

INFORMATION
ANALYSIS
DIRECTORATE



Northern Ireland Waiting Time Statistics: Diagnostic Waiting Times Quarter Ending June 2015



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

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Reader Information

Purpose	This publication presents information on waiting times for diagnostic services in Northern Ireland at 30 th June 2015 and diagnostic reporting times during the quarter ending 30 th June 2015. It details information on the number of patients waiting, and length of time waiting, for diagnostic services, as well as diagnostic reporting times at Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts in Northern Ireland. This information reports on performance against the 2015/16 Ministerial diagnostic target which states that, from April 2015, no patient should wait longer than nine weeks for a diagnostic test and all urgent diagnostic tests should be reported on within 2 days of the test being undertaken. Data is presented by HSC Trust, diagnostic service and time band.
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Target audience	DHSSPS, Chief Executives of the HSC Board and Trusts in Northern Ireland, health care professionals, academics, Health & Social Care stakeholders, the media and general public.
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Key Points

- At 30th June 2015, there were 89,684 patients waiting for a diagnostic service at HSC Trusts in Northern Ireland. This represents an increase of 11.2% (9,041) compared with the end of March 2015 and an increase of 23.0% (16,745) compared to the end of June 2014 (Figure 1 & Table 1a).
- Of the 89,684 patients waiting, 52.0% (46,661) were waiting for an Imaging Service, 29.2% (26,163) were waiting for a Physiological Measurement test and 18.8% (16,860) were waiting for a Day Case Endoscopy (Figure 2 & Table 1b).
- Of the 89,684 patients waiting for a diagnostic service, approximately 1 in 5 were waiting for a Non-obstetric Ultrasound (19,475, 21.7%) (Figure 3 & Table 3).
- There were 30,061 (33.5%) patients waiting longer than 9 weeks for a diagnostic service at the end of June 2015, an increase of 7,040 (30.6%) on the corresponding number at the end of the previous quarter (23,021), and more than twice the number (15,704 more) on 30th June 2014 (14,357) (Figure 6 & Tables 2, 3 & 4).
- There were 134,335 completed diagnostic reports verified and dispatched to the referring clinician in Northern Ireland during the quarter ending June 2015, a decrease of 1.9% (2,586) on the 136,921 reported in the previous quarter, and a decrease of 0.8% (1,042) on the same quarter last year (135,377) (Figure 11 & Table 5).
- In Northern Ireland as a whole, 89.1% of all urgent diagnostic tests were reported on within 2 days in the quarter ending June 2015, compared to 90.3% in the previous quarter and 91.8% for the same quarter last year (Figure 16 & Tables 10 & 11).
- During the quarter ending June 2015, 94.9% of routine diagnostic tests were reported on within 2 weeks and 99.0% were reported on within 4 weeks (Figure 16 & Tables 10 & 11).

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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: <http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/statistics/publications-statistics.htm>

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Technical Notes

This statistics release is part of a quarterly data series presenting information on waiting times and reporting times for diagnostic services at HSC Trusts in Northern Ireland.

Data Collection

The information presented in this bulletin derives from a series of statistical returns (listed below) provided by HSC Trusts and the HSC Board.

Statutory Data Return 1 (SDR1), Parts 1 and 2, and Diagnostic Reporting Turnaround Time Return (DRTT)

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:

<http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/statistics/hospital/waitingtimes/waitingtimes-diagnostic.htm>

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 between 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 cases, the percentage is rounded to zero or 100%.

Data Quality

Information provided by HSC Trusts on the SDR1 Part 1 return has been validated and quality assured by HSC Trusts prior to publication. HSC Trusts are given a set period of time to submit the information to HIB. Following submission, HIB perform a series of checks to verify that information is consistent both within and across returns. 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, returns may be amended and/or re-submitted.

The information contained within this publication is currently under review. The Department is looking at how information on diagnostic waiting and reporting times is sourced and the validation procedures that are carried out. All quality issues identified as part of this review are being addressed on an ongoing basis.

The information contained within this publication are not currently National Statistics.

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 patient 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 and ad hoc queries from the public.

An additional aim of this publication is to make waiting times information publicly available to those people using health services in Northern Ireland.

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/statistical-work-areas/diagnostics-waiting-times-and-activity/>

Scotland

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

Wales

<http://wales.gov.uk/statistics-and-research/nhs-diagnostic-therapy-service-waiting-times/?lang=en>

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 waiting times for diagnostic services and the diagnostic reporting turnaround times at HSC Trusts in Northern Ireland at 30th June 2015 and during the quarter ending (QE) June 2015, respectively.

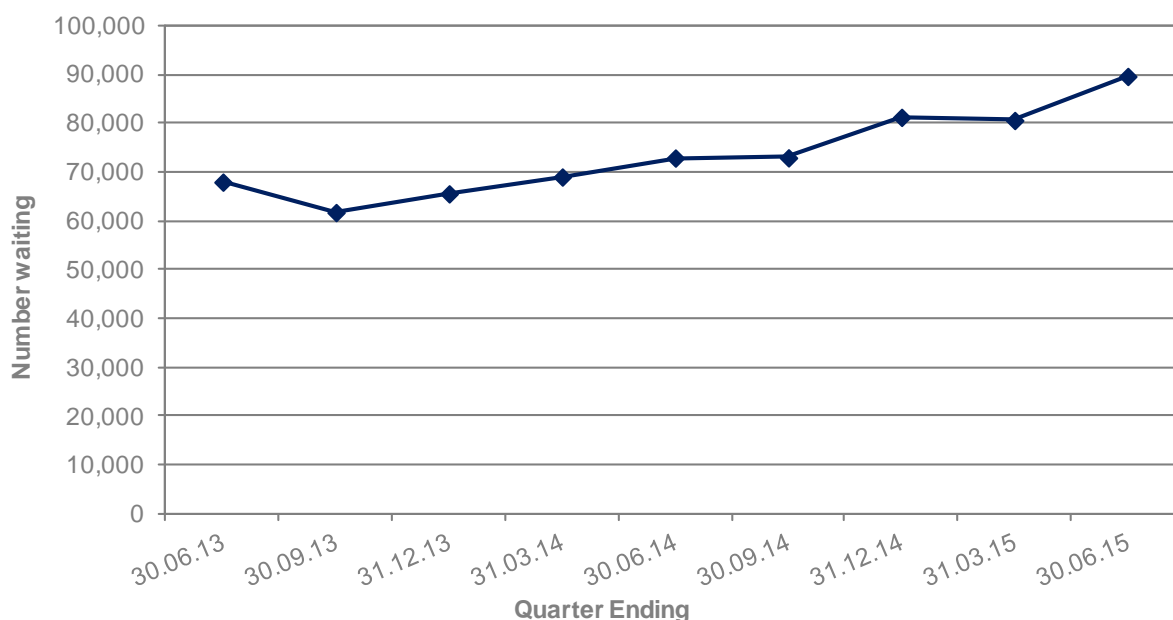
Waiting Times for Diagnostic Services

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.

