

INFORMATION  
ANALYSIS  
DIRECTORATE



# Northern Ireland Waiting Time Statistics: Inpatient and Day Case Waiting Times Quarter Ending September 2017



Department of  
**Health**  
An Roinn Sláinte  
Máinnystrie O Poustie  
[www.health-ni.gov.uk](http://www.health-ni.gov.uk)

# Reader Information

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**Purpose:** This statistical release presents information on waiting times for admission for either inpatient or day case treatment in Northern Ireland and reports on the performance of the Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts against the 2017/18 Ministerial waiting time target which states that:

*“By March 2018, 55% of patients should wait no longer than 13 weeks for inpatient/day case treatment, with no patient waiting longer than 52 weeks.”*

This statistical release details information on the number of patients waiting, and length of time waiting, for inpatient and day case admissions in HSC Trusts at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2017. Data are presented by HSC Trust, specialty and time band. It also includes inpatient and day case activity commissioned by the Health Service during the quarter ending September 2017.

**Statistical Quality:** The ‘*Inpatient and Day Case Waiting Times Publication – Supporting Documentation*’ booklet details the technical guidance, definitions, as well as notes on how to use the data contained within this statistical release. This booklet is available to view or download from the following link:

<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/northern-ireland-waiting-time-statistics-inpatient-waiting-times-september-2017>

**Internet:** <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/articles/inpatient-waiting-times>

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**Publication Date:** Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> November 2017

**Reporting Period:** 1<sup>st</sup> July 2017 – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2017

**Issued by:** Hospital Information Branch  
Information & Analysis Directorate  
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**Target audience:** Department of Health (DoH), Chief Executives of the HSC Board and Trusts in Northern Ireland, health care professionals, Health & Social Care stakeholders, academics, the media and the general public.

**Price:** Free

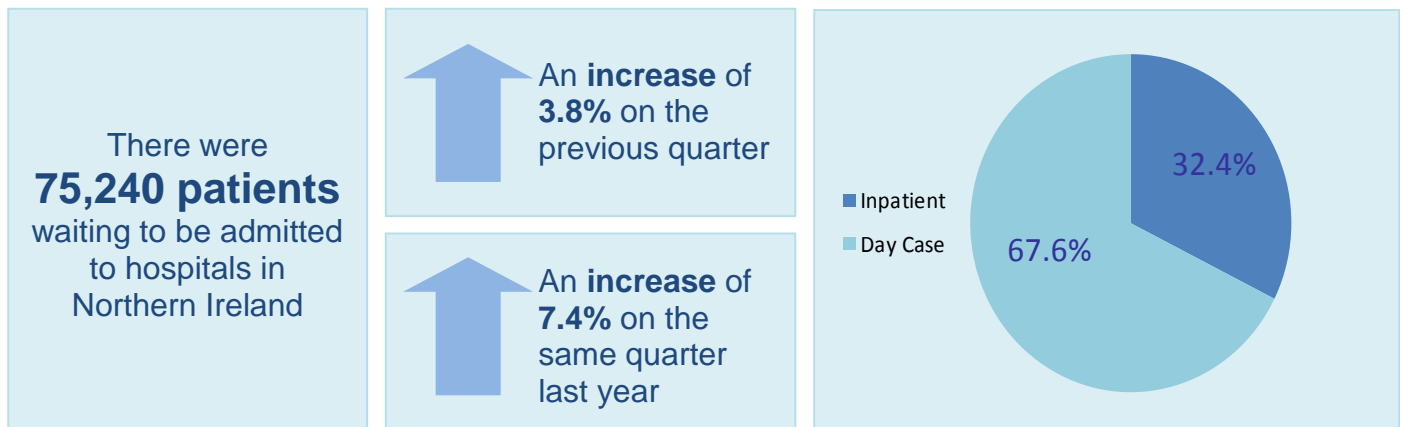
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**By March 2018, 55% of patients should wait no longer than 13 weeks for inpatient/day case treatment, with no patient waiting longer than 52 weeks.**

