

Statistics Release



Department of
**Health, Social Services
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AN ROINN

**Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta
agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí**

MÄNNYSTRIE O

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an Fowk Siccar**

05 March 2009

Northern Ireland Waiting Lists – December 2008

This statistics release gives details of the number of people waiting for either inpatient treatment, a first outpatient assessment or a selected diagnostic service at hospitals in Northern Ireland at the end of December 2008, the most recent quarter for which figures are available.

Inpatients

Headline Totals¹ – Table 1

The total number of patients waiting to be admitted to hospitals in Northern Ireland at the end of December 2008 stood at 36,900.

Over the quarter, comparing the end of December 2008 with the end of September 2008 (36,766), the total number waiting has increased by 134 (+0.4%). Comparing the end of December 2008 with the end of December 2007 (38,034), the total number waiting has decreased by 1,134 (-3.0%).

Table 1 Quarterly Inpatient Waiting Lists – December 2008

Waiting for:	Quarter Ending December 2008	Change compared with end of previous quarter	Change compared with end same quarter – previous year
Ordinary Admissions	11,962	-236	-926
Day case Admissions	24,938	+ 370	-208
Total Waiting	36,900	+ 134	-1,134

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

¹ Refer to technical notes – points 1-2 & 5-8.

Detailed notes and definitions are provided in the Technical Notes.



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.

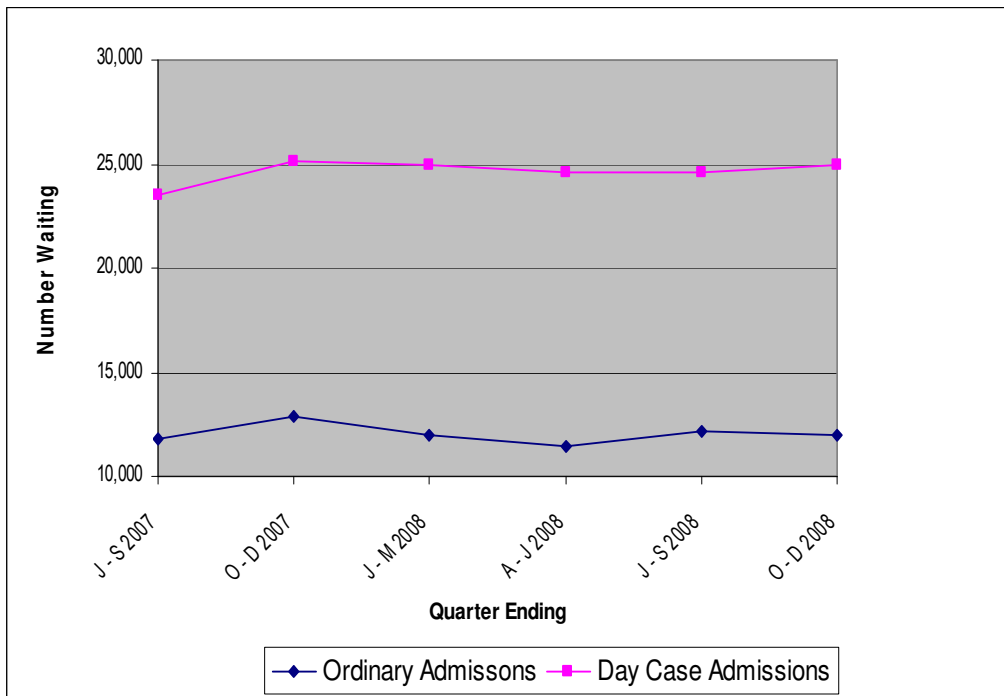
Of the 36,900 people waiting for admission to hospital at the end of December 2008, 11,962 (32.4%) were waiting for ordinary admission and 24,938 (67.6%) were waiting for day case admission (Table 1).

Since the end of September 2008, the number of cases waiting for ordinary admission has decreased by 236 (-1.9%) and the number waiting for day case admission has increased by 370 (+1.5%). Compared with the end of December 2007, the number waiting for ordinary admission decreased by 926 (-7.2%) with the number waiting for day case admission decreased by 208 (-0.8%).

Trends

The total number of patients waiting for both ordinary and day case admission has remained reasonably constant over the last six quarters.

Figure 1 Number of patients waiting for (i) Ordinary Admissions and (ii) Day case Admissions, Six Quarterly Trends September 2007 – December 2008



Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

Ordinary Admission and Day Cases Waiting More Than 13 Weeks² – Table 2

The 2008/09 Priority for Action target relating to waiting times for inpatient treatment, states that from April 2008 no patient should wait longer than 21 weeks for inpatient or day case treatment, reducing to 13 weeks by 31st March 2009.

At the end of December 2008, there were 4,370 patients waiting more than 13 weeks for inpatient treatment, of which 161 were waiting more than 21 weeks. Of the 4,370 patients waiting more than 13 weeks, 1,757 (40.2%) were awaiting ordinary admission and 2,613 (59.8%) were awaiting day case procedures.

Table 2 Patients Waiting More Than 13 Weeks² – December 2008

Waiting for:	Quarter Ending December 2008	Change compared with end of previous quarter	Change compared with end same quarter - previous year
Ordinary Admissions	1,757	-624	-1,440
Day Case Admissions	2,613	-1,401	-1,506
Total Waiting	4,370	-2,025	-2,946