Total patients waiting¹

The number of patients waiting for a diagnostic service at hospitals in Northern Ireland at 30th June 2015 was 89,684. This represents an increase of 9,041 (11.2%) on the number waiting at 31st March 2015 (80,643) and 16,745 (23.0%) more than at 30th June 2014 (72,939) (Figure 1 & Table 1a).

Figure 1: Total number of patients waiting: Quarterly trends 30th June 2013 to 30th June 2015

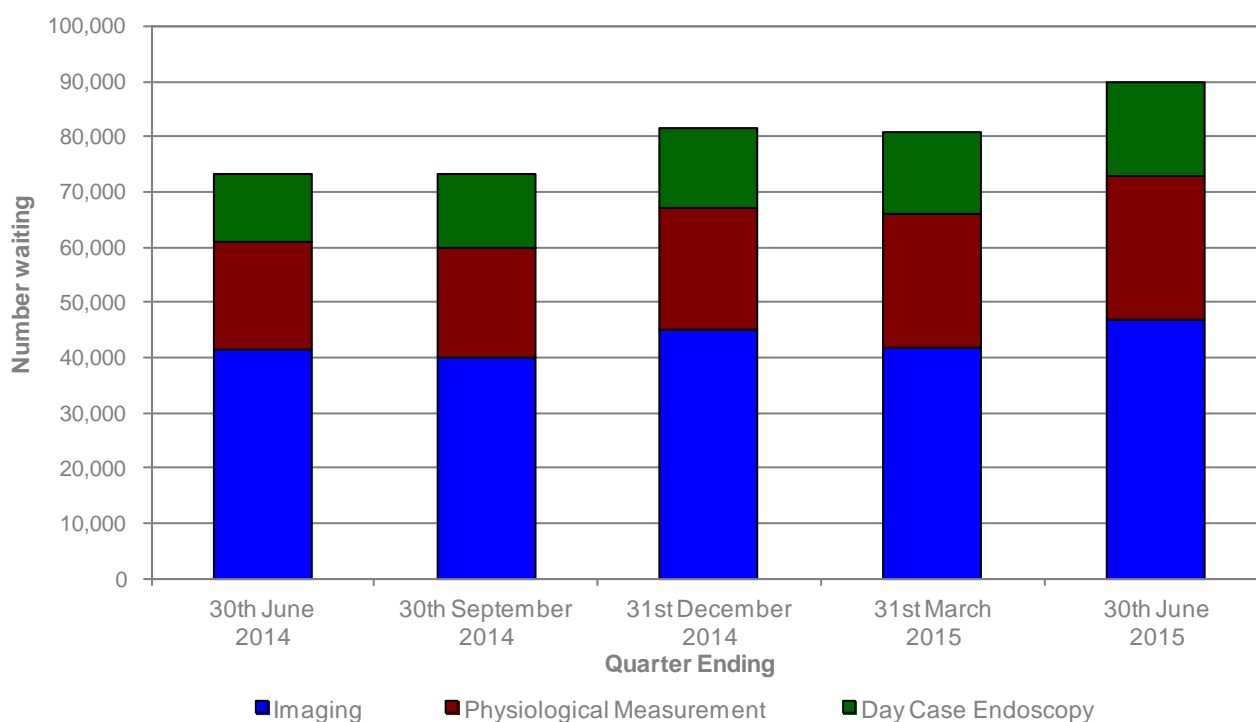


¹ Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-10 & 17

Total patients waiting by Diagnostic category¹

Of the 89,684 patients waiting, 52.0% (46,661) were waiting for an Imaging Service, 29.2% (26,163) were waiting for a Physiological Measurement test and 18.8% (16,860) were waiting for a Day Case Endoscopy (Figure 2 & Table 1b).

Figure 2: Total number of patients waiting by category of service: Quarterly trends 30th June 2014 to 30th June 2015



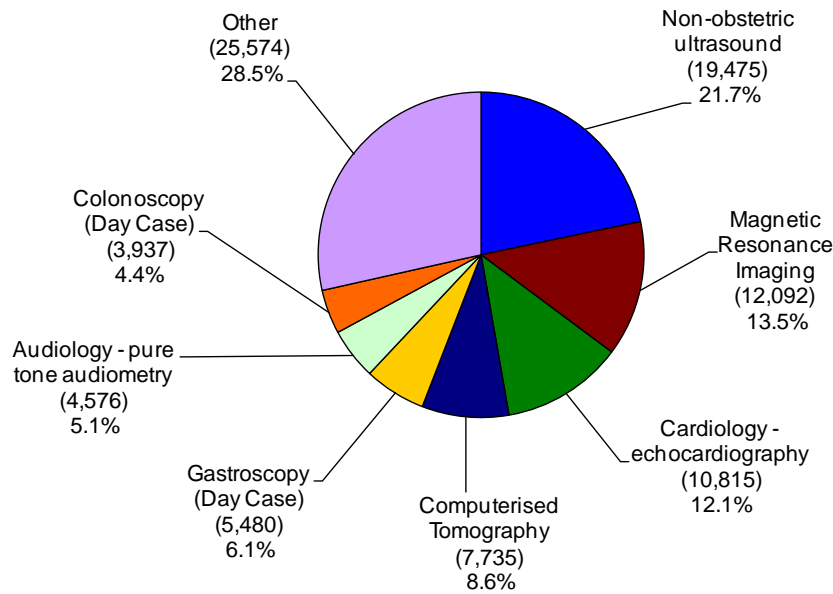
Total patients waiting by Diagnostic service²

Almost three-quarters (71.5%, 64,110) of the X patients waiting for a diagnostic service were within one of the following seven diagnostic services: Non-obstetric Ultrasound; Magnetic Resonance Imaging; Echocardiography; Computerised Tomography; Gastroscopy (Day Case); Pure Tone Audiometry and Colonoscopy (Day Case) (Figure 3 & Table 3).

¹ Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-10 & 17

² Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-11 & 17

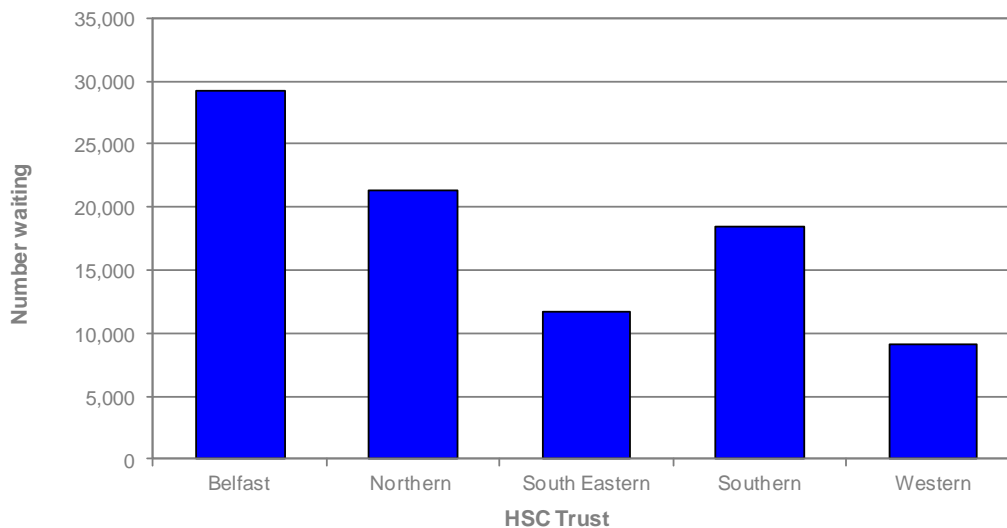
Figure 3: Total number of patients waiting by diagnostic service at 30th June 2015



Total patients waiting by HSC Trust²

Just under a third (32.6%, 29,205) of patients waiting for a diagnostic service were waiting in the Belfast HSC Trust. A further 23.7% (21,271) were waiting in the Northern HSC Trust, 20.6% (18,435) in the Southern HSC Trust, 13.0% (11,684) in the South Eastern HSC Trust and 10.1% (9,089) in the Western HSC Trust (Figure 4 & Table 4).

