admitted for inpatient treatment within the Independent Sector have been provided by the Health and Social Care Board, split by commissioning Trust.

It is estimated that approximately 3,460 Health Service patients were treated within the Independent Sector during the quarter ending December 2009. When this number is combined with that for inpatients admitted to Health Service hospitals during the quarter, it is estimated that approximately 49,051 inpatients were admitted to hospital in Northern Ireland for treatment commissioned by the Health Service.

Table 16a Completed Inpatient Waits by Trust including Independent Sector Activity – QE December 2009⁹

| 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 | 18,695 | 1,187 | 19,882 |
| Northern | 5,497 | 476 | 5,973 |
| South Eastern | 7,251 | 297 | 7,548 |
| Southern | 6,897 | 1,249 | 8,146 |
| Western | 7,251 | 251 | 7,502 |
| Total Treated | 45,591 | 3,460 | 49,051 |

Source: Hospital Inpatient System & Departmental Return IS1.

⁹ Refer to Technical Notes – point 27.

P - Provisional

Completed Inpatient Waits including Independent Sector Activity, Quarter Ending 31 December 2008 – Quarter Ending 31 December 2009

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 31 December 2008 – QE 31 December 2009^P

| Provider Trust | Total Number of Completed Inpatient Waits Commissioned by Health Service | | | | |
|----------------|--|----------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| | 31 December 2008 ^R | 31 March 2009 ^R | 30 June 2009 ^P | 30 September 2009 ^P | 31 December 2009 ^P |
| Belfast | 21,723 | 25,557 | 22,580 | 21,067 | 19,882 |
| Northern | 6,776 | 7,534 | 7,298 | 6,975 | 5,973 |
| South Eastern | 8,552 | 8,670 | 8,384 | 8,956 | 7,548 |
| Southern | 8,058 | 7,952 | 7,519 | 7,849 | 8,146 |
| Western | 8,558 | 9,054 | 8,144 | 7,535 | 7,502 |
| Total | 53,667 | 58,767 | 53,925 | 52,382 | 49,051 |

Source: Hospital Inpatient System & Departmental Return IS1.

¹⁰ Refer to Technical Notes – points 27 & 28.

R - Revised

P - Provisional

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 Time 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 Time 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. 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 includes estimated figures for the Genito-Urinary Medicine specialty at the Southern HSC Trust.
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' include all patients in the >9-13 and >13 – 26 and 26+ week timebands. Patients waiting 'more than 13 weeks' include all patients in the >13 week – 26 and 26+ 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 December 2009. 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. Hospital Information Branch undertook a National Statistics consultation on proposals to replace Departmental returns CH2 and CH4 with data sourced from Hospital Inpatients System and Quarterly Outpatient Activity Return (QOAR) respectively. These proposals were subsequently endorsed by respondents to the consultation. The new methodology derives the total number of completed outpatient waits each quarter as the total number of attendances at a first outpatient appointment from the 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 which were

formerly provided directly by HSC Trusts, from the quarter ending December 2009, will be 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, including those seen within the Independent Sector, has been revised for the quarters ending December 2008, March 2009, June 2009 and September 2009 due to the change in the methodology for collection of the Independent Sector data outlined in point nine.
11. The source for the diagnostic waiting time data is the Departmental Return SDR1. The data are not National Statistics and they have had limited validation by the Department, however, they have been included to provide users with a comprehensive view of waiting times for the selected diagnostic services subject to the 2009/10 Ministerial target.
12. 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, it is not currently possible to extract waiting time information from the system for submission to the Department. Consequently, neither the Northern nor South Eastern HSC Trusts have been able to provide data on their waiting time position at 31st December 2009 for Magnetic Resonance Imaging, Computerised Tomography, Non Obstetric Ultrasound, Barium Studies, DEXA Scan and Radio Nuclide Imaging services. Both HSC Trusts have provided estimates of their waiting time position, which have been included in the published waiting time position for 31st December 2009.
13. 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.
14. The Ministerial target for diagnostic waiting times states that from April 2009, no patient should wait longer than 9 weeks for one of the selected diagnostic tests (13 weeks for a day case endoscopy). The 16 selected services are: Magnetic Resonance Imaging; Computerised Tomography; Non-Obstetric Ultrasound; Barium Studies; DEXA Scan; Radio-Nuclide Imaging; Pure Tone Audiometry; Echocardiography; Perfusion Studies; Peripheral Neurophysiology; Sleep Studies; Urodynamics Pressures and Flows; Colonoscopy; Flexi Sigmoidoscopy; Cystoscopy and Gastroscopy.
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.
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) 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 week and 26+ timebands. Patients waiting 'more than 21 weeks' include 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. Following the National Statistics consultation outlined in point 8, the total number of completed inpatient waits each quarter are now 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. Data from April 2009 – December 2009 are provisional.

27. 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 which were formerly provided directly by HSC Trusts, from the quarter ending December 2009, will be 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.
28. The number of patients that received an inpatient assessment, commissioned by the Health Service, including those seen within the Independent Sector, has been revised for the quarters ending December 2008, March 2009, June 2009 and September 2009 due to a change in the methodology for collection of the Independent Sector data outlined in point 27.
29. 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.
30. HIB can provide further analyses of the data published in this bulletin upon request.
31. Figures relating to the quarter ending 31st March 2010 will be released on Thursday 3rd June 2010.
32. 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:

Office Information Manager

Hospital Information Branch

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

Annexe 2

Castle Buildings

Stormont

BT4 3SQ

E-mail: statistics@dhsspsni.gov.uk

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