

INFORMATION
ANALYSIS
DIRECTORATE



Northern Ireland Waiting Time Statistics: Inpatient Waiting Times Quarter Ending September 2015

Reader Information

Purpose	This publication presents information on waiting times for inpatient treatment in Northern Ireland at 30 th September 2015. It details information on the number of patients waiting, and length of time waiting, for Ordinary and Day Case admissions at Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts in Northern Ireland. This information reports on performance against the 2015/16 Ministerial waiting time target which states that, from April 2015, at least 65% of inpatients and daycases should be treated within 13 weeks; and no patient waiting longer than 26 weeks for treatment. Data are presented by HSC Trust, specialty and time band. The number of completed inpatient waits is also presented in this release by HSC Trust.
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Target audience	Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS), Chief Executives of the HSC Board and Trusts in Northern Ireland, health care professionals, academics, and Health & Social Care stakeholders, the media and general public.
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Key Points

- The total number of patients waiting to be admitted to hospitals in Northern Ireland at 30th September 2015 stood at 62,697 an increase of 4.3% (2,570) on the previous quarter, and 21.3% (11,004) more than the number at 30th September 2014 (Figure 1 & Table 1).
- Just under one third (31.0%, 19,437) of the people waiting for admission to hospital at the end of September 2015 were waiting for ordinary admission, with the other 69.0% (43,260) waiting for day case admission (Figure 1 & Table 1).
- Of those waiting for inpatient treatment at the end of September 2015, 52.6% (32,981) were waiting more than 13 weeks. This is compared with 29,028 (48.3%) at the end of June 2015, and 20,082 (38.8%) at the end of September 2014 (Figure 5 & Tables 3a & 3b).
- There were 18,137 patients waiting longer than 26 weeks at the 30th September 2015. This is an increase of 22.7% (3,360) compared with the previous quarter, and almost three times the number waiting at the end of September 2014 (6,519) (Figure 7 & Table 4).
- In total, the number of HSC patients admitted for inpatient treatment, in both HSC Trusts and the Independent Sector was 43,994, a decrease of 6.3% (2,935) on the previous quarter, and a decrease of 10.6% (5,200) on the quarter ending September 2014 (Figure 11 & Table 5).

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Hospital Information Branch (HIB)

Hospital Information Branch is responsible for the collection, quality assurance, analysis and publication of timely and accurate information derived from a wide range of statistical information returns supplied by the Health & Social Care (HSC) Trusts and the HSC Board. Statistical information is collected routinely from a variety of electronic patient level administrative systems and pre-defined EXCEL survey return templates.

The Branch aims to present information in a meaningful way and provide advice on its uses to customers in the HSC Committee, Professional Advisory Groups, policy branches within the DHSSPS, other Health organisations, academia, private sector organisations, charity/voluntary organisations as well as the general public. The statistical information collected is used to contribute to major exercises such as reporting on the performance of the HSC system, other comparative performance exercises, target setting and monitoring, development of service frameworks as well as policy formulation and evaluation. In addition, the information is used in response to a significantly high volume of Parliamentary / Assembly questions and ad-hoc queries each year.

Information is disseminated through a number of key statistical publications, including: Inpatient Activity, Outpatient Activity, Emergency Care, Mental Health & Learning Disability and Waiting Time Statistics (Inpatient, Outpatient, Diagnostics and Cancer). A detailed list of these publications is available from:

Website: <https://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/topics/dhssps-statistics-and-research>

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Technical Notes

This statistics release is part of a quarterly data series presenting information on waiting times for inpatient treatment at HSC Trusts in Northern Ireland.

Data Collection

The information presented in this bulletin derives from the DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset, the Hospital Inpatient System and the Departmental IS1 Part 2 statistical return provided by the HSC Board.

Data providers are supplied with technical guidance documents outlining the methodologies that should be used in the collection, reporting and validation of each of these data returns. These documents can be accessed at the following link:

<https://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/articles/inpatient-waiting-times>

Rounding

Percentages have been rounded to one decimal place and as a consequence some percentages may not sum to 100.

On occasion, the percentage of patients waiting within overall totals, or percentage changes within quarters, are presented. In some instances these percentages are less than 0.1% or more than 99.9%. Users should be aware that, in such instances the percentage is rounded to zero or 100%.

Data Quality

All waiting time information presented in this bulletin has been validated and quality assured by HSC Trusts prior to publication. HIB performs a series of checks to verify that downloaded information is consistent over time, both within and across specialties. Trend analyses are used to monitor annual variations and emerging trends. Queries arising from validation checks are presented to HSC Trusts for clarification and, if required, data may be amended.

Finally, prior to the publication of this information, the data are presented to HSC Trusts for final sign-off.

Information on completed waits within the Independent Sector is provided by the HSC Board. HSC Trusts are provided with guidance, detailing how they should record details of patients transferred to the Independent Sector for treatment, on their Patient Administration System. Following treatment, the Independent Sector provider informs the transferring HSC Trust who records the patient's inpatient wait as being complete. These records are then validated against financial invoices received by the HSC Trust from the Independent Sector provider for each transferred patient. HSC Trusts then submit these data to the HSC Board who forward the information to Hospital Information Branch for inclusion in this publication. These data are not National Statistics; however, they have been published to provide users with a comprehensive view of completed inpatient waits during each quarter.

Main Uses of Data

Data contained in this release are published primarily to provide an indication of HSC performance. They allow the general public and the DHSSPS Health Committee to assess the performance of the DHSSPS, the HSC Board and HSC Trusts in providing timely access to hospital services in Northern Ireland. These data also provide policy makers with the necessary information to formulate and evaluate health services and are helpful in assessing the effectiveness of resource

allocation in providing services that are fully responsive to patients needs. Additionally, hospital waiting time information is used to inform the media, special interest groups and academics, and by the DHSSPS to respond to parliamentary/assembly questions. An additional aim of this publication is to make waiting time information publicly available to those people using health services in Northern Ireland. Further advice on uses for these data is outlined in Appendix 2 of this publication.

Inpatient Activity in Northern Ireland

When using waiting time statistics, it is useful to have an understanding of inpatient activity across HSC Trusts and over time. This is available at the following link:

<https://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/articles/inpatient-and-day-case-activity>

Waiting Time Information Elsewhere in the United Kingdom

While it is our intention to direct users to waiting time information elsewhere in the UK, users should be aware that hospital waiting times in other administrations are not always measured in a comparable manner to those in Northern Ireland. Details of the hospital waiting times published elsewhere in the UK can be found as detailed below.

England

<http://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/rtt-waiting-times/>

Scotland

<http://www.isdscotland.org/Health-Topics/Waiting-Times/>

Wales

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/theme/health/nhsperformance/waiting-times/?lang=en>

Data on the length of time waited for a selection of inpatient procedures, that are comparable across the UK, are available at the link below (see Chapter 6 Table 6.6).