Figure 4: Total number of patients waiting by HSC Trust at 30th June 2015



Data users should be aware that many diagnostic services are not provided at each of the five HSC Trusts in Northern Ireland. In this situation, 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.

² Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-11 & 17

Performance against the 2015/16 maximum waiting time target³

The 2015/16 Ministerial diagnostic waiting time target states that, from April 2015, no patient should wait longer than nine weeks for a diagnostic test.

Figure 5: HSC Trust performance against the 2015/16 waiting time target for diagnostic tests

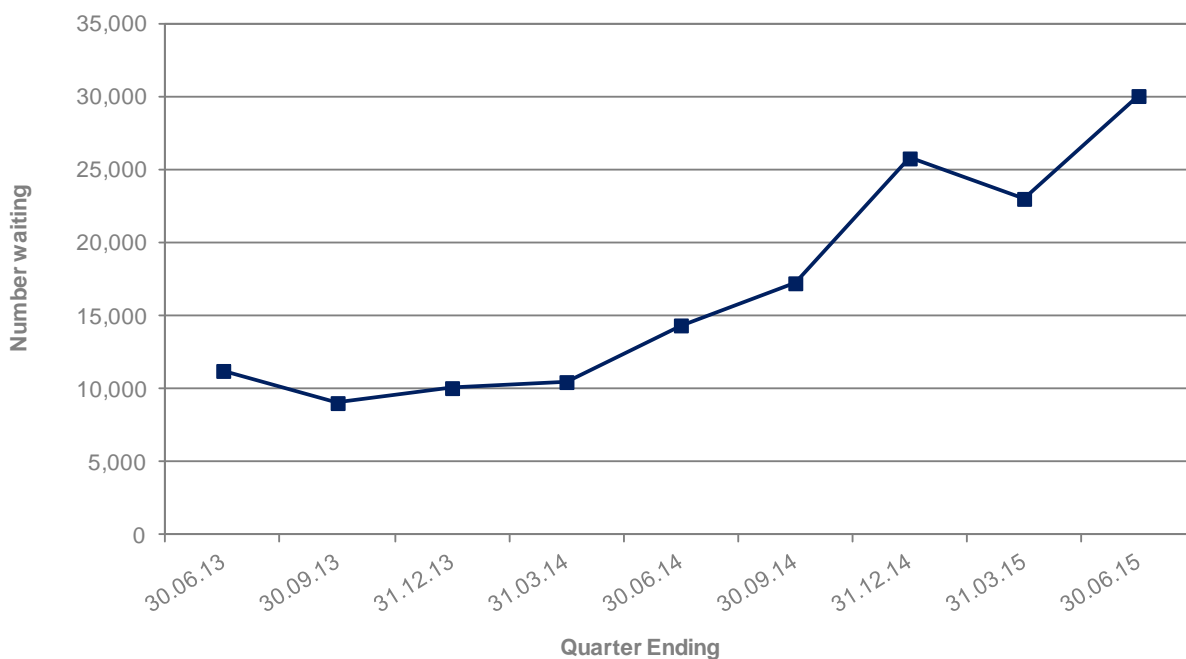
HSC Trust	Target Achieved?
	No patient waiting longer than nine weeks
Belfast	No
Northern	No
South Eastern	No
Southern	No
Western	No
Northern Ireland	No

Number of patients waiting longer than the 2015/16 maximum waiting time target

At the end of June 2015, Northern Ireland did not meet this target, nor did any of the individual Trusts (Table 4 & Figure 5).

At 30th June 2015, there were 30,061 (33.5%) patients waiting longer than 9 weeks for a diagnostic test. This represents an increase of 7,040 (30.6%) on 31st March 2015 (23,021), and more than twice the number waiting (15,704 more) than at 30th June 2014 (14,357) (Figure 6 & Table 2).

Figure 6: Number of patients waiting longer than 9 weeks: Quarterly trends 30th June 2013 to 30th June 2015

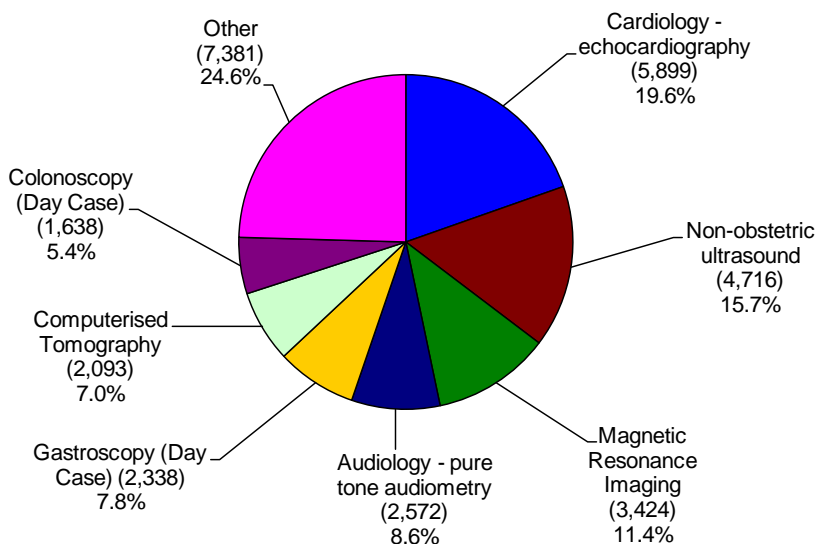


³ Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-12, 15 & 17

Patients waiting longer than the 2015/16 maximum waiting time target by Diagnostic service³

Over three-quarters (75.4%, 22,680) of the 30,061 patients waiting more than 9 weeks were waiting for one of the following seven diagnostic services: Echocardiography; Non-obstetric Ultrasound; Magnetic Resonance Imaging; Pure Tone Audiometry; Gastroscopy (Day Case); Computerised Tomography and Colonoscopy (Day Case) (Figure 7 & Table 3).