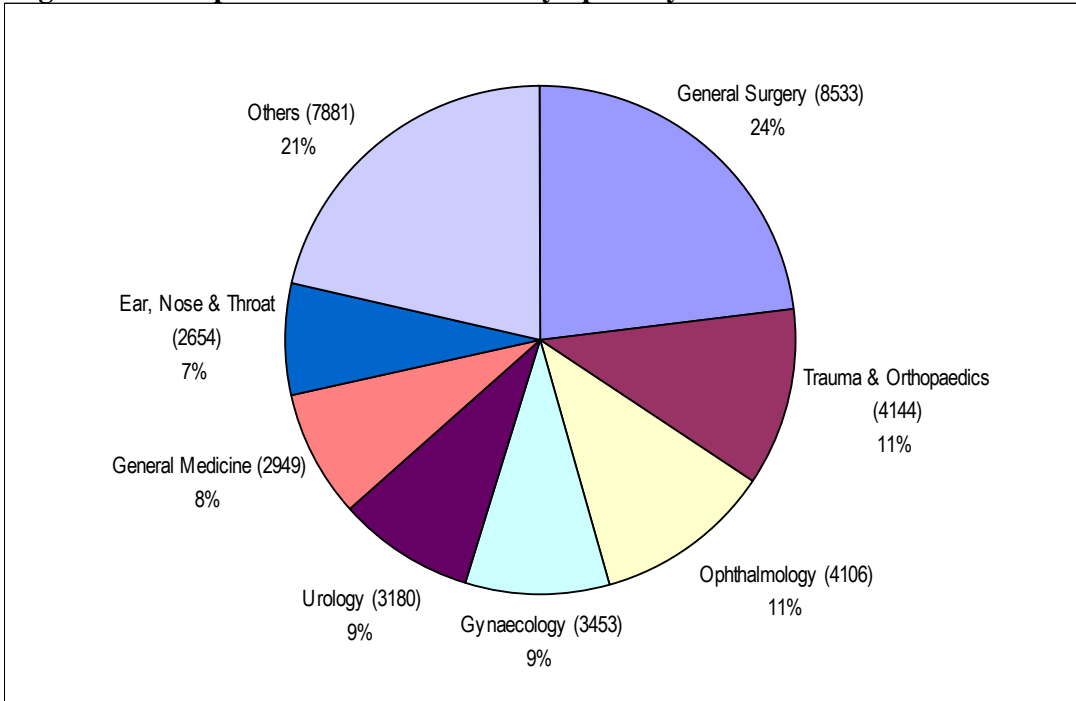
Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

² Refer to Technical Notes – points 1-9.

Inpatients Waiting by Specialty

The overwhelming majority of those waiting (79.0%) were within seven specialties: General Surgery; Trauma and Orthopaedic Surgery (T&O); Ophthalmology; Gynaecology (Gynae); Urology; General Medicine and Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) (Figure 2a).

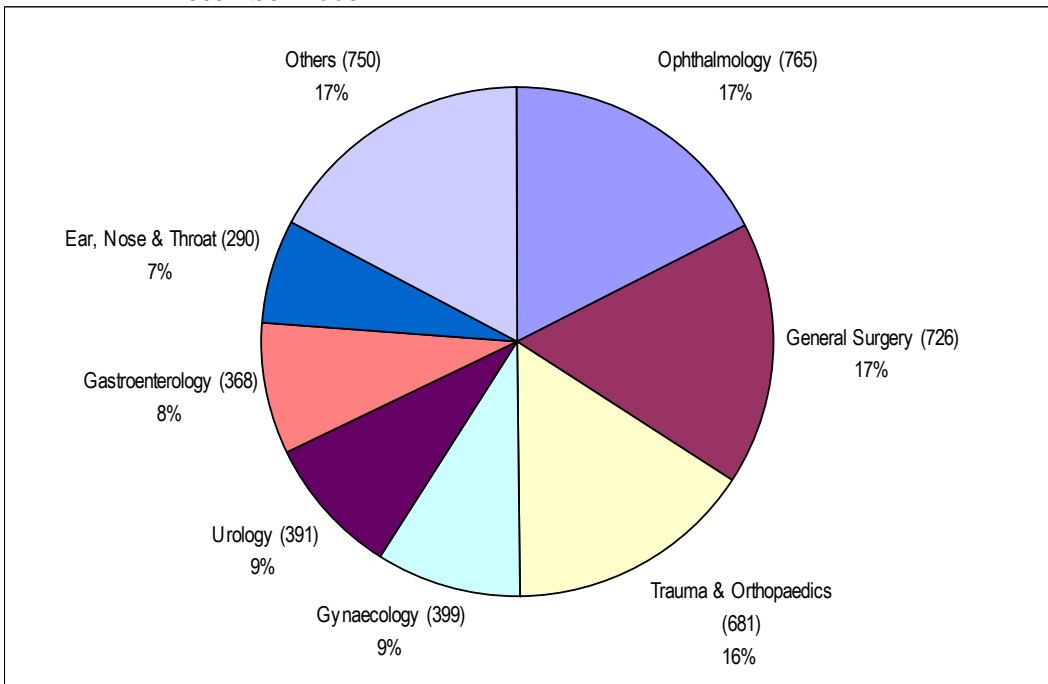
Figure 2a Inpatients - Total Waiters by Specialty at the end of December 2008²



Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

² Refer to Technical Notes – points 1-9.

Figure 2b Inpatients – Patients waiting more than 13 weeks by Specialty at the end of December 2008²



Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

² Refer to Technical Notes – points 1-9.

Inpatient Waiting Time by Specialty

Waiting times for inpatients by specialty are shown in Tables 3a and 3b. Overall 88.2% of those waiting for admission were waiting 13 weeks or less. More than 99% of patients were waiting for treatment in the Acute Services Programme of Care.

Table 3a Number of Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting and Specialty – December 2008²

Specialty	Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting				Total Number of Patients Awaiting Admission
	0 - 6	>6 - 13	>13 - 21	>21	
General Surgery	4,452	3,355	687	39	8,533
Trauma & Orthopaedics	1,665	1,798	659	22	4,144
Ophthalmology	1,749	1,592	765	0	4,106
Gynaecology	1,590	1,464	384	15	3,453
Urology	1,561	1,228	340	51	3,180
General Medicine	1,670	1,026	253	0	2,949
Ear, Nose & Throat	1,206	1,158	289	1	2,654
Gastroenterology	1,092	909	347	21	2,369
Cardiology	522	402	40	3	967
Pain Management	372	405	80	0	857
Oral Surgery	372	256	48	0	676
Plastic Surgery	350	222	96	4	672
Dermatology	226	178	34	0	438
Rheumatology	86	175	60	0	321
Cardiac Surgery	132	126	44	0	302
General Practice (Other)	244	35	6	0	285
Paediatric Surgery	122	89	3	5	219
Neurosurgery	68	88	27	0	183
Nephrology	34	33	28	0	95
Thoracic Surgery	61	23	1	0	85
Other	274	120	18	0	412
All Specialties	17,848	14,682	4,209	161	36,900

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

² Refer to Technical Notes – points 1-9.