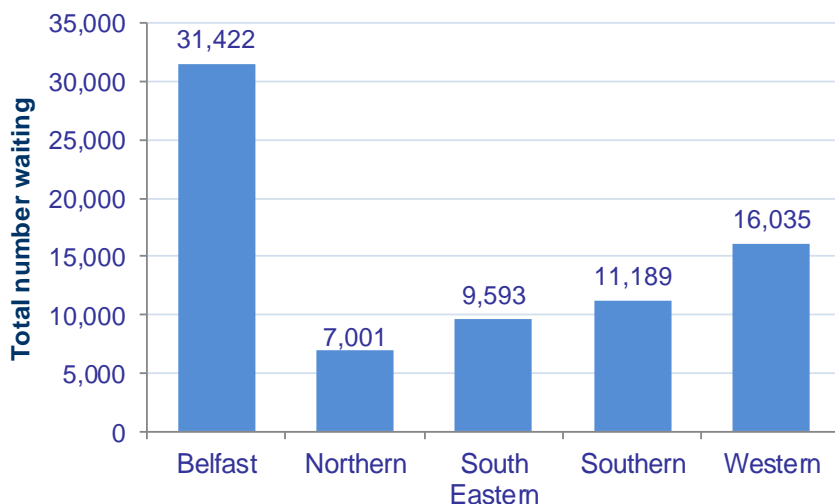
## Total number of patients waiting at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2017



Source: DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

At 30<sup>th</sup> September 2017, a total of 75,240 patients were waiting to be admitted to hospitals in Northern Ireland, 3.8% (2,760) more than at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2017 (72,480), and 7.4% (5,205) more than at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2016 (70,035) (Table 1).

Almost one third (32.4%, 24,364) of those waiting for admission at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2017 were waiting for an inpatient admission, with the remaining 67.6% (50,876) waiting for a day case admission (Table 1).



Source: DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

A number of inpatient and day case services may not be provided at a patient's local HSC Trust, and instead are provided at a single regional centre for Northern Ireland. As patients are reported against the HSC Trust responsible for the service that will be providing treatment, users should be cautious in how they use these data (see explanatory note 11).

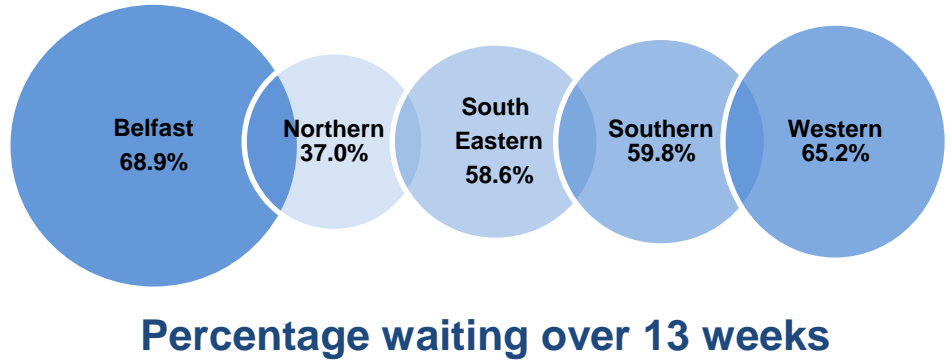
Over two fifths (41.8%) were waiting to be admitted in the Belfast HSC Trust, with a further 21.3% waiting in the Western HSC Trust, 14.9% in the Southern HSC Trust, 12.7% in the South Eastern HSC Trust and 9.3% in the Northern HSC Trust (Table 2a).

Over three quarters (78.2%, 58,831) of the 75,240 patients were waiting for admission in one of the following specialties: General Surgery (14,600); Trauma and Orthopaedic (T&O) Surgery (14,196); Ophthalmology (7,594); Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) (6,779); Urology (6,601); Gynaecology (5,194) and Gastroenterology (3,867) (Table 3a).