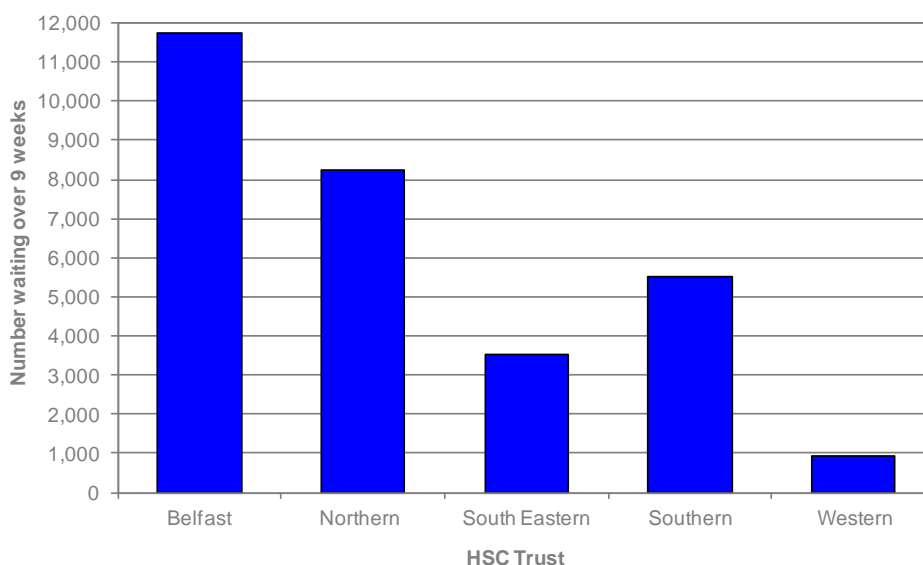
Figure 7: Number of patients waiting longer than 9 weeks by diagnostic service at 30th June 2015



Patients waiting longer than the 2015/16 maximum waiting time target by HSC Trust³

Of the 30,061 patients waiting longer than 9 weeks for a diagnostic service, 39.1% (11,755) were waiting in the Belfast HSC Trust, 27.5% (8,259) in the Northern HSC Trust, 18.4% (5,523) in the Southern HSC Trust, 11.8% (3,559) in the South Eastern HSC Trust, and 3.2% (965) in the Western HSC Trust (Figure 8 & Table 4).

Figure 8: Number of patients waiting longer than 9 weeks by HSC Trust at 30th June 2015

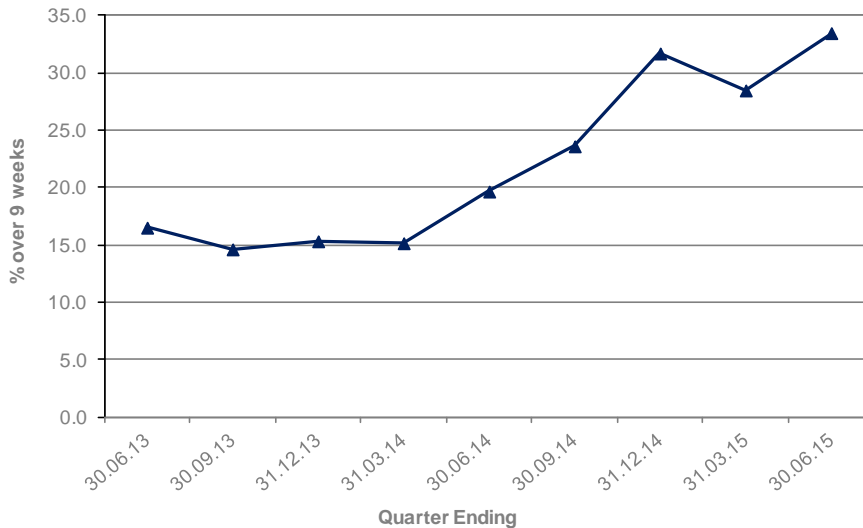


³ Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-12, 15 & 17

Proportion of patients waiting longer than the 2015/16 maximum waiting time target³

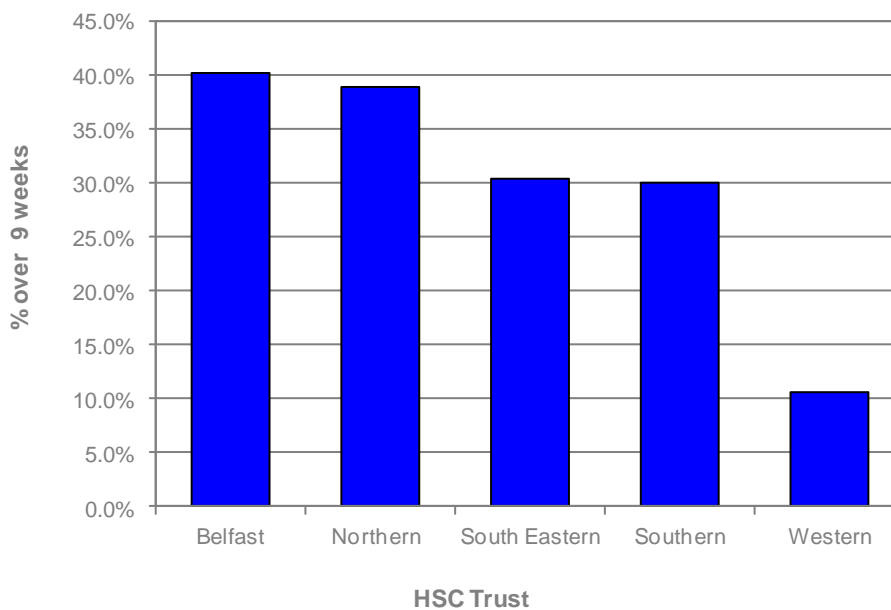
At the end of June 2015, 33.5% (30,061) of patients were waiting more than 9 weeks for a diagnostic service, compared with 28.5% (23,021) at the end of March 2015 and 19.7% (14,357) at the end of June 2014 (Figure 9 & Tables 1a & 2).

Figure 9: Proportion of patients waiting longer than 9 weeks: Quarterly trends 30th June 2013 to 30th June 2015



At 30th June 2015, 40.2% (11,755 out of 29,205) of patients in the Belfast HSC Trust were waiting longer than 9 weeks for a diagnostic service. The comparable proportion in the Northern HSC Trust was 38.8% (8,259 out of 21,271), with 30.5% (3,559 out of 11,684) in the South Eastern HSC Trust, 30.0% (5,523 out of 18,435) in the Southern HSC Trust and 10.6% (965 out of 9,089) in the Western HSC Trust (Figure 10 & Table 4).