Table 3b Percentage of Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting and Specialty – December 2008²

Specialty	Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting			
	0 - 6	>6 - 13	>13 - 21	>21
General Surgery	52.2%	39.3%	8.1%	0.5%
Trauma & Orthopaedics	40.2%	43.4%	15.9%	0.5%
Ophthalmology	42.6%	38.8%	18.6%	0.0%
Gynaecology	46.0%	42.4%	11.1%	0.4%
Urology	49.1%	38.6%	10.7%	1.6%
General Medicine	56.6%	34.8%	8.6%	0.0%
Ear, Nose & Throat	45.4%	43.6%	10.9%	0.0%
Gastroenterology	46.1%	38.4%	14.6%	0.9%
Cardiology	54.0%	41.6%	4.1%	0.3%
Pain Management	43.4%	47.3%	9.3%	0.0%
Oral Surgery	55.0%	37.9%	7.1%	0.0%
Plastic Surgery	52.1%	33.0%	14.3%	0.6%
Dermatology	51.6%	40.6%	7.8%	0.0%
Rheumatology	26.8%	54.5%	18.7%	0.0%
Cardiac Surgery	43.7%	41.7%	14.6%	0.0%
General Practice (Other)	85.6%	12.3%	2.1%	0.0%
Paediatric Surgery	55.7%	40.6%	1.4%	2.3%
Neurosurgery	37.2%	48.1%	14.8%	0.0%
Nephrology	35.8%	34.7%	29.5%	0.0%
Thoracic Surgery	71.8%	27.1%	1.2%	0.0%
Other	66.5%	29.1%	4.4%	0.0%
All Specialties	48.4%	39.8%	11.4%	0.4%

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

² Refer to Technical Notes – points 1-9.

Inpatient Waiting Times by Provider Trust

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

Table 4 Number of Patients Waiting for Admission by Provider Trust and by Weeks Waiting – December 2008²

Provider Trust	Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting				Total Number of Patients Waiting
	0 - 6	>6 - 13	>13 - 21	>21	
Belfast	6,848	6,226	1,995	68	15,137
Northern	2,881	2,442	764	75	6,162
South Eastern	2,572	1,543	268	0	4,383
Southern	2,317	2,209	588	1	5,115
Western	3,230	2,262	594	17	6,103
Total	17,848	14,682	4,209	161	36,900

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

² Refer to Technical Notes – points 1-9.

Completed Inpatient Waits – December 2008

Waiting times for completed inpatient waits, for patients treated within Health Service hospitals in Northern Ireland are shown in Table 5. A total of 48,132 inpatients were admitted to Health Service hospitals during the December 2008 quarter.

Table 5 Completed Inpatient Waits³

Quarter	Total Number of Completed Inpatient Waits	
	Excluding patients who self deferred or did not attend on a previously arranged admission date	Including patients who self deferred or did not attend on a previously arranged admission date
J - M 2005	39,359	42,567
A - J 2005	41,285	44,448
J - S 2005	37,191	40,422
O - D 2005	40,456	44,606
J - D 2005	158,291	172,043
J - M 2006	41,240	45,827
A - J 2006	39,425	43,553
J - S 2006	36,858	41,004
O - D 2006	39,973	44,994
J - D 2006	157,496	175,378
J - M 2007	41,197	46,645
A - J 2007	40,856	46,140
J - S 2007	38,530	43,853
O - D 2007	40,538	46,230
J - D 2007	161,121	182,868
J - M 2008	39,091	45,217
A - J 2008	42,372	48,612
J - S 2008	38,811	44,802
O - D 2008	42,045	48,132
J - D 2008	162,319	186,763

Source: Departmental Return CH2

³ Refer to Technical Notes – point 10.

Completed Inpatient Waits including Independent Sector Activity – December 2008

During the December 2008 quarter, a number of patients received inpatient treatment commissioned by the Health Service, within the Independent Sector. Estimates of the number of patients admitted for inpatient treatment within the Independent Sector have been provided by the commissioning Trust.

It is estimated that approximately 3,604 Health Service patients were treated within the Independent Sector during the quarter ending December 2008. When this number is combined with that for inpatients admitted to Health Service hospitals during the quarter, it is estimated that approximately 51,736 inpatients were admitted to hospital in Northern Ireland for treatment commissioned by the Health Service.

Table 6a Completed Inpatient Waits by Trust including Independent Sector Activity⁴

Provider Trust	Number of Completed Inpatient Waits within Health Service Hospitals	Number of Completed Inpatient Waits in Independent Sector	Total Number of Completed Inpatient Waits Commissioned by Health Service
Belfast	21,518	675	22,193
Northern	6,075	137	6,212
South Eastern	6,484	146	6,630
Southern	6,752	1,275	8,027
Western	7,303	1,371	8,674
Total Treated	48,132	3,604	51,736

Source: Health and Social Care Trusts

⁴Refer to Technical Notes – points 10-11.

Completed Inpatient Waits including Independent Sector Activity, Quarter Ending 31 December 2007 – Quarter Ending 31 December 2008

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

Table 6b Completed Inpatient Waits by Trust Including Independent Sector Activity⁴, 31 December 2007 – 31 December 2008

Provider Trust	Total Number of Completed Inpatient Waits Commissioned by Health Service				
	31 December 2007	31 March 2008	30 June 2008	30 September 2008	31 December 2008
Belfast	21,097	21,069	21,006	20,278	22,193
Northern	6,313	5,817	6,897	6,325	6,212
South Eastern	7,128	7,000	7,443	6,929	6,630
Southern	6,653	6,716	7,088	7,171	8,027
Western	7,426	7,270	8,395	7,677	8,674
Total	48,617	47,872	50,829	48,380	51,736

Source: Health and Social Care Trusts

⁴Refer to Technical Notes – points 10-11.