## Patients waiting more than 13 weeks at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2017

This element was **not achieved** by Northern Ireland as a whole

**62.5%**  
of patients were waiting longer than 13 weeks



Source: DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

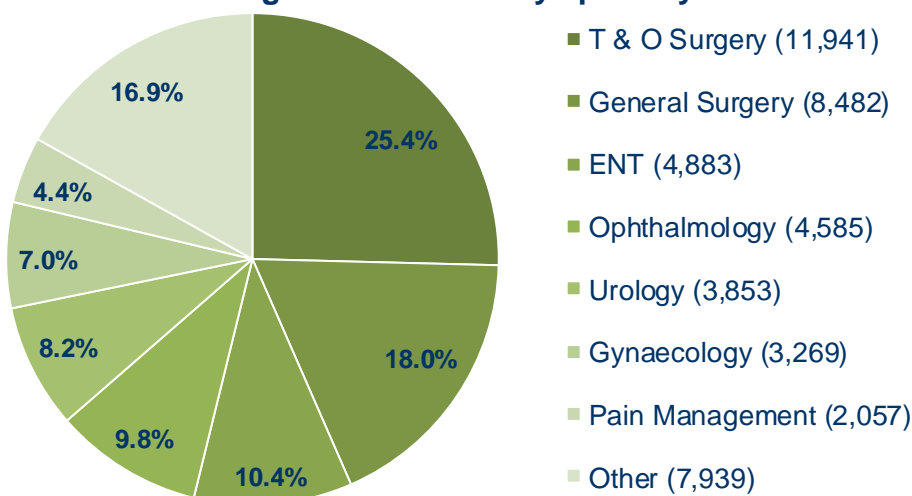
Achievement of the 13 week target requires that less than 45% of patients should be waiting over 13 weeks for inpatient or day case admission.

At 30<sup>th</sup> September 2017, 62.5% (47,009) of patients were waiting more than 13 weeks to be admitted for treatment, compared with 59.0% (42,732) at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2017 and 56.8% (39,772) at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2016 (Table 1).

At 30<sup>th</sup> September 2017, the 13 week element of the target was not achieved by Northern Ireland as a whole (Table 2a). The Northern HSC Trust did meet this element of the target, however, data users should be aware that many inpatient and day case services are not provided at every HSC Trust (see explanatory note 11).

Over three quarters (77.0%, 18,768) of those patients waiting for an inpatient admission, were waiting over 13 weeks. This is compared with 55.5% (28,241) waiting over 13 weeks for a day case admission (Table 1).

### Patients waiting over 13 weeks by specialty



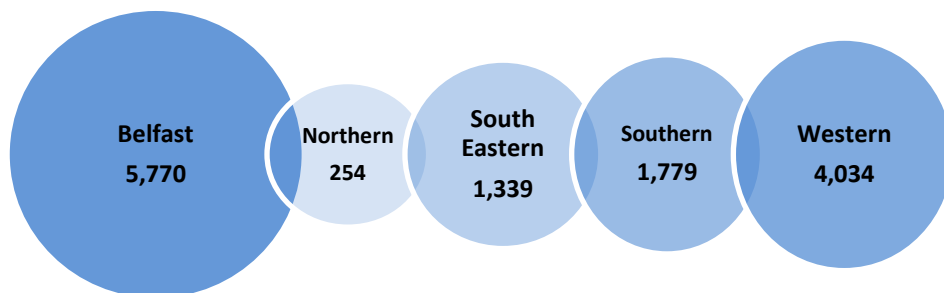
Source: DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

Just over four fifths (83.1%, 39,070) of the 47,009 patients waiting more than 13 weeks at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2017 were in one of the following specialties: Trauma and Orthopaedic (T&O) Surgery; General Surgery; Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT); Ophthalmology; Urology; Gynaecology; and Pain Management (Table 3a).