Figure 10: Proportion of patients waiting longer than 9 weeks in each HSC Trust at 30th June 2015



³ Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-12, 15 & 17

Diagnostic Reporting Times

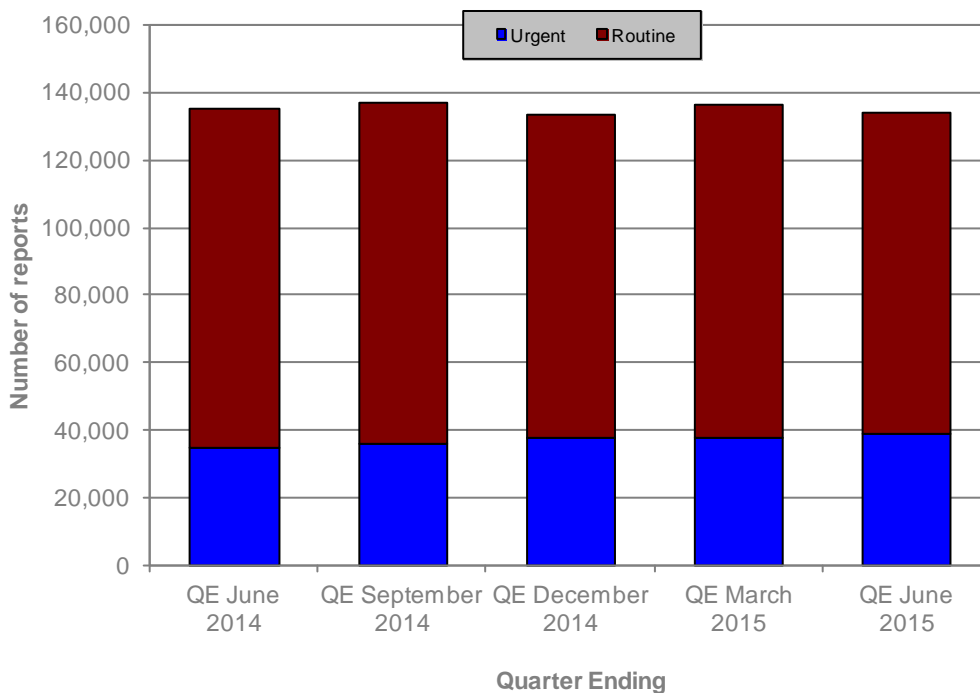
The diagnostic reporting turnaround time is the length of time between the diagnostic test being undertaken and the results being verified and dispatched to the referring clinician in Northern Ireland.

Diagnostic reporting turnaround times relate only to a selected subset of Imaging and Physiological Measurement tests (See explanatory note 14). Day case endoscopies are reported on the day of the test and as such are not included.

Total completed diagnostic reports⁴

A total of 134,335 diagnostic reports were verified and dispatched to the referring clinician in Northern Ireland during the quarter ending June 2015. This represents a decrease of 2,586 (1.9%) on the number of completed reports during the quarter ending March 2015 (136,921), and a decrease of 1,042 (0.8%) on the number completed during the quarter ending June 2014 (135,377) (Figure 11 & Table 5).

Figure 11: Number of completed diagnostic reports by priority: Quarterly trends QE June 2014 – QE June 2015

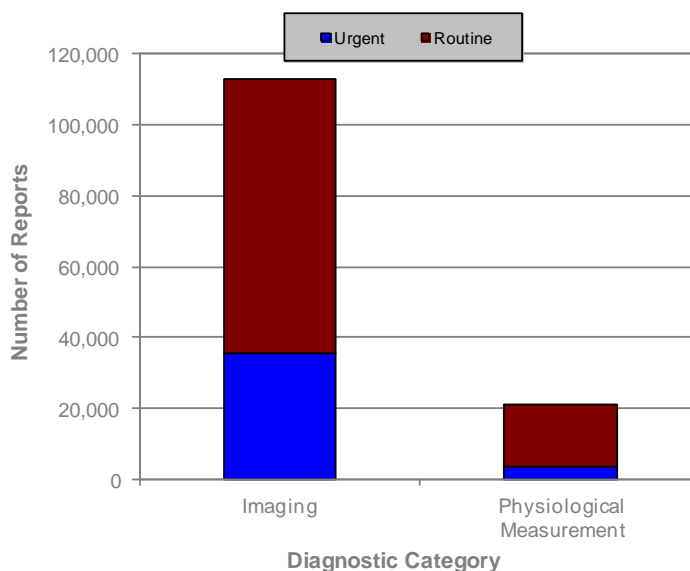


⁴ Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-5, 13-15 & 18-20

Diagnostic reports by diagnostic category⁴

Of the 134,335 completed diagnostic test reports, 113,158 (84.2%) were reporting on an Imaging test and 21,177 (15.8%) were reporting on a Physiological Measurement test (Figure 12 & Tables 6 & 7).

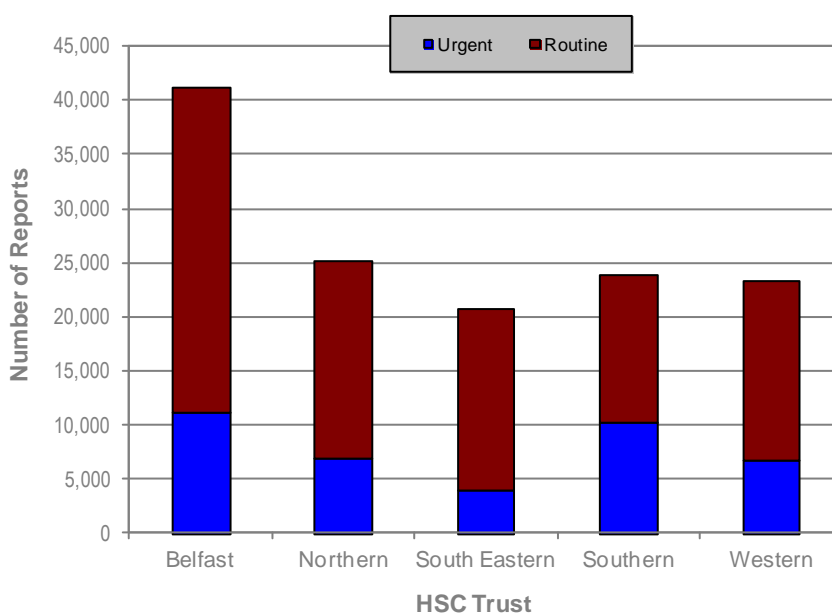
Figure 12: Number of completed diagnostic reports by category and priority during QE June 2015



Diagnostic reports by HSC Trust⁴

A total of 30.7% (41,226) diagnostic reports were completed in the Belfast HSC Trust, with 18.8% (25,224) completed in the Northern HSC Trust, 17.7% (23,843) in the Southern HSC Trust, 17.4% (23,392) in the Western HSC Trust and 15.4% (20,650) in the South Eastern HSC Trust (Figure 13 & Tables 8 & 9).

Figure 13: Number of completed diagnostic reports by HSC Trust and priority during QE June 2015



⁴ Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-5, 13-15 & 18-20

2015/16 Diagnostic reporting time target⁵

The Ministerial target for diagnostic reporting times states that, from April 2015, all urgent diagnostic tests should be reported on within two days of the test being undertaken. This means that 100% of urgent diagnostic tests subject to the target should be reported on within two days.