Outpatients

Headline Totals - Table 7

The number of patients waiting for a first outpatient appointment (including cancellations and deferrals) at the end of December 2008 stood at 68,734.

Over the quarter, comparing the end of December 2008 with the end of September 2008 (73,910), the total number has decreased by 5,176 (-7.0%).

Over the year, comparing the end of December 2008 with the end of December 2007 (73,629), the total number waiting decreased by 4,895 (-6.6%).

Excluding cancellations and deferrals, the quarterly and annual decreases were -8.4% and -7.1% respectively.

Table 7 Quarterly Outpatient Waiting Lists – December 2008⁵

Waiting for:	Quarter Ending December 2008	Change compared with end of previous quarter	Change compared with end same quarter - previous year
Excluding Cancellations and Deferrals	62,148	-5,735	-4,740
Cancellations and Deferrals	6,586	559	-155
Total Waiting	68,734	-5,176	-4,895

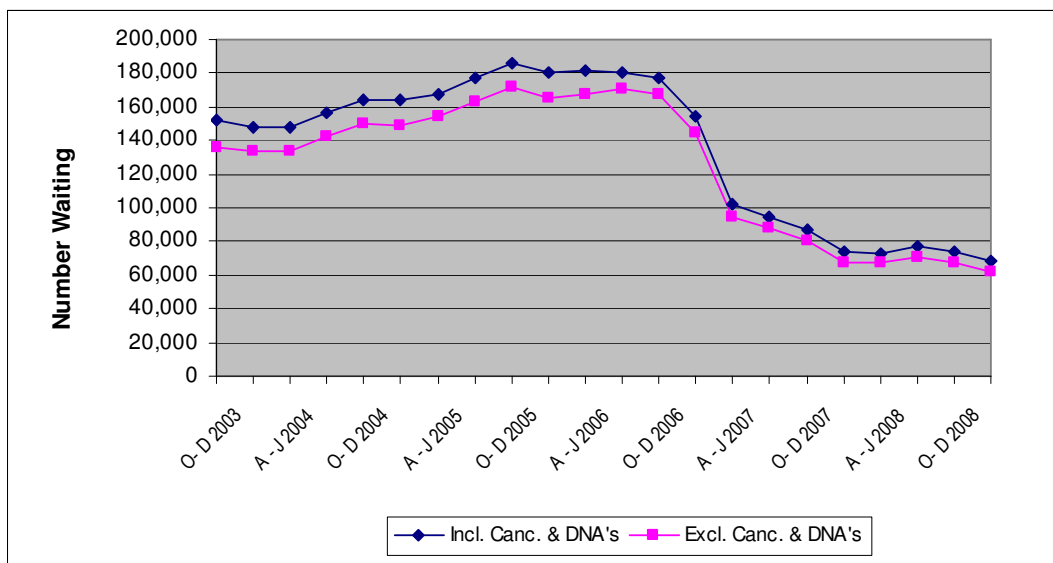
Source: Departmental Return CH3 parts 1 & 2

⁵ Refer to Technical Notes 12-15.

Trends

The total number of people waiting for a first outpatient appointment peaked in September 2005. There has been a downward trend since this peak and the outpatient waiting lists total has decreased in nine of the previous ten quarters.

Figure 3 Outpatients Waiting for a First Appointment (including and excluding cancellations and deferrals), Five Yearly Trends December 2003 – December 2008



Source: Departmental Return CH3 parts 1 & 2.

Outpatients Waiting More than 9 Weeks

The 2008/09 Priority For Action Target relating to Waiting Times for a first outpatient appointment states that 'Trusts should ensure that, from April 2008, no patient waits longer than 13 weeks for a first outpatient appointment, reducing to 9 weeks by March 2009'. At the end of December 2008, the number of patients waiting more than 9 weeks for a first outpatient appointment was 5,831, 8.5% of the total waiting.

Table 8 Patients Waiting More than 9 Weeks⁶ - December 2008

Waiting for:	Quarter Ending December 2008	Change compared with end of previous quarter
Excluding Cancellations and Deferrals	5,601	-2,018
Cancellations and Deferrals	230	-57
Total Waiting	5,831	-2,075

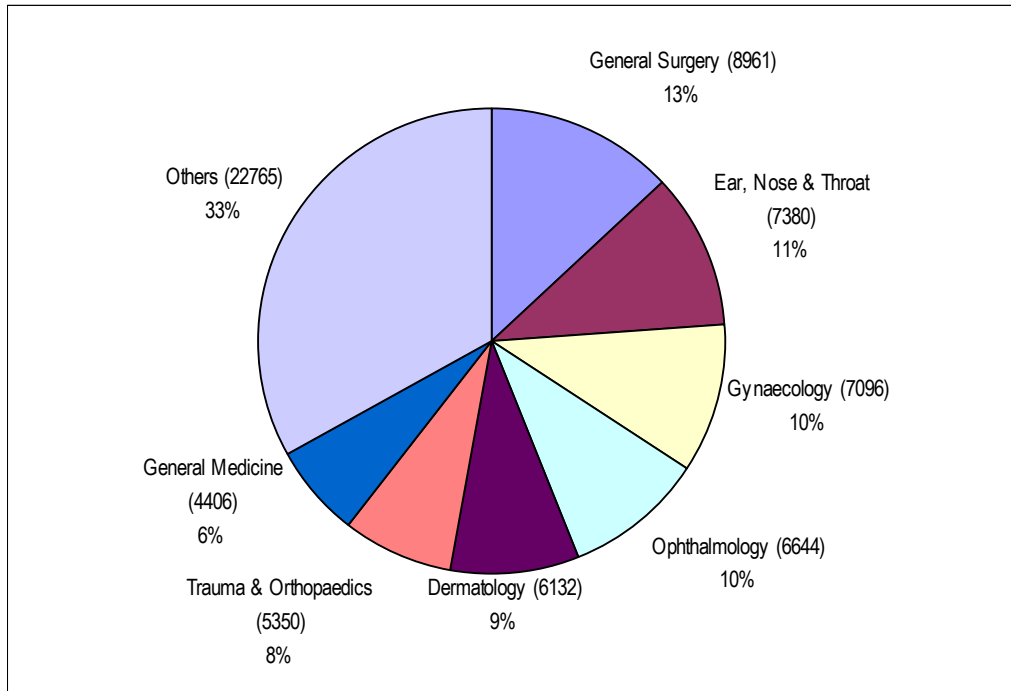
Source: Departmental Return CH3 parts 1 & 2.