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/publications/re-reference-tables.html?edition=tcn%3A77-213417>

A National Statistics Publication

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs;
- are well explained and readily accessible;
- are produced according to sound methods; and
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics, it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.

Further information on the Code of Practice for National Statistics is available at:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/>.

A list of those who received 24-hour pre-release access to this publication is available at:

<https://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/publications/northern-ireland-waiting-time-statistics-outpatient-diagnostic-and-inpatient-waiting>

Contact Information

As we want to engage with users of our statistics, we invite you to feedback your comments on this publication to:

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Introduction

The information detailed in this release is published primarily to provide an indication of HSC Trust performance. It allows the general public and the DHSSPS Health Committee to assess the performance of the DHSSPS, the HSC Board and HSC Trusts in providing timely access to hospital services in Northern Ireland.

Data contained in this publication relates to the waiting times for admission for inpatient treatment at HSC Trusts in Northern Ireland at 30th September 2015; and Health Service commissioned activity for inpatient treatment, either in HSC hospitals or the Independent Sector, during the quarter ending (QE) September 2015.

Inpatient Admission

Inpatient admissions include both patients waiting for ordinary admission to hospital and patients waiting for day case treatment.

Waiting Times for Inpatient Admission

Total patients waiting¹

At 30th September 2015, a total of 62,697 people were waiting for admission to hospital in Northern Ireland. This is 2,570 (4.3%) more than at the end of June 2015 (60,127) and 11,004 (21.3%) more than at 30th September 2014 (51,693) (Figure 1 & Table 1).

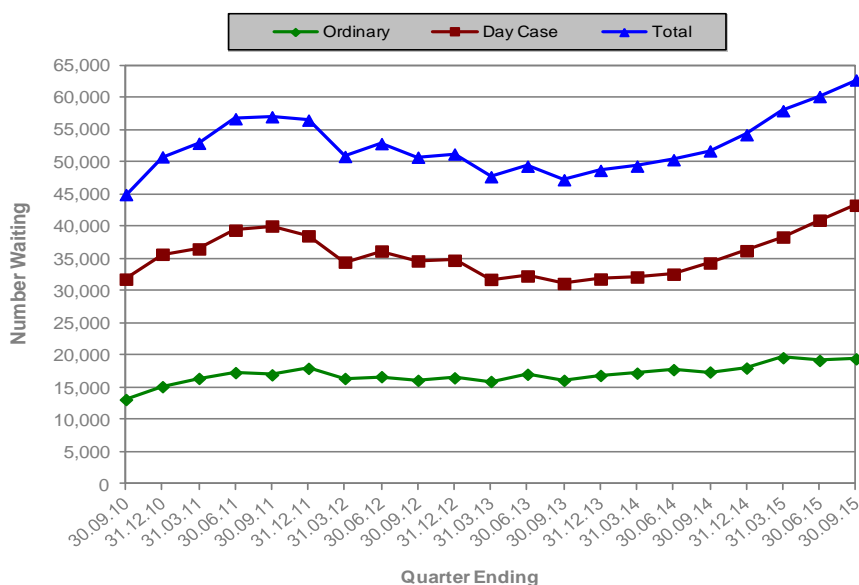
Just under one third (31.0%, 19,437) of people on the inpatient waiting list at the end of September 2015 were waiting for ordinary admissions, with the other 69.0% (43,260) waiting for day case admission (Figure 1 & Table 1).

Compared to the 30th June 2015, the number waiting for ordinary admission increased by 256 (1.3%) and the number waiting for day case admission increased by 2,314 (5.7%) (Figure 1 & Table 1).

Compared to 30th September 2014, the number waiting for ordinary admission increased by 2,048 (11.8%) and the number waiting for day case admission increased by 8,956 (26.1%) (Figure 1 & Table 1).

¹Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-8

Figure 1: Total number of patients waiting: Quarterly trends 30th September 2010 – 30th September 2015

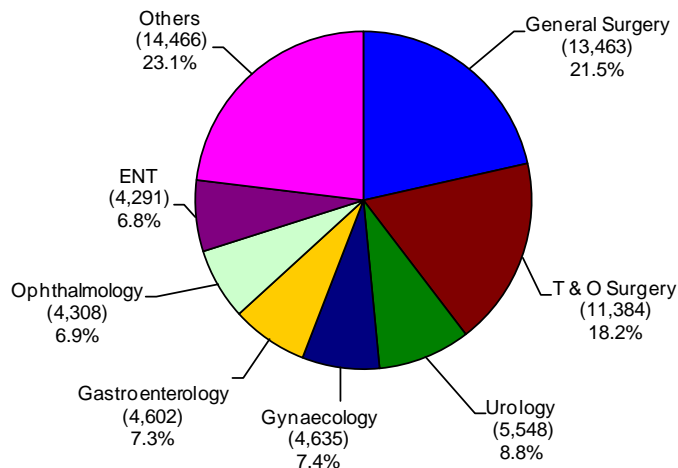


There was a considerable increase in the total number waiting for inpatient admission from September 2010 (44,918) through to September 2011 (56,993). The total number waiting then dropped in March 2012 (50,829) and continued to decrease until the end of September 2013 (47,223) after which it has shown a steady increase throughout 2013/14, 2014/15 and into 2015/16. The same pattern is observed for day case admissions and, to a lesser extent, ordinary admissions (Figure 1).

Inpatients Waiting by Specialty¹

Just over three quarters (76.9%, 48,231) of the 62,697 patients waiting for inpatient treatment were within seven specialties: General Surgery; Trauma and Orthopaedic (T & O) Surgery; Urology; Gynaecology; Gastroenterology; Ophthalmology and Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) (Figure 2 & Table 2a).