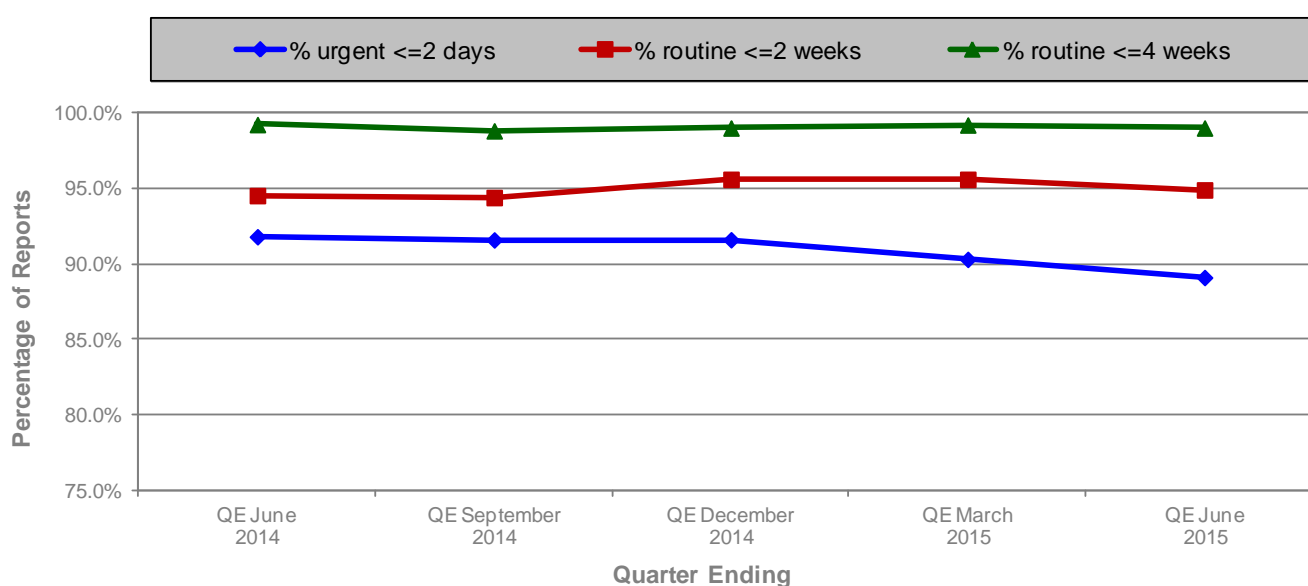
Figure 14: HSC Trust performance against the 2015/16 reporting time target

HSC Trust	Target Achieved?
	Ministerial Target: All urgent diagnostic tests reported on within 2 days
Belfast	No
Northern	No
South Eastern	No
Southern	No
Western	No
Northern Ireland	No

During the quarter ending June 2015, Northern Ireland as whole did not meet this target, nor did any of the individual Trusts (Figure 14).

Of the 39,047 urgent diagnostic tests reported on during the quarter ending June 2015, 89.1% (34,805) were reported on within 2 days. This is a decrease of 1.2 percentage points compared with the previous quarter (90.3%) (Figure 15 & Table 11). Compared with the same quarter in the previous year, the percentage of urgent diagnostic tests reported on within two days has decreased by 2.7 percentage point (91.8%). (Figure 15 & Table 11).

Figure 15: Percentage of diagnostic tests reported within 2 days/2weeks/4weeks: Quarterly trends QE June 2014 - QE June 2015



⁵ Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-5, 13-16 & 18-20

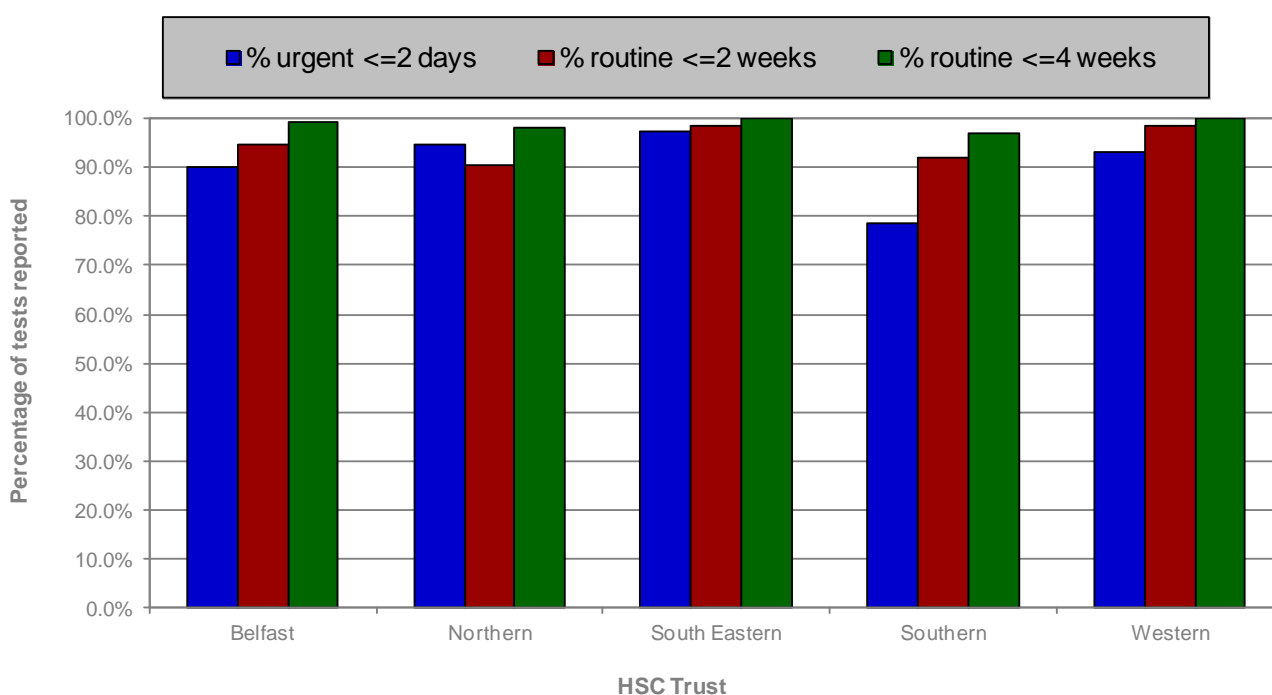
Performance against target by Diagnostic category⁵

Of the 39,047 urgent diagnostic tests reported on during the quarter ending June 2015, 35,471 were imaging and 3,576 were physiological measurement. A total of 88.5% of urgent imaging tests were reported on within 2 days, compared to 95.7% of urgent physiological measurement tests (Table 6).

Performance against target across Trusts⁵

Although no Trust managed to report on 100% of urgent diagnostic tests within 2 days, all Trusts did manage to report on at least 78.7%, with the South Eastern HSC Trust reporting on 97.3% within 2 days (Figure 16 & Table 10).

Figure 16: Percentage of diagnostic tests reported within 2 days/2weeks/4weeks by HSC Trust during QE June 2015



⁵ Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-5, 13-16 & 18-20

2015/16 Diagnostic reporting time indicators of performance⁶

The 2015/16 Ministerial indicators of performance for diagnostic reporting times refer to (i) the percentage of routine diagnostic tests reported on within 2 weeks of the test being undertaken, and (ii) the percentage of routine diagnostic tests reported on within 4 weeks of the test being undertaken.

During the quarter ending June 2015, there were a total of 95,288 completed routine diagnostic tests, of which 90,412 (94.9%) were reported on within two weeks (Table 7).

A further 3,893 (4.1%) routine tests were reported on within two to four weeks, giving a total of 94,305 (99.0%) reported on within four weeks. It took more than four weeks to report on 983 (1.0%) of these routine diagnostic tests (Tables 7 & 9).