⁶ Refer to Technical Notes 12-18.

Outpatients Waiting by Specialty

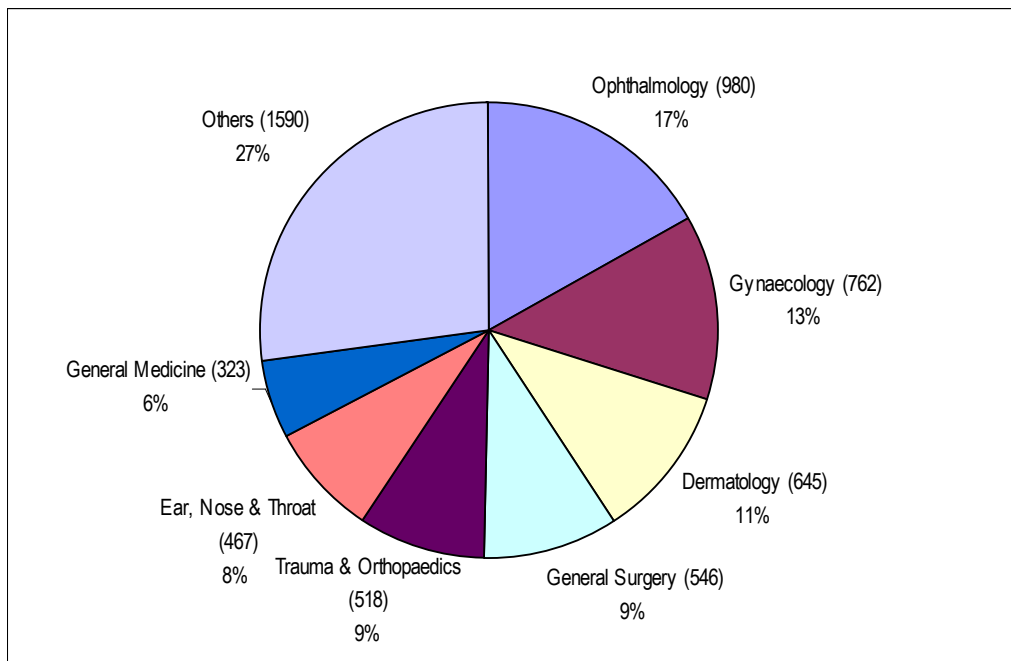
The majority of those waiting (67.0%) were within seven specialties: General Surgery; Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT); Gynaecology (Gynae); Ophthalmology; Dermatology; Trauma & Orthopaedics and General Medicine (Figure 4a). Figures represent the total number waiting for their first outpatient appointment during the December 2008 quarter including those who have cancelled or missed a previous appointment.

Figure 4a Outpatients – Total Waiters by Specialty at the end of December 2008



Source: Departmental Return CH3 Parts 1 & 2.

Figure 4b Outpatients – Patients Waiting More than 9 Weeks by Specialty at the end of December 2008



Source: Departmental Return CH3 Parts 1 & 2.

Outpatient Waiting Time by Specialty

Waiting times for outpatients by specialty are shown in Tables 9a and 9b. Overall 91.6% of those waiting for treatment were waiting less than 9 weeks.

Table 9a Number of Patients Waiting for a First Appointment by Weeks Waiting and Specialty – December 2008

Specialty	Patients Waiting for an Appointment by Weeks Waiting				Total Number of Patients Waiting
	0-6	>6-9	>9-13	>13	
General Surgery	6,537	1,878	546	0	8,961
Ear, Nose & Throat	5,344	1,569	467	0	7,380
Gynaecology	4,736	1,598	762	0	7,096
Ophthalmology	4,127	1,537	980	0	6,644
Dermatology	3,978	1,509	643	2	6,132
Trauma & Orthopaedics	3,560	1,272	435	83	5,350
General Medicine	3,140	943	323	0	4,406
Paediatrics	2,099	508	117	42	2,766
Cardiology	1,789	431	85	33	2,338
Neurology	1,434	549	189	0	2,172
Urology	1,481	483	149	0	2,113
Rheumatology	1,149	476	53	0	1,678
Oral Surgery	1,195	283	67	1	1,546
Pain Management	753	287	78	0	1,118
Gastroenterology	673	219	97	0	989
Plastic Surgery	591	225	103	0	919
Restorative Dentistry	590	186	50	0	826
Thoracic Medicine	459	155	44	0	658
Geriatric Medicine	541	90	19	0	650
Clinical Genetics	153	134	171	19	477
Other	3,439	803	214	59	4,515
All Specialties	47,768	15,135	5,592	239	68,734

Source: Departmental Return CH3 Parts 1 & 2

Table 9b Percentage of Patients Waiting for a First Appointment by Weeks Waiting and Specialty – December 2008