## Patients waiting more than 52 weeks at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2017

This element was **not achieved** by Northern Ireland as a whole

**13,176**  
patients were waiting longer than 52 weeks



### Number waiting over 52 weeks

Source: DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

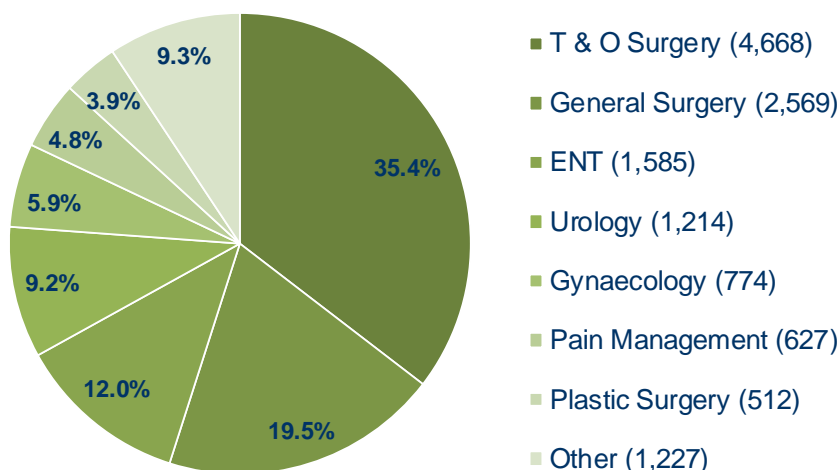
At 30<sup>th</sup> September 2017, 17.5% (13,176) of patients were waiting more than 52 weeks for either an inpatient or day case admission, compared with 15.5% (11,261) at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2017, and 11.0% (7,710) at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2016 (Table 1).

At 30<sup>th</sup> September 2017, the 52 week element of the target was not achieved by Northern Ireland as a whole or by any individual HSC Trust (Table 2a). Data users should be aware that many inpatient and day case services are not provided at every HSC Trust (see explanatory note 11).

A quarter (25.2%, 4,034) of patients in the Western HSC Trust were waiting longer than 52 weeks at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2017, 18.4% (5,770) in the Belfast HSC Trust, 15.9% (1,779) in the Southern HSC Trust, 14.0% (1,339) in the South Eastern HSC Trust, and 3.6% (254) in the Northern HSC Trust (Table 2a).

Of those waiting more than 52 weeks, 7,193 were waiting for an inpatient admission and 5,983 were waiting for a day case admission (Table 1).

### Patients waiting over 52 weeks by specialty



A total of 90.7% (11,949) of the 13,176 patients waiting more than 52 weeks to be admitted were in one of the following specialties: Trauma and Orthopaedic (T&O) Surgery; General Surgery; Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT); Urology; Gynaecology; Pain Management and Plastic Surgery (Table 3a).

Source: DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

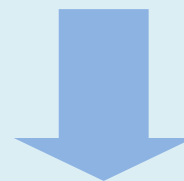
## Completed waits for inpatient and day case activity during quarter ending 30<sup>th</sup> September 2017

There were  
**41,567**

admissions for inpatient and day case treatment in Northern Ireland commissioned by the Health Service



A decrease of **8.3%** on the previous quarter

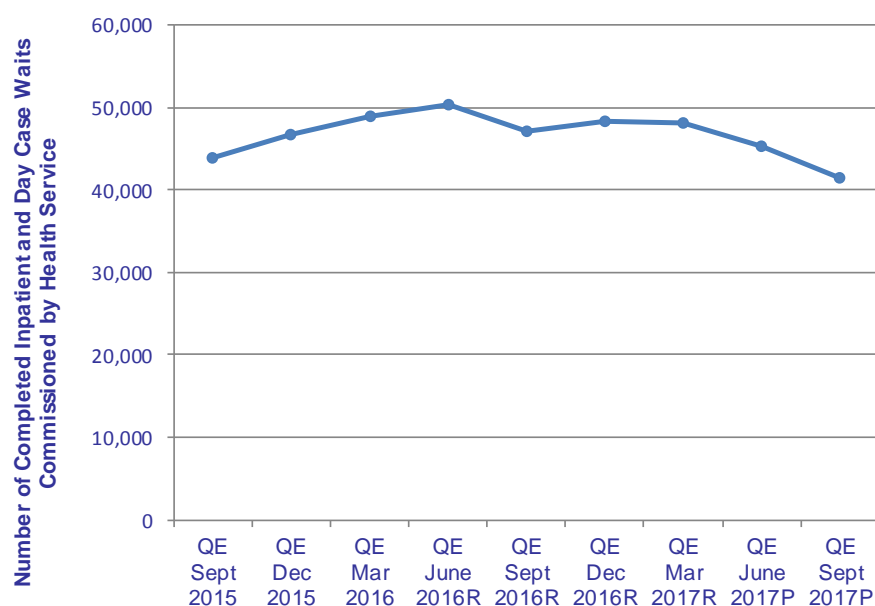


A decrease of **11.7%** on the same quarter last year

Source: Hospital Inpatient System & IS1 Part 2 Return

A total of 41,231 patients were admitted to Health Service hospitals in Northern Ireland during the quarter ending September 2017, 7.6% (3,410) less than during the quarter ending June 2017 (44,641), and 4.0% (1,708) less than during the quarter ending September 2016 (42,939) (Table 4).