Compared with the previous quarter, the percentage of routine diagnostic tests reported on within two weeks decreased by 0.7 percentage points.

Compared with the same quarter in the previous year, the percentage of routine diagnostic tests reported on within two weeks increased by 0.4 percentage points, from 94.5% to 94.9% (Figure 15 & Table 11).

The percentage of routine diagnostic tests reported on within four weeks decreased by both 0.2 percentage points when compared with the previous quarter, and to the same quarter in the previous year, from 99.2% to 99.0%. (Figure 15 & Table 11).

Indicators of performance by Diagnostic category⁶

Of the 95,288 routine diagnostic tests reported on during the quarter ending June 2015, 77,687 were imaging, while 17,601 were physiological measurement. A total of 94.7% of routine imaging tests were reported on within 2 weeks, compared to 95.7% of routine physiological measurement tests (Table 7).

A total of 98.8% of routine imaging tests were reported on within 4 weeks, compared to 99.6% of routine physiological measurement tests (Table 7).

Indicators of performance by Trust⁶

All Trusts managed to report on at least 90.6% of routine diagnostic tests within two weeks, with the South Eastern Trust reporting on 98.6% of routine diagnostic tests within two weeks. All Trusts managed to report on at least 98.2% of routine diagnostic tests within four weeks (Figure 16 & Table 10).

⁶ Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-5, 13-15 & 17-20

Waiting times for Diagnostic Tests

Table 1a: Number of patients waiting for a diagnostic service – 30th June 2015¹

Total Waiting :	Number of patients waiting: 30th June 2015	Change compared with the end of the previous quarter	Change compared with the same quarter previous year
16 Selected Services*	74,761	+7,970	+14,242
Other Services	14,923	+1,071	+2,503
Total	89,684	+9,041	+16,745

Source: Departmental Return SDR 1 (Parts 1 & 2)

¹Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-10 & 17

* Refer specifically to Explanatory Note 2

Table 1b: Number of patients waiting for a diagnostic service by category – 30th June 2015¹

Diagnostic Service Category	Number of patients waiting for one of the 16 selected services - 30th June 2015*	Number of patients waiting for one of the other diagnostic services - 30th June 2015	Total waiting for a diagnostic service - 30th June 2015
Imaging (excluding Interventional Imaging)	41,726	4,935	46,661
Physiological Measurement	19,228	6,935	26,163
Endoscopy (Day Case)	13,807	3,053	16,860
Total waiting for diagnostic tests	74,761	14,923	89,684

Source: Departmental Return SDR 1 (Parts 1 & 2)

¹Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-11 & 17

* Refer specifically to Explanatory Note 2

Table 2: Number of patients waiting longer than 9 weeks for a diagnostic service – 30th June 2015³

Waiting more than 9 weeks for:	Number of patients waiting: 30th June 2015	Change compared with the end of the previous quarter	Change compared with the same quarter previous year
16 Selected Services*	26,905	+6,850	+14,538
Other Services	3,156	+190	+1,166
Total	30,061	+7,040	+15,704

Source: Departmental Return SDR 1 (Parts 1 & 2)

³Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-12, 15 & 17

* Refer specifically to Explanatory Note 2

Table 3: Number of patients waiting for a diagnostic service, by type of service and weeks waiting – 30th June 2015³

Diagnostic Test	Patients Waiting for a Diagnostic Test by Weeks						Total Waiting
	0 - 6	>6 - 9	>9 - 13	>13 - 21	>21 - 26	>26	
Non-obstetric ultrasound	11,461	3,298	2,545	1,889	275	7	19,475
Magnetic Resonance Imaging	6,709	1,959	1,741	908	233	542	12,092
Cardiology - echocardiography	3,674	1,242	1,172	1,838	888	2,001	10,815
Computerised Tomography	4,670	972	818	993	236	46	7,735
Gastroscopy (Day Case)	2,316	826	782	1,020	241	295	5,480
Audiology - pure tone audiometry	1,456	548	423	694	367	1,088	4,576
Colonoscopy (Day Case)	1,775	524	400	577	214	447	3,937
Plain Film Xrays	3,521	197	56	53	1	0	3,828
Ambulatory ECG monitoring (24 hr holter)	1,873	472	270	109	3	0	2,727
Cystoscopy (Day Case)	899	266	231	306	138	618	2,458
Flexi sigmoidoscopy (Day Case)	783	361	217	341	117	113	1,932
DEXA Scan	1,066	215	293	351	1	0	1,926
Neurophysiology - peripheral neurophysiology	610	332	336	188	9	8	1,483
Arthroscopy	108	117	126	234	119	460	1,164
Cardiology - perfusion studies	297	131	130	136	49	276	1,019
Fluroscopy	676	144	68	61	10	0	959
Hysteroscopy	437	103	81	101	40	60	822
Exercise tolerance testing	609	96	27	8	15	16	771
Urodynamics - pressures and flows	283	126	80	126	52	45	712
Respiratory physiology - sleep studies	496	66	18	35	7	1	623
Other	3,292	617	300	345	135	461	5,150
Total waiting for diagnostic tests	47,011	12,612	10,114	10,313	3,150	6,484	89,684

Source: Departmental Return SDR 1 (Parts 1 & 2)

³Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-12, 15 & 17

Table 4: Number of patients waiting for a diagnostic service, by HSC Trust – 30th June 2015³

HSC Trust	All patients waiting for a diagnostic service by HSC Trust and weeks waiting: 30th June 2015						Total Waiting
	0 - 6	>6 - 9	>9 - 13	>13 - 21	> 21 - 26	>26	
Belfast	13,168	4,282	3,958	3,810	1,341	2,646	29,205
Northern	10,403	2,609	2,264	2,956	1,017	2,022	21,271
South Eastern	6,836	1,289	684	1,123	438	1,314	11,684
Southern	9,506	3,406	2,892	2,210	245	176	18,435
Western	7,098	1,026	316	214	109	326	9,089
Total	47,011	12,612	10,114	10,313	3,150	6,484	89,684

Total waiting more than nine weeks: 30,061

Source: Departmental Return SDR 1 (Parts 1 & 2)

³Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-12 15 & 17

Diagnostic Reporting Times

Table 5: Number of completed diagnostic reports by priority – QE June 2015⁴

Priority of Report	QE June 2015	Change compared with previous quarter	Change compared with the same quarter previous year
Urgent Reports	39,047	+1,374	+4,101
Routine Reports	95,288	-3,960	-5,143
Total Reports	134,335	-2,586	-1,042

Source: Departmental Return DRTT

⁴Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-5, 13-15 & 18-20

Table 6: Number of completed urgent diagnostic reports by category – QE June 2015⁵

Category of test	Length of time reporting in days				Total Completed
	0 - 2 days	>2 - 14 days	>14 - 28 days	>28 days	
Imaging	31,384	3,728	230	129	35,471
Physiological Measurement	3,421	142	13	0	3,576
Total	34,805	3,870	243	129	39,047

0 - 2 days: 34,805 (89.1%)

> 2 days: 4,242 (10.9%)