Figure 2: Total number of patients waiting by specialty at 30th September 2015

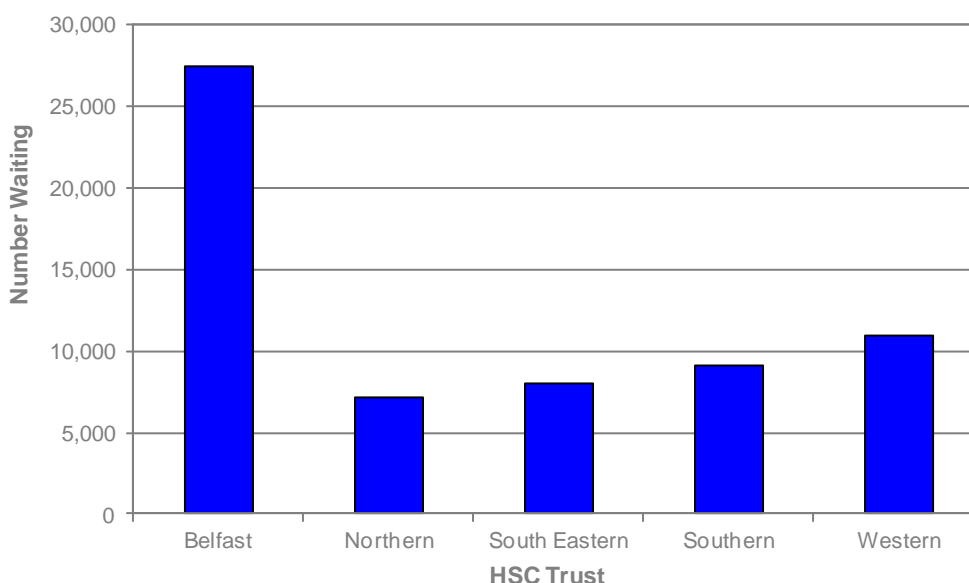


¹Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-8

Total patients waiting by HSC Trust¹

Over two fifths (43.8%, 27,461) of patients waiting for admission were waiting in the Belfast HSC Trust. A further 17.4% (10,912) were waiting in the Western HSC Trust, 14.6% (9,147) in the Southern HSC Trust, 12.8% (8,010) in the South Eastern HSC Trust and 11.4% (7,167) in the Northern HSC Trust (Figure 3 & Table 3a).

Figure 3: Total number of patients waiting by HSC Trust at 30th September 2015



Data users should be aware that many inpatient services are not provided at each of the five HSC Trusts in Northern Ireland. In such circumstances, patients from one HSC Trust area will be waiting to be seen at a service provided at another HSC Trust. It is therefore not possible to accurately calculate the number of patients waiting per head of the population in any specific HSC Trust area, as HSC Trusts that provide services for the whole of Northern Ireland will have a higher number of patients waiting per head of the population than those that provide more localised services.

Performance against 2015/16 waiting time target²

The Ministerial target for inpatient waiting times states that, from April 2015, at least 65% of inpatients and daycases should be treated within 13 weeks, and no patient should wait longer than 26 weeks for treatment.

¹Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-8

²Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-10

Figure 4: HSC Trust performance against the 2015/16 waiting time target for inpatient admission

HSC Trust	Target Achieved?	
	At least 65% of patients should wait no longer than 13 weeks	No patient waiting longer than 26 weeks
Belfast	No	No
Northern	Yes	No
South Eastern	No	No
Southern	No	No
Western	No	No
Northern Ireland	No	No

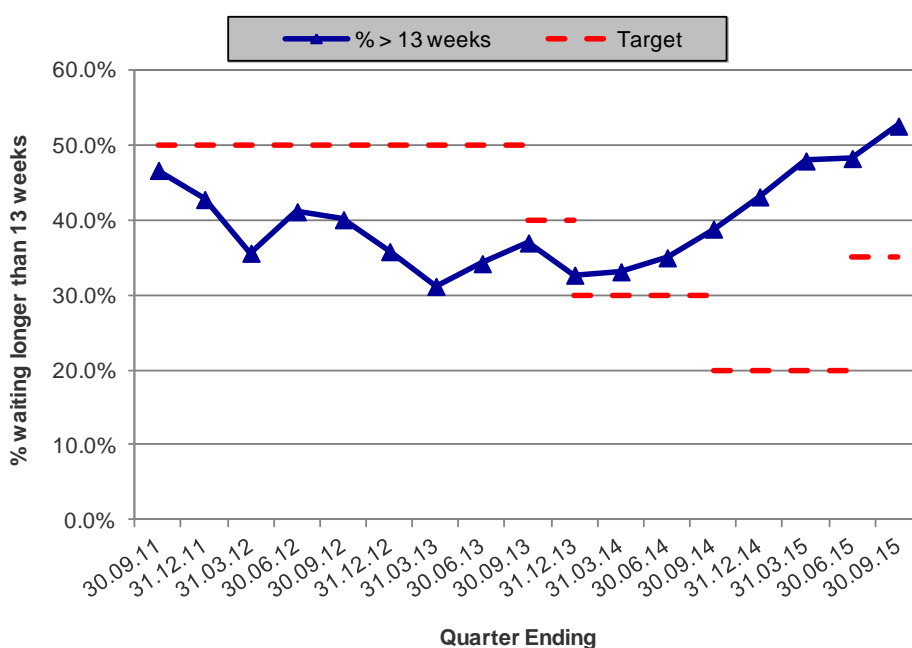
At the end of September 2015, Northern Ireland, as a whole, did not meet the first element of the waiting time target that at least 65% of patients should wait no longer than 13 weeks for inpatient or day case treatment. This element was however achieved by Northern HSC Trust (Figure 4 & 6 & Tables 3a & 3b).

The second element of the target that there should be no patient waiting longer than 26 weeks, was not met by Northern Ireland as a whole, nor by any individual HSC Trust (Figure 4 & 9 & Tables 3a & 3b).

Proportion of patients waiting over 13 weeks

Achievement of the 13 week target requires that less than 35% of patients should be waiting over 13 weeks for inpatient treatment. At the end of September 2015, 52.6% (32,981) of patients were waiting more than 13 weeks for inpatient admission, compared with 48.3% (29,028) at the end of June 2015 and 38.8% (20,082) at the end of September 2014 (Figure 5 and Table 3b).

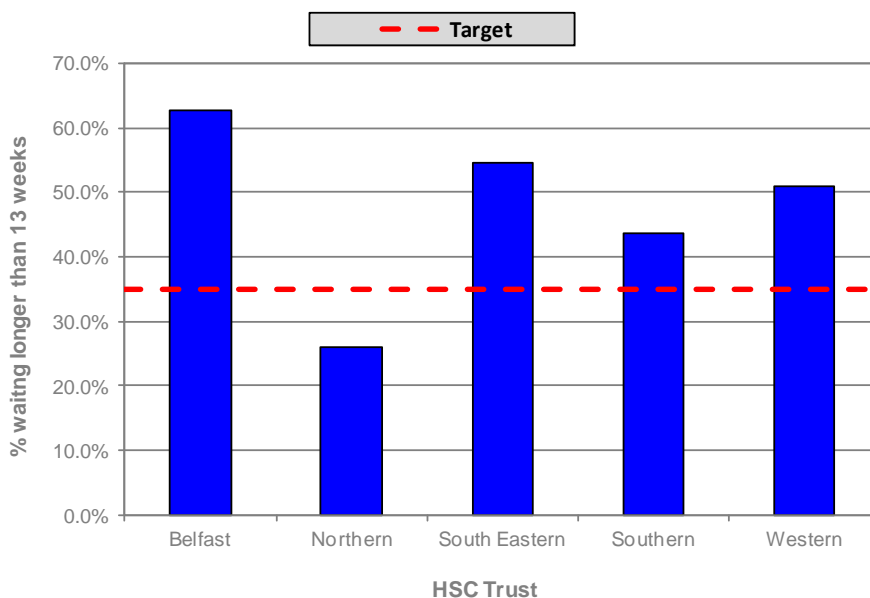
Figure 5: Proportion of patients waiting over 13 weeks: Quarterly trends 30th September 2011 – 30th September 2015