During the quarter ending September 2017, 336 patients received inpatient or day case treatment commissioned by the Health Service, within the Independent Sector, half (50.4%) the number seen during the quarter ending June 2017 (677), and 91.8% (3,782) less than the same quarter last year (4,118) (Table 4).



Source: Hospital Inpatient System & IS1 Part 2 Return

<sup>P</sup> Data are currently provisional

<sup>R</sup> Revised figures

When the number of completed inpatient and day case waits within the Independent Sector during the quarter ending September 2017 (336) is combined with those treated in Health Service hospitals during the same period (41,231), provisional figures indicate that 41,567 inpatients and day cases received treatment in Northern Ireland commissioned by the Health Service. This was

a 8.3% (3,751) decrease in the number of completed waits commissioned by the Health Service between the quarter ending June 2017 (45,318) and the quarter ending September 2017 (41,567) and a decrease of 11.7% (5,490) compared to quarter ending September 2016 (47,057) (Table 4).

## Appendix 1: Tables

**Table 1: Quarterly inpatient and day case waiting lists – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2017<sup>1</sup>**

Type of Admission		Current Quarter (30 <sup>th</sup> Sept 2017)	Previous Quarter (30 <sup>th</sup> June 2016)	Same Quarter Last Year (30 <sup>th</sup> Sept 2016)
<b>Inpatient</b>	Total Patients Waiting	24,364	23,538	20,925
	Number waiting over 13 weeks	18,768	17,359	14,685
	<i>Percentage waiting over 13 weeks</i>	77.0%	73.7%	70.2%
	Number waiting over 52 weeks	7,193	6,161	3,779
<b>Day Case</b>	Total Patients Waiting	50,876	48,942	49,110
	Number waiting over 13 weeks	28,241	25,373	25,087
	<i>Percentage waiting over 13 weeks</i>	55.5%	51.8%	51.1%
	Number waiting over 52 weeks	5,983	5,100	3,931
<b>All Admissions</b>	Total Patients Waiting	75,240	72,480	70,035
	Number waiting over 13 weeks	47,009	42,732	39,772
	<i>Percentage waiting over 13 weeks</i>	62.5%	59.0%	56.8%
	Number waiting over 52 weeks	13,176	11,261	7,710

Source: DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

<sup>1</sup>Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–14

**Table 2a: Number of patients waiting for inpatient and day case admissions by HSC Trust**

HSC Trust	Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting						Total Waiting for Admission
	0 - 6	>6 - 13	>13 - 21	>21 - 26	>26-52	>52	
Belfast	5,026	4,755	5,234	2,273	8,364	5,770	31,422
Northern	2,631	1,777	1,099	302	938	254	7,001
South Eastern	2,419	1,553	1,608	610	2,064	1,339	9,593
Southern	2,638	1,859	1,820	690	2,403	1,779	11,189
Western	3,073	2,500	2,060	902	3,466	4,034	16,035
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,787</b>	<b>12,444</b>	<b>11,821</b>	<b>4,777</b>	<b>17,235</b>	<b>13,176</b>	<b>75,240</b>

**and weeks waiting – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2017<sup>1</sup>**

Source: DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

<sup>1</sup>Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–14

**Table 2b: Percentage of patients waiting for inpatient and day case admissions by HSC Trust and weeks waiting – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2017<sup>1</sup>**

HSC Trust	Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting					
	0 - 6	>6 - 13	>13 - 21	>21 - 26	>26-52	>52
Belfast	16.0%	15.1%	16.7%	7.2%	26.6%	18.4%
Northern	37.6%	25.4%	15.7%	4.3%	13.4%	3.6%
South Eastern	25.2%	16.2%	16.8%	6.4%	21.5%	14.0%
Southern	23.6%	16.6%	16.3%	6.2%	21.5%	15.9%
Western	19.2%	15.6%	12.8%	5.6%	21.6%	25.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>21.0%</b>	<b>16.5%</b>	<b>15.7%</b>	<b>6.3%</b>	<b>22.9%</b>	<b>17.5%</b>