Source: Departmental Return DRTT

⁵Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-5, 13-16 & 18-20

Table 7: Number of completed routine diagnostic reports by category – QE June 2015⁶

Category of test	Length of time reporting in weeks			Total Completed
	0 - 2 weeks	>2 - 4 weeks	>4 weeks	
Imaging	73,572	3,209	906	77,687
Physiological Measurement	16,840	684	77	17,601
Total	90,412	3,893	983	95,288
0 - 2 weeks: 90,412 (94.9%) >2 - 4 weeks: 3,893 (4.1%) >4 weeks: 983 (1.0%)				

Source: Departmental Return DRTT

⁶Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-5, 13-15 & 17-20

Table 8: Number of completed urgent diagnostic reports by HSC Trust and time in days – QE June 2015⁵

HSC Trust	Length of time reporting in days				Total Completed
	0 - 2 days	>2 - 14 days	>14 - 28 days	>28 days	
Belfast	10,031	1,042	40	5	11,118
Northern	6,533	370	3	1	6,907
South Eastern	3,849	101	6	0	3,956
Southern	8,095	1,892	182	123	10,292
Western	6,297	465	12	0	6,774
Total	34,805	3,870	243	129	39,047

Source: Departmental Return DRTT

⁵Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-5, 13-16 & 18-20

Table 9: Number of completed routine diagnostic reports by HSC Trust and time in weeks – QE June 2015⁶

HSC Trust	Length of time reporting in weeks			Total Completed
	0 - 2 weeks	>2 - 4 weeks	>4 weeks	
Belfast	28,546	1,369	193	30,108
Northern	16,602	1,378	337	18,317
South Eastern	16,467	223	4	16,694
Southern	12,439	687	425	13,551
Western	16,358	236	24	16,618
Total	90,412	3,893	983	95,288

Source: Departmental Return DRTT

⁶ Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-5, 13-15 & 17-20

Table 10: Percentage of completed reports achieved – QE June 2015⁷

HSC Trust	Percentage achieved		
	Percentage of urgent diagnostic tests reported on within two days	Percentage of routine tests reported on within two weeks	Percentage of routine tests reported on within four weeks
Belfast	90.2%	94.8%	99.4%
Northern	94.6%	90.6%	98.2%
South Eastern	97.3%	98.6%	100.0%
Southern	78.7%	91.8%	96.9%
Western	93.0%	98.4%	99.9%
Northern Ireland	89.1%	94.9%	99.0%

Source: Departmental Return DRTT

⁷Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-5 & 13-20

Table 11: Diagnostic reporting time performance (across all HSC Trusts in Northern Ireland) – QE June 2015⁷

Priority	Performance	Change compared with previous quarter	Change compared with the same quarter previous year
Urgent	% within two days: 89.1%	- 1.2 percentage points	- 2.7 percentage points
Routine	% within two weeks: 94.9%	-0.7 percentage points	+ 0.4 percentage points
Routine	% within four weeks: 99.0%	- 0.2 percentage points	-0.2 percentage points

Source: Departmental Return DRTT

⁷Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-5 & 13-20

Appendix 1: Explanatory Notes

1. The sources for the data contained in this release are the quarterly Departmental Returns SDR1 (Parts 1 & 2) and the DRTT Return. The source for the diagnostic waiting time data for the 16 selected diagnostic services is the Departmental Return SDR1 Part 1 (See explanatory note 2). The waiting time information for all other diagnostic services is provided by the HSC Board on the SDR1 Part 2 return. The diagnostic reporting turnaround time information is provided by the HSC Board on the DRTT return.
2. The 16 selected diagnostic 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.
3. All of the data contained in the tables can be supplied by individual diagnostic service or HSC Trust if this level of detail is required. In addition, quarterly data relating to diagnostic waiting times has also been published in spreadsheet format (Microsoft Excel), split by HSC Trust and diagnostic service, in order to aid secondary analysis. These data are available at <http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/statistics/hospital/waitingtimes/waitingtimes-diagnostic.htm>
4. The diagnostic waiting and reporting turnaround times returns (SDR1 Parts 1 and 2, DRTT) include patients living outside Northern Ireland and privately funded patients waiting for treatment in Health Service hospitals in Northern Ireland.
5. HSC Trusts use the Northern Ireland Picture Archive and Communications System (NIPACS) as the mechanism for managing imaging services. The HSC Board has carried out a validation exercise with Trusts to address any data quality issues. The quality of imaging waiting times and reporting times have improved in recent years.
6. 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. There are three categories of diagnostic test: Imaging Service; Physiological Measurement test; and Day Case Endoscopy.
7. The **diagnostic waiting time** 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 programmes are also excluded from the waiting times target.
8. 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.
9. A number of the diagnostic services reported on the SDR 1 return are managed as an inpatient admission: 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.
10. Waiting time statistics for day case endoscopies also include patients waiting for these services that are managed as ordinary admissions.

11. For Tables 2, 3 and 4 and Figures 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10, each diagnostic waiting timeband relates to the number of completed weeks a patient has been waiting for a diagnostic service. For example, a patient waiting exactly 6 weeks would be included in the 0-6 week time band and a patient waiting 6 weeks and 1 day would be included in the >6-9 (greater than 6 weeks but waiting no longer than 9 weeks) week time band.
12. Patients waiting 'longer than nine weeks' for a diagnostic service includes all patients in the >9 - 13, >13 - 21, >21 - 26 and > 26 week time bands.
13. The **diagnostic reporting turnaround time** is the time interval between the completion of the diagnostic test and the results of that test being verified or dispatched to the referring clinician in Northern Ireland, whichever is applicable.
14. Diagnostic reporting times apply to a selected subset of diagnostic services. These 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; and Urodynamics Pressures and Flows.
15. Information on Plain Film Xray reporting times has been collected from April 2015 however as it is not included as part of the 2015/16 Ministerial Target, the commentary and figures within this publication do not include them. Information on Plain Film Xray reporting times however have been provided within the accompanying excel document.
16. The 2015/16 Ministerial diagnostic target, as detailed in the Health and Social Care (Commissioning Plan) Direction (Northern Ireland) 2015, states that, from April 2015, no patient should wait longer than nine weeks for a diagnostic test, and all urgent diagnostic tests are reported on within two days of being undertaken.
17. The 2015/16 Ministerial indicators of performance, as detailed in the Health and Social Care (Indicators of Performance) Direction (Northern Ireland) 2015, measure (i) percentage of routine diagnostic tests reported on within 2 weeks of the test being undertaken and (ii) percentage of routine diagnostic tests reported on within four weeks of the test being undertaken.
18. The information on diagnostic and reporting times contained within this publication is currently under review. The Department is looking at how this information is sourced and the validation procedures that are carried out with a view to improving the quality. All quality issues identified as part of this review are being addressed on an ongoing basis.
19. 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.
20. Amended DRTT returns were received for the QE June 2014 for Belfast Trust. The changes have been reflected in this bulletin.
21. The information contained within this publication is not National Statistics.
22. Figures relating to the quarter ending 30th September 2015 will be released on Thursday 26th November 2015.

Additional Information

Further information on Waiting Times for Diagnostic Services at HSC Trusts in Northern Ireland is available from:

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