Specialty	Patients Waiting for an Appointment by Weeks Waiting			
	0-6	>6-9	>9-13	>13
General Surgery	72.9%	21.0%	6.1%	0.0%
Ear, Nose & Throat	72.4%	21.3%	6.3%	0.0%
Gynaecology	66.7%	22.5%	10.7%	<0.1%
Ophthalmology	62.1%	23.1%	14.8%	0.0%
Dermatology	64.9%	24.6%	10.5%	0.0%
Trauma & Orthopaedics	66.5%	23.8%	8.1%	1.6%
General Medicine	71.3%	21.4%	7.3%	<0.1%
Paediatrics	75.9%	18.4%	4.2%	1.5%
Cardiology	76.5%	18.4%	3.6%	1.4%
Neurology	66.0%	25.3%	8.7%	0.0%
Urology	70.1%	22.9%	7.1%	0.0%
Rheumatology	68.5%	28.4%	3.2%	0.0%
Oral Surgery	77.3%	18.3%	4.3%	0.1%
Pain Management	67.4%	25.7%	7.0%	0.0%
Gastroenterology	68.0%	22.1%	9.8%	0.0%
Plastic Surgery	64.3%	24.5%	11.2%	0.0%
Restorative Dentistry	71.4%	22.5%	6.1%	0.0%
Thoracic Medicine	69.8%	23.6%	6.7%	0.0%
Geriatric Medicine	83.2%	13.8%	2.9%	0.0%
Clinical Genetics	32.1%	28.1%	35.8%	4.0%
Other	76.2%	17.8%	4.7%	1.3%
All Specialties	69.5%	22.0%	8.1%	0.3%

Source: Departmental Return CH3 Parts 1 & 2.

Outpatient Waiting Times by Provider Trust

Waiting times for outpatients by Trust are shown in Table 10.

Table 10 Number of Patients Waiting for a First Outpatient Appointment by Provider Trust and Weeks Waiting – December 2008⁶

Provider Trust	Patients Waiting for an Appointment by Weeks Waiting				Total Number of Patients Waiting
	0-6	>6-9	>9-13	>13	
Belfast	17,782	6,289	2,453	220	26,744
Northern	7,300	2,027	128	1	9,456
South Eastern	8,087	2,587	1,387	2	12,063
Southern	7,534	2,627	1,132	15	11,308
Western	7,065	1,605	492	1	9,163
Total	47,768	15,135	5,592	239	68,734

Source: Departmental Return CH3 Parts 1 & 2

⁶Refer to Technical Notes – points 12-18.

Outpatient Waiting Times by Programme of Care

Waiting times for a first outpatient appointment by programme of care are shown in Table 11. The vast majority (97.4%) of patients were awaiting their first outpatient appointment in the Acute Services Programme of Care.

Table 11 Number of Patients Waiting for a First Appointment by Weeks Waiting and Programme of Care – December 2008

Programme of Care	Patients Waiting for an Appointment by Weeks Waiting				Total Number of Patients Waiting
	0-6	>6-9	>9-13	>13	
Acute Services	46,447	14,813	5,470	238	66,968
Maternity & Child Health	0	0	0	0	0
Elderly Care	853	136	33	0	1,022
Mental Health	433	174	83	1	691
Learning Disability	35	12	6	0	53
All POCs	47,768	15,135	5,592	239	68,734

Source: Departmental Return CH3 Parts 1 & 2

Completed Outpatient Waits – December 2008

Waiting times for completed outpatient waits, for patients treated within Health Service hospitals in Northern Ireland, are shown in Table 12. A total of 109,825 patients received a first outpatient appointment within Health Service hospitals (excluding those who had previously cancelled or not attended a previous appointment) during the December 2008 quarter. Including patients who have cancelled, or did not attend a previous appointment, the total number of patients that attended a first outpatient appointment within Health Service hospitals in Northern Ireland during the quarter was 117,731.

Table 12 Completed Outpatient Waits for First Appointment⁷

Quarter	Total Number of Completed Outpatient Waits	
	Excluding patients who had cancelled or did not attend a previous appointment	Including patients who had cancelled or did not attend a previous appointment
J - M 2005	86,944	94,865
A - J 2005	91,489	99,698
J - S 2005	82,721	92,047
O- D 2005	91,969	101,037
J - D 2005	353,123	387,647
J - M 2006	91,695	101,249
A - J 2006	90,531	99,418
J - S 2006	90,716	100,769
O- D 2006	104,266	113,927
J - D 2006	377,208	415,363
J - M 2007	110,712	121,104
A - J 2007	105,202	114,317
J - S 2007	102,848	110,509
O- D 2007	109,135	116,634
J - D 2007	427,897	462,564
J - M 2008	104,041	112,140
A - J 2008	108,230	115,771
J - S 2008	101,318	109,341
O- D 2008	109,825	117,731
J - D 2008	423,414	454,983

Source: Departmental Return CH4

⁷Refer to Technical Notes – points 19 & 20.

Completed Outpatient Waits including Independent Sector Activity– December 2008

During the December 2008 quarter, a number of patients attended a first outpatient appointment, commissioned by the Health Service, within the Independent Sector. Estimates of the number of patients attending a first outpatient appointment, within the Independent Sector have been provided by commissioning Trusts.

It is estimated that approximately 6,553 Health Service patients attended a first outpatient appointment, within the Independent Sector, during the quarter ending December 2008. 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 124,284 outpatients attended a first appointment in Northern Ireland for an assessment commissioned by the Health Service.

Table 13a Completed Outpatient Waits by Trust including Independent Sector Activity⁸

Provider Trust	Number of Completed Outpatient Waits within Health Service Hospitals	Number of Completed Outpatient Waits in Independent Sector	Total Number of Completed Outpatient Waits Commissioned by Health Service
Belfast ⁸	46,910	-	46,910
Northern	17,039	2,275	19,314
South Eastern	19,428	1,316	20,744
Southern	16,205	559	16,764
Western	18,149	2,403	20,552
Total Treated	117,731	6,553	124,284

Source: Health and Social Care Trusts

⁸Refer to Technical Notes – points 20-21.