Proportion of patients waiting over 13 weeks by HSC Trust²

The proportion of patients waiting longer than 13 weeks was 62.6% in the Belfast HSC Trust, 54.5% in the South Eastern HSC Trust, 51.1% in the Western HSC Trust, 43.6% in the Southern HSC Trust and 26.0% in the Northern HSC Trust (Figure 6 & Table 3b).

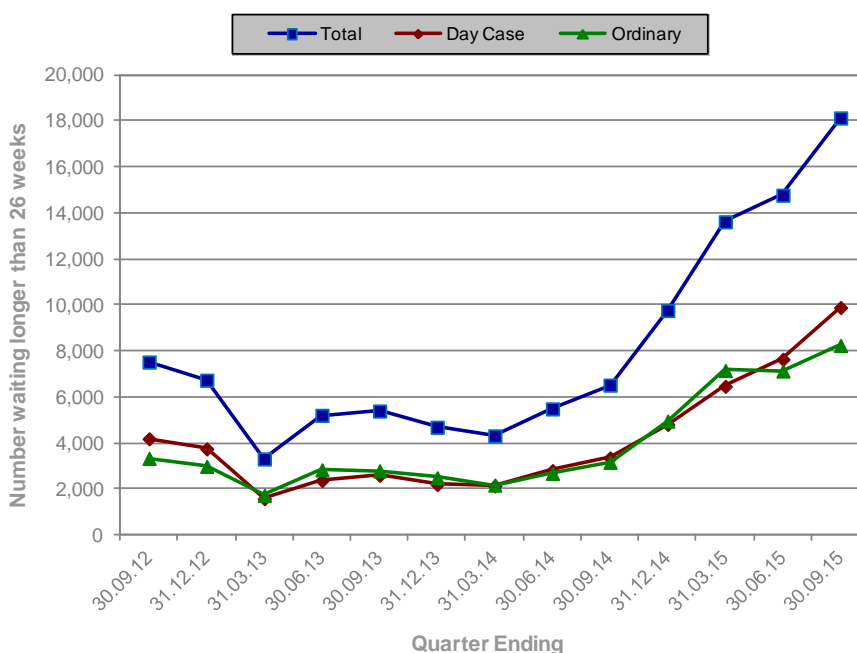
Figure 6: Proportion of patients waiting over 13 weeks by HSC Trust at 30th September 2015



Patients waiting longer than the 2015/16 maximum waiting time target²

At 30th September 2015, there were 18,137 (28.9%) patients waiting more than 26 weeks for inpatient treatment; 8,245 were awaiting ordinary admission and 9,892 were awaiting day case procedures (Figure 7 & Table 4).

Figure 7: Number of patients waiting longer than 26 weeks: Quarterly trends 30th September 2012 – 30th September 2015



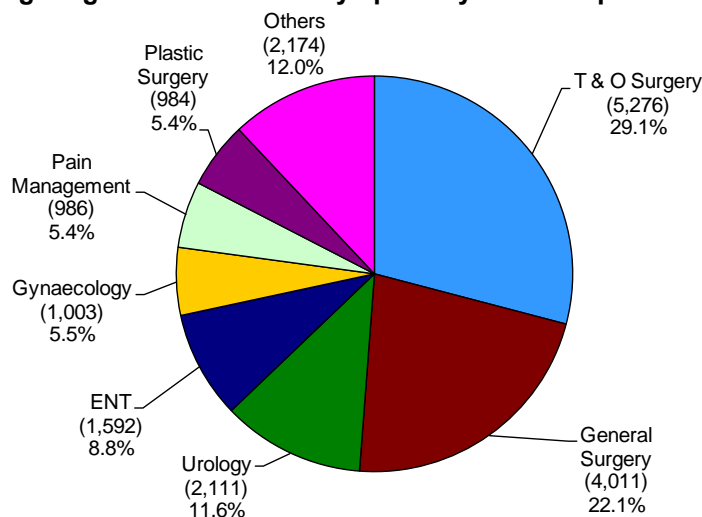
²Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-10

At the end of September 2015, the number of patients waiting more than 26 weeks was 3,360 more than at the end of June 2015 (14,777) and 11,618 more than at the end of September 2014 (6,519).

Patients waiting longer than the 2015/16 maximum waiting time target by Specialty²

A total of 88.0% (15,963) of the 18,137 patients waiting more than 26 weeks were within the seven specialties: T&O Surgery; General Surgery; Urology; ENT; Gynaecology; Pain Management and Plastic Surgery (Figure 8 & Table 2a).

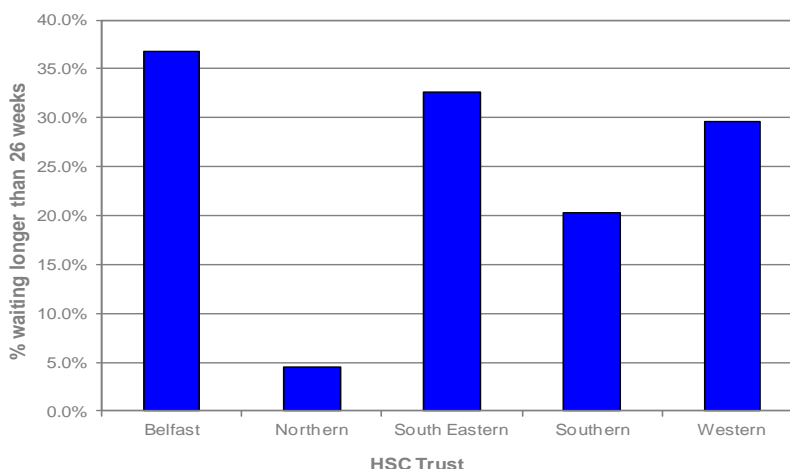
Figure 8: Patients waiting longer than 26 weeks by specialty at 30th September 2015



Proportion of patients waiting longer than the 2015/16 maximum waiting time target by HSC Trust²

The proportion of patients waiting longer than 26 weeks at 30th September 2015 was 36.8% (10,104) in the Belfast HSC Trust, 32.6% (2,614) in the South Eastern HSC Trust, 29.7% (3,237) in the Western HSC Trust, 20.3% (1,856) in the Southern HSC Trust and 4.5% (326) in the Northern HSC Trust (Figure 9 & Table 3b).