Source: DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

<sup>1</sup>Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–14



**Table 3a: Number of patients waiting for inpatient and day case admissions by weeks waiting and specialty – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2017<sup>1</sup>**

Specialty	Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting						Total Waiting for Admission
	0 - 6	>6 - 13	>13 - 21	>21 - 26	>26-52	>52	
General Surgery	3,523	2,595	2,273	897	2,743	2,569	14,600
T & O Surgery	726	1,529	2,102	974	4,197	4,668	14,196
Ophthalmology	1,439	1,570	1,686	689	1,795	415	7,594
ENT	1,021	875	1,034	414	1,850	1,585	6,779
Urology	1,752	996	765	305	1,569	1,214	6,601
Gynaecology	1,115	810	841	344	1,310	774	5,194
Gastroenterology	1,666	977	780	179	237	28	3,867
General Medicine	1,264	722	357	152	566	134	3,195
Pain Management	424	436	393	203	834	627	2,917
Cardiology	667	510	390	166	616	243	2,592
Plastic Surgery	366	264	328	137	464	512	2,071
Oral Surgery	292	213	147	45	358	124	1,179
Paediatric Surgery	121	119	157	60	252	154	863
Dermatology	299	179	148	49	106	43	824
GP Other	293	180	115	19	5	0	612
Paediatrics	83	66	89	58	59	5	360
Rheumatology	140	111	14	9	25	25	324
Neurology	68	31	28	9	131	4	271
Neurosurgery	80	59	45	6	15	1	206
Other	448	202	129	62	103	51	995
<b>All Specialties</b>	<b>15,787</b>	<b>12,444</b>	<b>11,821</b>	<b>4,777</b>	<b>17,235</b>	<b>13,176</b>	<b>75,240</b>

Source: DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

<sup>1</sup>Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–14

**Table 3b: Percentage of patients waiting for inpatient and day case admissions by weeks waiting and specialty – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2017<sup>1</sup>**

Specialty	Percentage of Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting					
	0 - 6	>6 - 13	>13 - 21	>21 - 26	>26-52	>52
General Surgery	24.1%	17.8%	15.6%	6.1%	18.8%	17.6%
T & O Surgery	5.1%	10.8%	14.8%	6.9%	29.6%	32.9%
Ophthalmology	18.9%	20.7%	22.2%	9.1%	23.6%	5.5%
ENT	15.1%	12.9%	15.3%	6.1%	27.3%	23.4%
Urology	26.5%	15.1%	11.6%	4.6%	23.8%	18.4%
Gynaecology	21.5%	15.6%	16.2%	6.6%	25.2%	14.9%
Gastroenterology	43.1%	25.3%	20.2%	4.6%	6.1%	0.7%
General Medicine	39.6%	22.6%	11.2%	4.8%	17.7%	4.2%
Pain Management	14.5%	14.9%	13.5%	7.0%	28.6%	21.5%
Cardiology	25.7%	19.7%	15.0%	6.4%	23.8%	9.4%
Plastic Surgery	17.7%	12.7%	15.8%	6.6%	22.4%	24.7%
Oral Surgery	24.8%	18.1%	12.5%	3.8%	30.4%	10.5%
Paediatric Surgery	14.0%	13.8%	18.2%	7.0%	29.2%	17.8%
Dermatology	36.3%	21.7%	18.0%	5.9%	12.9%	5.2%
GP Other	47.9%	29.4%	18.8%	3.1%	0.8%	0.0%
Paediatrics	23.1%	18.3%	24.7%	16.1%	16.4%	1.4%
Rheumatology	43.2%	34.3%	4.3%	2.8%	7.7%	7.7%
Neurology	25.1%	11.4%	10.3%	3.3%	48.3%	1.5%
Neurosurgery	38.8%	28.6%	21.8%	2.9%	7.3%	0.5%
Other	45.0%	20.3%	13.0%	6.2%	10.4%	5.1%
<b>All Specialties</b>	<b>21.0%</b>	<b>16.5%</b>	<b>15.7%</b>	<b>6.3%</b>	<b>22.9%</b>	<b>17.5%</b>