Completed Outpatient Waits including Independent Sector Activity, Quarter Ending 31 December 2007 – Quarter Ending 31 December 2008

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

Table 13b Completed Outpatient Waits by Trust Including Independent Sector Activity⁸, 31 December 2007 – 31 December 2008

Provider Trust	Total Number of Completed Outpatient Waits Commissioned by Health Service				
	31 December 2007	31 March 2008	30 June 2008	30 September 2008	31 December 2008
Belfast	45,196	43,938	44,762	45,018	46,910
Northern	18,053	15,618	18,261	17,357	19,314
South Eastern	20,827	19,131	20,639	19,860	20,744
Southern	16,369	14,674	17,560	16,205	16,764
Western	23,541	22,478	20,248	19,536	20,552
Total	123,986	115,839	121,470	117,976	124,284

Source: Health and Social Care Trusts

⁸Refer to Technical Notes – points 20-21.

Diagnostic Services

Tables 14 -18 provide details of the number of people waiting for the 16 selected diagnostic services, carried out at hospitals in Northern Ireland, and covered by the maximum waiting time Ministerial target for 2008/09⁹.

Headline Totals – Table 14

The total number of patients waiting for one of the 16 selected diagnostic services at hospitals in Northern Ireland at the end of December 2008 stood at 32,204, a increase of 1,559 (5.1%) on the position at 30th September 2008 (30,645).

Table 14 Quarterly Diagnostic Services Waiting List – December 2008⁹

Diagnostic Service:	Number of Patients Waiting Quarter Ending December 2008	Change compared with the end of the previous quarter
Imaging (excluding Interventional Imaging)		
Magnetic Resonance Imaging	3,370	416
Computerised Tomography	2,914	245
Non-obstetric ultrasound	7,530	915
Barium Studies	1,102	-212
DEXA Scan	886	34
Radio-Nuclide Imaging	729	135
Physiological Measurement		
Audiology - pure tone audiometry	574	17
Cardiology - echocardiography	3,197	586
Cardiology - perfusion studies	489	19
Neurophysiology - peripheral neurophysiology	723	-358
Respiratory physiology - sleep studies	338	34
Urodynamics - pressures and flows	396	-89
Day case Endoscopy		
Colonoscopy	2,830	-71
Flexi sigmoidoscopy	1,366	101
Cystoscopy	1,622	-54
Gastroscopy	4,138	-159
Other Endoscopy		
Colonoscopy	0	0
Flexi sigmoidoscopy	0	0
Cystoscopy	0	0
Gastroscopy	0	0
Total waiting for selected diagnostic tests	32,204	1,559

Source: Departmental Return SDR1

⁹Refer to Technical Notes – points 22-28.

Table 15 Diagnostic Services Waiting Times by Diagnostic Test and Weeks Waiting – December 2008⁹

Diagnostic Test	Patients Waiting for a Diagnostic Test by					Total Number of Patients Waiting
	0 - 6 weeks	>6 - 9 weeks	>9 - 13 weeks	>13 - 21 weeks	>21 weeks	
Magnetic Resonance Imaging	2,363	778	229	0	0	3,370
Computerised Tomography	2,325	465	124	0	0	2,914
Non Obstetric Ultrasound	6,049	1,242	239	0	0	7,530
Barium Studies	977	116	9	0	0	1,102
DEXA Scan	770	108	8	0	0	886
Radio Nuclide Imaging	552	137	40	0	0	729
Audiology - Pure Tone	361	144	69	0	0	574
Cardiology - Echocardiography	2,241	686	258	12	0	3,197
Cardiology - Perfusion Studies	256	102	78	53	0	489
Neurophysiology - Peripheral Neurophysiology	511	175	37	0	0	723
Respiratory Physiology - Sleep Studies	236	99	3	0	0	338
Urodynamics - Pressures & Flows	228	97	66	5	0	396
Colonoscopy	1,437	554	530	309	0	2,830
Flexi sigmoidoscopy	852	238	196	80	0	1,366
Cystoscopy	757	326	337	202	0	1,622
Gastroscopy	2,275	752	723	388	0	4,138
Total waiting for selected diagnostic tests	22,190	6,019	2,946	1,049	0	32,204

Source: Departmental Return SDR1

⁹Refer to Technical Notes – points 22-28.

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

Table 16 Diagnostic Services Waiting Times by Provider Trust – December 2008⁹

Diagnostic Test	Patients Waiting for a Diagnostic Test by Weeks Waiting					Total Number of Patients Waiting
	0 - 6 weeks	>6 - 9 weeks	>9 - 13 weeks	>13 - 21 weeks	>21 weeks	
Belfast	7,376	2,347	1,326	197	0	11,246
Northern	3,477	1,196	632	412	0	5,717
South Eastern	3,277	860	288	121	0	4,546
Southern	4,732	1,065	414	196	0	6,407
Western	3,328	551	286	123	0	4,288
Total	22,190	6,019	2,946	1,049	0	32,204

Source: Departmental Return SDR1

⁹Refer to Technical Notes – points 22-28.

Diagnostic Services Waiting over 9/13 Weeks

The 2008/09 Ministerial target for diagnostic services states that from April 2008, no patient should wait longer than 13 weeks for one of the selected diagnostic tests (21 weeks for a day case endoscopy) reducing to 9 weeks (13 weeks for a day case endoscopy) by 31st March 2009.

There were 1,230 patients waiting over 9 weeks for the 16 selected diagnostic services (except for day case endoscopies). 70 of these patients were waiting over 13 weeks.

Table 17 Selected Diagnostic Tests – Over 9 Weeks⁹

Diagnostic Test	Total Number of Patients Waiting	Total Number of Patients Waiting over 9 weeks	Total Number of Patients Waiting over 13 weeks
Magnetic Resonance Imaging	3,370	229	0
Computerised Tomography	2,914	124	0
Non Obstetric Ultrasound	7,530	239	0
Barium Studies	1,102	9	0
DEXA Scan	886	8	0
Radio Nuclide Imaging	729	40	0
Audiology - Pure Tone Audiometry	574	69	0
Cardiology - Echocardiography	3,197	270	12
Cardiology - Perfusion Studies	489	131	53
Neurophysiology - Peripheral Neurophysiology	723	37	0
Respiratory Physiology - Sleep Studies	338	3	0
Urodynamics - Pressures & Flows	396	71	5
Total waiting	22,248	1,230	70

Source: Departmental Return SDR1

⁹Refer to Technical Notes – points 22-28.