Figure 9: Proportion of patients waiting longer than 26 weeks by HSC Trust at 30th September 2015



²Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-10

Completed Inpatient Waits³

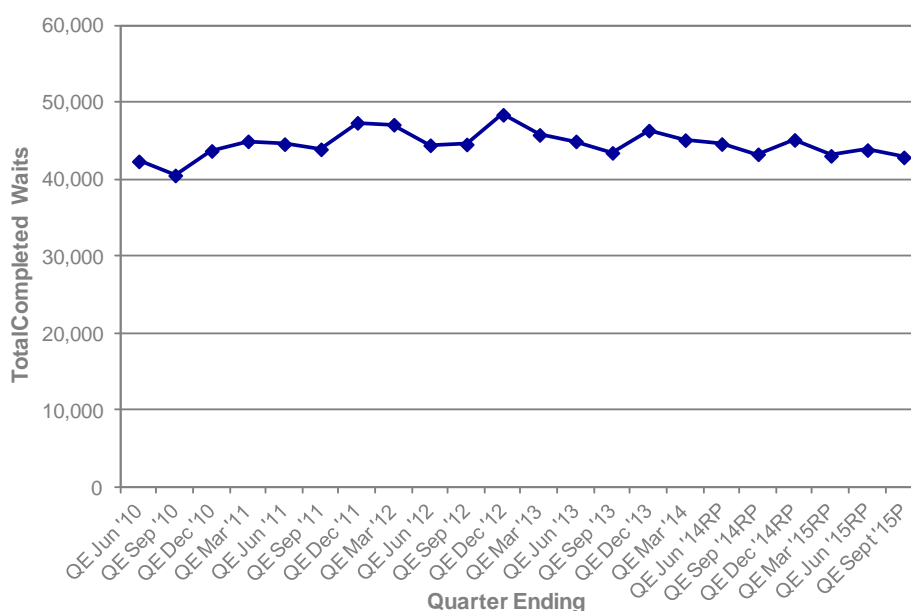
The total number of completed waits each quarter is derived as the total number of elective admissions for inpatient treatment (excluding those admitted for a planned treatment).

Admissions for inpatient treatment in Northern Ireland commissioned by the Health Service can take place in either HSC Hospitals or at an Independent Sector provider.

Completed waits in Health Service Hospitals³

A total of 42,868 patients were admitted to Health Service hospitals in Northern Ireland during the quarter ending 30th September 2015. This is compared with 43,816 admissions in the quarter ending June 2015 (down 2.2%) and 43,267 during the quarter ending September 2014 (down 0.9%) (Table 5).

Figure 10: Total number of completed waits in Health Service Hospitals: Quarterly trends QE March 2010 – QE September 2015



^P Data are currently provisional

^R Data have been revised

Completed Waits in the Independent Sector³

The number of patients receiving inpatient treatment within the Independent Sector has been provided by the Health and Social Care Board, split by commissioning HSC Trust. These data are not National Statistics; however, they have been published to provide users with a comprehensive view of completed inpatient waits during each quarter.

During the quarter ending September 2015, 1,126 patients received inpatient treatment commissioned by the Health Service, within the Independent Sector. This is a decrease on the quarter ending June 2015 (3,113) and decrease on the same quarter in the previous year (5,927) (Table 5). The reduction in the number of patients receiving treatment in the Independent Sector is due to the Health and Social Care Board's decision from July 2014 to halt the transfer of additional patients to the Independent Sector, and from October 2014 to place a hold on treatment of patients already transferred and assessed as requiring non-urgent treatment, except for those awaiting

³Refer to Explanatory Notes 11-13

diagnostics tests and patients awaiting treatment in cardiac surgery and scoliosis (complex spinal surgery). This decision was made as a result of the DHSSPS financial position in 2014/15.

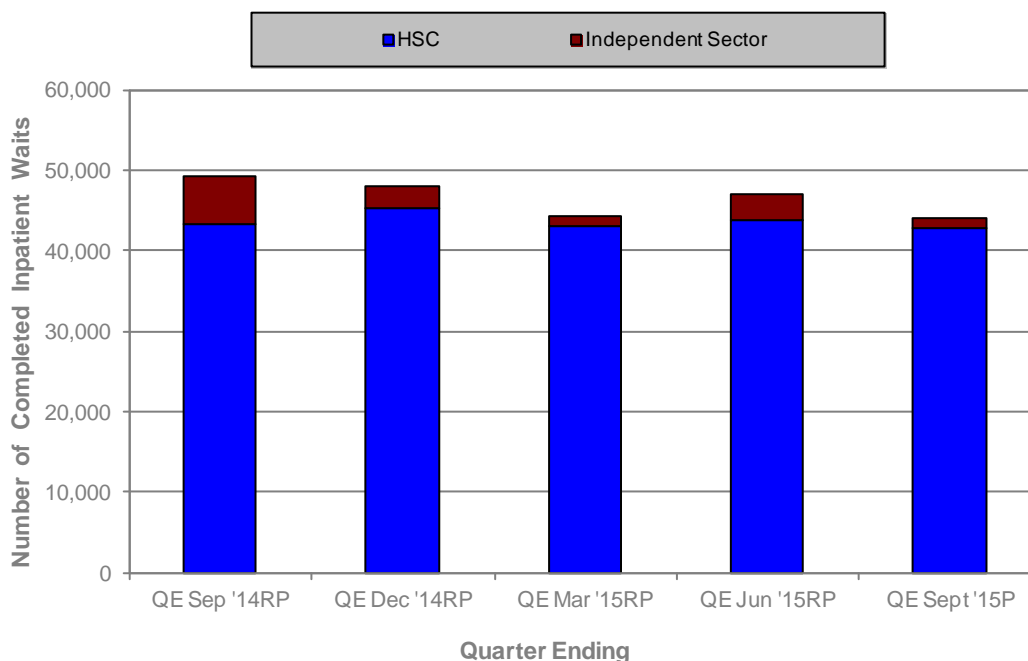
Completed waits commissioned by the Health Service³

The total number of admissions for inpatient treatment commissioned by the Health Service is the number of patients who were admitted to either a Health Service hospital, or within the Independent Sector, commissioned by the Health Service.