Source: DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

<sup>1</sup>Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–14

**Table 4: Number of completed inpatient and day case waits commissioned by the Health Service: QE September 2015 - QE September 2017<sup>2</sup>**

Quarter Ending	Number of Completed Inpatient and Day Case Waits		
	Within Health Service Hospitals	Independent Sector*	Total Commissioned by Health Service
QE Sept 2015	42,864	1,130	43,994
QE Dec 2015	45,700	1,081	46,781
QE Mar 2016	44,109	4,883	48,992
QE June 2016 <sup>R</sup>	45,776	4,517	50,293
QE Sept 2016 <sup>R</sup>	42,939	4,118	47,057
QE Dec 2016 <sup>R</sup>	45,843	2,589	48,432
QE Mar 2017 <sup>R</sup>	44,541	3,719	48,260
QE June 2017 <sup>R</sup>	44,641	677	45,318
QE Sept 2017 <sup>P</sup>	41,231	336	41,567

Source: Hospital Inpatient System & IS1 Part 2 Return

<sup>P</sup>Data are currently provisional

<sup>R</sup>Data has been revised

\* Not National Statistics

<sup>2</sup>Refer to Explanatory Notes 1, 4 & 15-17

## Appendix 2: Explanatory Notes

1. The sources for the data contained in this release are the DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset, Hospital Inpatient System and IS1 Part 2 Return. These returns collect information from Health and Social Care Trusts on a quarterly basis.

2. The '*Inpatient and Day Case Waiting Times Publication – Supporting Documentation*' booklet details the technical guidance, definitions, as well as notes on how to use the data contained within this statistical release. This booklet is available to view or download from the following link: <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/northern-ireland-waiting-time-statistics-inpatient-waiting-times-september-2017>.

3. 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 and day case waiting times have been published in spreadsheet format (CSV), split by HSC Trust, Specialty, Programme of Care and Intended Management of the patient (i.e. Inpatient Admission or Day Case), in order to aid secondary analysis. These data are available at <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/articles/inpatient-waiting-times-september-2017>.

4. Information includes patients living outside Northern Ireland and privately funded patients waiting for treatment in Health Service hospitals in Northern Ireland.

5. Inpatient and day case waiting list data comprise the number of patients waiting for inpatient admission to hospital and the number of patients waiting for day case treatment.

6. Inpatient admissions can 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 inpatient admission.

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 inpatient admission.

8. The inpatient and day case waiting list figures do not include:

- Patients admitted as emergency cases;
- Outpatients;
- Patients undergoing a planned programme of treatment e.g. a series of admissions for chemotherapy;
- Patients waiting for admission as a regular day or night attender
- 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.

9. Waiting time begins from the date the clinician decided to admit the patient. 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.

10. Some people will be waiting on more than one waiting list or be on the waiting list for more than one outpatient appointment/admission/diagnostic test at the same time due to having more than one condition.

11. The Ministerial target, for inpatient and day case waiting times, as set out in the Health and Social Care (Commissioning Plan) Direction states that, by March 2018, at least 55% of patients should wait no longer than 13 weeks for inpatient or day case treatment, with no patient waiting longer than 52 weeks.

12. A number of inpatient and day case services may not be provided at a patient's local HSC Trust or at each of the five HSC Trusts, and instead are provided at a single regional centre for 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. 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, 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. 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.

13. For Tables 2a, 2b, 3a and 3b, each inpatient and day case waiting time band relates to the number of completed weeks a patient has been waiting for admission for treatment. 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 >6-13 (greater than 6 weeks but waiting no longer than 13 weeks) week time band. Patients waiting 'more than 13 weeks' includes all patients in the >13-21, >21-26, >26-52 and >52 time bands. Patients waiting 'more than 52 weeks' includes all patients in the >52 time band.

14. Patients waiting for day case endoscopies are included within both inpatient and diagnostic waiting times; as such, figures should not be added together.

15. 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.

16. 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)

17. The numbers of patients that received inpatient treatment, commissioned by the Health Service, in the Independent Sector, are provided by the HSC Board. 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.

18. 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.

19. Figures relating to inpatient and day case waiting times for the quarter ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017 will be released on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2018.

**Further information on Inpatient and Day Case Waiting Times in Northern Ireland is available from:**

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