There were 979 patients waiting over 13 weeks for a day case endoscopy at the 31st December 2008, none of which were waiting more than 21 weeks.

Table 18 Day Case Endoscopies – Over 13 Weeks⁹

Diagnostic Test	Total Number of Patients Waiting	Total Number of Patients Waiting over 13 weeks	Total Number of Patients Waiting over 21 weeks
Colonoscopy	2,830	309	0
Flexi Sigmoidoscopy	1,366	80	0
Cystoscopy	1,622	202	0
Gastroscopy	4,138	388	0
Total Waiting	9,956	979	0

Source: Departmental Return SDR1

⁹Refer to Technical Notes – points 22-28.

Technical Notes

1. The sources for the data contained in this release are the DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Time Dataset and Departmental Returns CH2, CH3, CH4 and SDR1. These returns collect information from Health and Social Care Trusts on a quarterly basis.
2. Trust based information (DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Time Dataset, CH2, CH3, CH4 and SDR1) returns include all patients living outside Northern Ireland and all privately funded patients waiting for treatment in Health Service hospitals in Northern Ireland.
3. For Tables 2, 3a, 3b, 4 and Figure 2b, 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.
4. The current ministerial target for inpatient waiting times states that from April 2008 no patient should wait longer than 21 weeks for inpatient or day case treatment, reducing to 13 weeks by 31st March 2009. Patients waiting 'more than 13 weeks' include all patients in the >13-21 and >21 week timebands. Patients waiting 'more than 21 weeks' include all patients in the >21 week timeband.
5. 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.
6. 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.
7. 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.
8. 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.
9. 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.

10. Waiting times for completed inpatient waits are available upon request from Hospital Information Branch.
11. The number of patients that received inpatient treatment, commissioned by the Health Service, in the Independent Sector are provided in Tables 6a and 6b. These figures have been provided for each transferring Health and Social Care Trust (Health Trust responsible for the patients waiting time). They are not 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 inpatient waits during each quarter.
12. 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 his 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.
13. In previous quarters outpatient waiting list figures included patients waiting for an appointment in the Obstetrics speciality (501) and excluded all other obstetric patients (specialty 510, Obstetrics (Ante Natal) and specialty 520, Obstetrics (Post Natal)), as these services are provided on a planned rather than elective basis. From the quarter ending September 2008, all ante natal obstetric appointments are now recorded under speciality 510 (including those previously recorded as specialty 501) and all post natal obstetric appointments are recorded under specialty 520. As a result, all obstetric appointments are now excluded from outpatient waiting lists figures.
14. During 2008/09, Health and Social Care Trusts commenced a process of reclassifying a number of mental health 'consultant led' outpatient services as 'non consultant led' services. While this decision has been taken to improve the delivery of mental health services, the process has resulted in patients waiting for reclassified mental health services no longer being reported on the outpatient waiting list (see point 14). The process of reclassification has occurred on a service by service basis since the beginning of 2008/09 and relates to the following specialities; Geriatric medicine, Mental Handicap, Mental Illness, Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, Forensic Psychiatry, Psychotherapy and Old Age Psychiatry. Services reclassified during the quarter ending December 2008 are excluded from the figures contained in this bulletin. Figures relating to services reclassified during the quarters ending June and September 2008 have been retrospectively removed from data presented for those quarters. Waiting times for 'non consultant led' mental health services are subject to an additional PfA target and are performance managed by the DHSSPS.
15. The total number of patients waiting for a first outpatient appointment at 30 September 2008 has been revised to 73,910 due to an amendment received from the Northern Health and Social Care Trust.
16. For Tables 8, 9a, 9b, 10, 11 and Figure 4b, 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.

17. The current ministerial target for outpatient waiting times states that from April 2008 no patient should wait longer than 13 weeks for a first outpatient appointment, reducing to 9 weeks by 31st March 2009. Patients waiting 'more than 9 weeks' include all patients in the >9-13 and >13 week timebands. Patients waiting 'more than 13 weeks' include all patients in the >13 week timeband.
18. 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 2008.
19. Waiting times for completed outpatient waits are available upon request from Hospital Information Branch.
20. Data on the number of completed outpatient waits performed within the Independent sector, as commissioned by the Belfast HSC Trust are included within the figures contained in Table 12.
21. The number of patients that received an outpatient assessment, commissioned by the Health Service, in the Independent Sector is provided in Tables 13a and 13b. These figures have been provided for each transferring Health and Social Care Trust (Trust responsible for the patients waiting time). They are not 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.
22. The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety commenced the collection of waiting times information for diagnostic services for the quarter ending 31st December 2007, following a pilot exercise for the quarter ending 30th September 2007. The source for the data is the Information Return SDR1. This return will be collected from Hospital Trusts on a quarterly basis. The data are not 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 2008/09 Ministerial target.
23. 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.
24. The Ministerial target for diagnostic waiting times states that from April 2008, no patient should wait longer than 13 weeks for one of the selected diagnostic tests (21 weeks for a day case endoscopy) reducing to 9 weeks (13 weeks for a day case endoscopy) by 31st March 2009. The 16 selected services are: Magnetic Resonance Imaging; Computerised Tomography; Non-Obstetric Ultrasound; Barium Studies; DEXA Scan; Radio-Nuclide Imaging; Pure Tone Audiometry; Echocardiography; Perfusion Studies; Peripheral Neurophysiology; Sleep Studies; Urodynamics Pressures and Flows; Colonoscopy; Flexi Sigmoidoscopy; Cystoscopy; Gastroscopy.
25. 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.

26. 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.
27. 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.
28. Waiting time statistics for day case endoscopies also include patients waiting for endoscopies that are managed as ordinary admissions.
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. Figures relating to the quarter ending 31st March 2009 will be released on Thursday, 4th June 2009.
31. 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/stats-hospital_community_statistics#waiting