When the number of completed inpatient waits within the Independent Sector during the quarter ending September 2015 (1,126) is combined with that for inpatients treated in Health Service hospitals during the same period (42,868), it is estimated that approximately 43,994 inpatients received treatment in Northern Ireland commissioned by the Health Service (Tables 5 & 6). There has been a 6.3% (2,935) decrease in the number of completed inpatient waits commissioned by the Health Service between the quarter ending June 2015 (46,929) and quarter ending September 2015 (43,994) and a decrease of 10.6% (5,200) compared to quarter ending September 2014 (49,194) (Figure 11 & Table 7).

The overall decrease of 2,935 in completed inpatient waits, between the quarter ending June 2015 and the quarter ending September 2015, was made up of a decrease of 948 in completed inpatient waits within the HSC, combined with a decrease of 1,987 in the number of completed inpatient waits within the Independent Sector (Figure 11 & Table 5).

Figure 11: Completed inpatient waits including Independent Sector activity: Quarterly trends QE September 2014 – QE September 2015^P



^P Data are currently provisional

^R Data have been revised

Over one third (35.7%, 15,688) of all completed waits for the quarter ending September 2015 occurred in the Belfast HSC Trust. A further 18.1% (7,959) of completed waits were in the Southern HSC Trust, 16.4% (7,223) in the Western HSC Trust, 15.3% (6,735) in the Northern HSC Trust and 14.5% (6,389) in the South Eastern HSC Trust (Table 6).

³Refer to Explanatory Notes 11-13

Inpatient Admissions

Table 1: Quarterly inpatient waiting lists – 30th September 2015¹

Waiting for:	Number of patients waiting: 30th September 2015	Change compared with end of previous quarter	Change compared with end same quarter – previous year
Ordinary Admissions	19,437	+256	+2048
Day Case Admissions	43,260	+2,314	+8,956
Total Waiting	62,697	+2,570	+11,004

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

¹Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–8

Table 2a: Number of patients waiting for inpatient admission by weeks waiting and specialty – 30th September 2015²

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	3,968	2,432	2,147	905	4,011	13,463
T & O Surgery	855	1,988	2,223	1,042	5,276	11,384
Urology	1,757	721	633	326	2,111	5,548
Gynaecology	1,450	939	900	343	1,003	4,635
Gastroenterology	1,922	1,218	835	254	373	4,602
Ophthalmology	1,512	1,271	901	186	438	4,308
ENT	1,036	697	671	295	1,592	4,291
General Medicine	1,382	607	211	96	518	2,814
Pain Management	520	480	527	254	986	2,767
Cardiology	645	544	440	131	226	1,986
Plastic Surgery	334	233	286	94	984	1,931
Oral Surgery	343	226	169	63	75	876
Dermatology	339	252	162	14	45	812
Paediatric Surgery	106	109	155	91	273	734
GP Other	314	198	61	9	6	588
Rheumatology	122	128	88	0	0	338
Cardiac Surgery	76	84	75	27	51	313
Paediatric Dentistry	70	54	46	8	6	184
Paediatrics	54	44	28	15	42	183
Other	488	198	99	34	121	940
All Specialties	17,293	12,423	10,657	4,187	18,137	62,697

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

²Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–10

Table 2b: Percentage of patients waiting for inpatient admission by weeks waiting and specialty – 30th September 2015²

Specialty	Percentage of Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting				
	0 - 6	>6 - 13	>13 - 21	>21 - 26	>26
General Surgery	29.5%	18.1%	15.9%	6.7%	29.8%
T & O Surgery	7.5%	17.5%	19.5%	9.2%	46.3%
Urology	31.7%	13.0%	11.4%	5.9%	38.0%
Gynaecology	31.3%	20.3%	19.4%	7.4%	21.6%
Gastroenterology	41.8%	26.5%	18.1%	5.5%	8.1%
Ophthalmology	35.1%	29.5%	20.9%	4.3%	10.2%
ENT	24.1%	16.2%	15.6%	6.9%	37.1%
General Medicine	49.1%	21.6%	7.5%	3.4%	18.4%
Pain Management	18.8%	17.3%	19.0%	9.2%	35.6%
Cardiology	32.5%	27.4%	22.2%	6.6%	11.4%
Plastic Surgery	17.3%	12.1%	14.8%	4.9%	51.0%
Oral Surgery	39.2%	25.8%	19.3%	7.2%	8.6%
Dermatology	41.7%	31.0%	20.0%	1.7%	5.5%
Paediatric Surgery	14.4%	14.9%	21.1%	12.4%	37.2%
GP Other	53.4%	33.7%	10.4%	1.5%	1.0%
Rheumatology	36.1%	37.9%	26.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Cardiac Surgery	24.3%	26.8%	24.0%	8.6%	16.3%
Paediatric Dentistry	38.0%	29.3%	25.0%	4.3%	3.3%
Paediatrics	29.5%	24.0%	15.3%	8.2%	23.0%
Other	51.9%	21.1%	10.5%	3.6%	12.9%
All Specialties	27.6%	19.8%	17.0%	6.7%	28.9%

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

²Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–10

Table 3a: Number of patients waiting for inpatient admission by HSC Trust and weeks waiting – 30th September 2015²

HSC Trust	Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting					Total Number of Patients Waiting
	0 - 6	>6 - 13	>13 - 21	>21 - 26	>26	
Belfast	5,318	4,949	5,041	2,049	10,104	27,461
Northern	3,164	2,142	1,253	282	326	7,167
South Eastern	2,345	1,302	1,225	524	2,614	8,010
Southern	3,265	1,891	1,524	611	1,856	9,147
Western	3,201	2,139	1,614	721	3,237	10,912
Total	17,293	12,423	10,657	4,187	18,137	62,697

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

²Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–10

Table 3b: Percentage of patients waiting for inpatient admission by HSC Trust and weeks waiting – 30th September 2015²

HSC Trust	Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting				
	0 - 6	>6 - 13	>13 - 21	>21 - 26	>26
Belfast	19.4%	18.0%	18.4%	7.5%	36.8%
Northern	44.1%	29.9%	17.5%	3.9%	4.5%
South Eastern	29.3%	16.3%	15.3%	6.5%	32.6%
Southern	35.7%	20.7%	16.7%	6.7%	20.3%
Western	29.3%	19.6%	14.8%	6.6%	29.7%
Total	27.6%	19.8%	17.0%	6.7%	28.9%

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

²Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–10

Table 4: Patients waiting longer than 26 weeks for inpatient admission– 30th September 2015²

Waiting for:	Number of patients waiting: 30th September	Change compared with end of previous	Change compared with end same quarter - previous
Ordinary Admissions	8,245	+1,110	+5082
Day Case Admissions	9,892	+2,250	+6536
Total Waiting	18,137	+3,360	+11,618

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

²Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–10

Completed Inpatient Waits

Table 5: Completed inpatient waits: QE June 2011 - QE September 2015³

Quarter	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
A - J 2011	44,583	2,804	47,387
J - S 2011	43,914	1,099	45,013
O - D 2011	47,347	3,795	51,142
J - M 2012	47,106	8,207	55,313
A - M 2011/12	182,950	15,905	198,855
A - J 2012	44,439	5,150	49,589
J - S 2012	44,544	7,595	52,139
O - D 2012	48,390	6,259	54,649
J - M 2013	45,779	8,274	54,053
A - M 2012/13	183,152	27,278	210,430
A - J 2013	44,941	6,685	51,626
J - S 2013	43,451	8,467	51,918
O - D 2013	46,343	6,486	52,829
J - M 2014	45,107	5,272	50,379
A - M 2013/14	179,842	26,910	206,752
A - J 2014 ^R	44,598	6,370	50,968
J - S 2014 ^R	43,267	5,927	49,194
O - D 2014 ^R	45,132	2,826	47,958
J - M 2015 ^R	43,063	1,240	44,303
A - M 2014/15^R	176,060	16,363	192,423
A - J 2015 ^{RP}	43,816	3,113	46,929
J - S 2015 ^P	42,868	1,126	43,994

Source: Hospital Inpatient System & Departmental Return IS1 Part 2

^RData have been revised

^PData are currently provisional

*Not National Statistics

³Refer to Explanatory Notes 11 - 13

Table 6: Completed inpatient waits by HSC Trust including Independent Sector activity – QE September 2015³

HSC Trust	Number of Completed Inpatient Waits within Health Service Hospitals ^P	Number of Completed Inpatient Waits in Independent Sector ^{P*}	Total Number of Completed Inpatient Waits Commissioned by Health Service ^P
Belfast	14,922	766	15,688
Northern	6,680	55	6,735
South Eastern	6,178	211	6,389
Southern	7,905	54	7,959
Western	7,183	40	7,223
Total Treated	42,868	1,126	43,994

Source: Hospital Inpatient System & Departmental Return IS1 Part 2

^PData are currently provisional

*Not National Statistics

³Refer to Explanatory Notes 11 - 13

**Table 7: Completed inpatient waits by HSC Trust including Independent Sector activity:
QE September 2014 - QE September 2015³**

HSC Trust	Total Number of Completed Inpatient Waits Commissioned by Health Service				
	QE September 2014 ^{RP}	QE December 2014 ^{RP}	QE March 2015 ^{RP}	QE June 2015 ^{RP}	QE September 2015 ^P
Belfast	17,591	17,795	15,862	17,384	15,688
Northern	7,701	7,223	6,500	6,559	6,735
South Eastern	7,558	7,168	6,506	6,797	6,389
Southern	7,959	7,747	8,150	7,939	7,959
Western	8,708	8,162	7,308	8,076	7,223
Total	49,517	48,095	44,326	46,755	43,994

Source: Hospital Inpatient System & Departmental Return IS1 part 2

^RData have been revised

^PData are currently provisional

³Refer to Explanatory Notes 11 - 13

Appendix 1: Explanatory Notes

1. The sources for the data contained in this release are the DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset, Hospital Inpatient System Dataset and the Departmental Return IS1 Part 2. These returns collect information from Health and Social Care Trusts and the Health and Social Care Board on a quarterly basis.
2. All of the data contained in the tables are available on a quarterly basis and can be supplied by individual specialty or Provider HSC Trust if this level of detail is required. In addition, quarterly data relating to inpatient waiting times have been published in spreadsheet format (Microsoft Excel), split by HSC Trust, Specialty, Programme of Care and Intended Management of the patient (i.e. Ordinary Admission or Day Case), in order to aid secondary analysis. These data are available at <https://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/publications/northern-ireland-waiting-time-statistics-outpatient-diagnostic-and-inpatient-waiting>
3. Trust based information returns (DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Time Dataset, Hospital Inpatient System Dataset and the Departmental Return IS1) include patients living outside Northern Ireland and privately funded patients waiting for treatment in Health Service hospitals in Northern Ireland.
4. Inpatient waiting list data comprise the number of patients waiting for ordinary admission to hospital and the number of patients waiting for day case treatment.
5. 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). (See explanatory note 7). 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.
6. 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.
7. 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 currently receiving inpatient treatment in hospitals who are included on other waiting lists;
 - Patients who are temporarily suspended from waiting lists.
8. 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.
9. The Ministerial target, for inpatient waiting times, as set out in the Health and Social Care (Commissioning Plan) Direction states that, from April 2015, at least 65% of patients should wait no longer than 13 weeks for inpatient or day case treatment, and no patient should wait longer than 26 weeks for inpatient or day case treatment.

10. For Tables 2a, 2b, 3a, 3b, 4 and Figures 4 - 9, each inpatient waiting timeband 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 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. Patients waiting 'more than 13 weeks' includes all patients in the >13 - 21, >21 – 26, >26 timebands. Patients waiting 'more than 26 weeks' includes all patients in the >26 timeband.
11. The total number of completed inpatient waits within HSC hospitals each quarter is sourced from the Hospital Inpatient System. During the financial year, data from the Hospital Inpatient System will be marked as provisional. This is because information on inpatient admissions continuously improves during the year before being finalised. Consequently, quarterly information from the Hospital Inpatient System, for the most recent financial year, will be revised on a quarterly basis.
12. The number of completed inpatient waits within HSC hospitals each quarter, do not include:
 - Elective planned patients;
 - Emergency patients;
 - Maternity (specialties 510 and 520);
 - Private patients;
 - Amenity patients;
 - Mental Health and Learning Disability patients;
 - Others (including transfers)
13. The numbers of patients that received inpatient treatment, commissioned by the Health Service, in the Independent Sector are provided in Tables 5, 6, 7 and Figures 10 and 11. 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 inpatient waits during each quarter.
14. HIB surveyed data providers during 2011/12 to ascertain the cost of producing, validating and submitting the information required for this publication. This relates to the time taken to generate, validate and submit data, over and above what is already required by their organisation for internal performance management purposes. The annual cost to data providers of compliance with HIB's requirements for this publication, based on HSC salary costs, was £1,670.
15. Figures relating to inpatient waiting times for the quarter ending 31st December 2015 will be released on Thursday 25th February 2016.

Appendix 2: Data in the publication

General guidance on using the data

The data contained in the publication are presented on a quarterly basis. While seasonal impact should be minimal, it is advisable that data for the current quarter be compared with both the previous quarter (to gauge the most recent direction of performance), and the same quarter in the previous year (to assess any seasonal impact).

Number of patients waiting for inpatient admission

Description of data

Data on the number of health service patients who are waiting for inpatient admission at a Health and Social Care (HSC) Trust in Northern Ireland. The term 'inpatient' is used to describe all patients admitted to hospital, both ordinary admissions and day case admissions (see explanatory notes 5 and 6 in Appendix 1 for a description of these terms).

Data Provider

Data are sourced directly from the Patient Administration System, via a facility known as the HSC Data Warehouse, at each HSC Trust.

Data Quality Assessment

Data are derived from a single administrative system. Data providers have been given in-depth guidance providing instructions for recording, collection and submission of data. In addition, variance checks are employed as an integral part of the production process with large discrepancies between the current quarter and both the previous quarter, and the corresponding quarter in the previous year, being queried with the data provider.

Guidance on using data

- Number of patients waiting for inpatient admission – this is the number of inpatients who are waiting for inpatient surgery following a 'decision to admit' being taken by their consultant. It does not include patients waiting for a planned procedure, regular day and night attenders, patients currently in hospital, maternity patients and patients who are currently suspended. Data relate to the numbers who have still to be admitted at the end of each quarter and provide users with an indication of demand for HSC inpatient services. It should not be used to estimate the numbers who have been admitted for an inpatient procedure (completed inpatient waits).
- Lengths of time patients are waiting for inpatient admission – this relates to the lengths of time patients have been waiting for inpatient admission at the end of the relevant quarter. These are sometimes referred to as current waiters. Explanatory note 8, in Appendix 1, explains how these waiting times are measured. This information relates to how long patients are waiting for inpatient admission, not the length of time they waited before being admitted, also known as completed waits. Data on the total length of time patients waited for admission, are not collected.
- An assessment of both the total number waiting and the length of time patients are waiting, when compared with equivalent data for previous quarters, allow users to gauge the disparity between demand for inpatient services and the overall capacity for providing these services, both within the HSC and Independent Sector providers.
- Inpatient waiting times by HSC Trust – patients will be waiting for admission to a specific HSC Trust. Patients are reported by the HSC Trusts responsible for the service that will be treating the patient. This is not necessarily the nearest HSC Trust to the patient's residence. Certain clinical services may not be provided at a patient's local HSC Trust, and in the case of more complex procedures, such as cardiac surgery, services are provided at a single regional centre for Northern Ireland. In some cases, the HSC Trust at which the patient is waiting may not be the actual facility

at which the procedure will be performed, as a consultant from one HSC Trust may provide a 'visiting' service at another HSC Trust. Users should therefore be cautious in how they use these data. For example, they should not be used to calculate the total number of patients waiting per head of the population residing within each Trust area. Neither should the actual number of patients waiting longer than the recommended waiting time be used as indicator of poor performance within an individual HSC Trust. Users who require an indication of the latter are advised to refer to the commentary section of the publication which provides an indication of the percentage of total waiters that have been waiting over the maximum recommended waiting times, within each HSC Trust.

- Inpatient waiting times by specialty – a consultant will decide to admit a patient for a specific clinical procedure. Following the decision to admit being taken, the patient will be added to the waiting list for a procedure, usually to be undertaken by the consultant who assessed the patient. Each consultant employed by the HSC Trust will have an allocated specialty of employment, and it will be this specialty against which the patient's waiting time will be reported. These data provide a useful insight into the differences in both demand for certain types of medical procedures, and also the existing capacity available to meet these demands.

Number of patients admitted for an inpatient procedure (completed inpatient waits)

Description of data

Data on the number of health service patients who were admitted for inpatient admission at either a HSC Trust, or who had been transferred by a HSC Trust for treatment by an Independent Sector provider, in Northern Ireland. The term 'inpatient' is used to describe all patients admitted to hospital, both ordinary admissions and day case admission (see explanatory notes 5 and 6 in Appendix 1 for a description of these terms). These data are also known as completed inpatient waits. (See explanatory note 12 for exclusions).

Data Provider

Data on patients treated within HSC Trusts are sourced directly from the Patient Administration System, via a facility known as the HSC Data Warehouse, at each HSC Trust. Data on HSC patients treated by an Independent Sector provider are provided on the Departmental Return IS1 Part 2 by the HSC Board, which is responsible for the regional commissioning of independent sector provision.

Data Quality Assessment

Data are derived from a range of administrative systems. For data on completed inpatient waits within HSC Trusts, data providers have been given in-depth guidance providing instructions for recording, collection and submission of data. In addition, variance checks are employed as an integral part of the production process with large discrepancies between the current quarter and both the previous quarter, and the corresponding quarter in the previous year, being queried with the data provider. HSC Trusts are provided with in-depth guidance, detailing how they should record details of patients transferred to the Independent Sector for assessment, on their Patient Administrative System. Following assessment, the Independent Sector provider informs the transferring HSC Trust who records the patient's inpatient wait as being complete. These records are then validated against financial invoices received by the HSC Trust from the Independent Sector provider for each transferred patient. HSC Trusts then submit these data to the HSC Board. These are not categorised as National Statistics.

Guidance on using data

- Number of HSC patients admitted for an inpatient procedure at a HSC hospital – these data relate to the number of patients who were admitted for an inpatient procedure within the HSC during each quarter and include both ordinary admissions and day case admissions. Health Service patients will be admitted for an inpatient procedure at a HSC hospital, at either a routinely provided inpatient service, or a more irregular inpatient service provided by the HSC Trust, in addition to the routine services. These latter services (sometimes referred to as 'Waiting List Initiatives') are often provided in response to a specific need, such as increases in both the number

of patients waiting and lengths of time waiting. Data on the number of HSC patients admitted for an inpatient procedure at a HSC hospital provide users with a good indication of the capacity available within the HSC in treating inpatients.

- Number of HSC patients admitted for an inpatient procedure with an Independent Sector provider – these data relate to the number of Health Service patients who were admitted for an inpatient procedure provided by the Independent Sector. Independent Sector provision is introduced when the demand for certain types of inpatient service is greater than the capacity within HSC hospitals. When this situation results in increases in both the number of patients waiting and the length of time waiting, patients may be admitted for a procedure undertaken by an Independent Sector provider. The cost of treating these patients is met by the transferring HSC Trust, who retains responsibility for the patients waiting time. Data on the number of HSC patients admitted for an inpatient procedure with an Independent Sector provider, provide users with a good indication of demand for inpatient services within the HSC exceeding available capacity.

- Total number of HSC patients admitted for an inpatient procedure – this relates to the total number of HSC patients admitted for an inpatient procedure irrespective of the location or provider of the treatment. This provides users with an indication of the number of patients who would previously have been on the waiting list but had been treated during the latest quarter. Data on the total number of inpatients admitted allow users to assess the impact that actual admissions during the quarter have had upon the total number of patients waiting for inpatient admission at the end of the quarter.

Further information on Inpatient Waiting Times in Northern Ireland is available from:

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