

INFORMATION
ANALYSIS
DIRECTORATE



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



Department of
Health
An Roinn Sláinte
Máinnystrie O Poustie
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Reader Information

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 31st December 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 December 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-december-2017>

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

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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

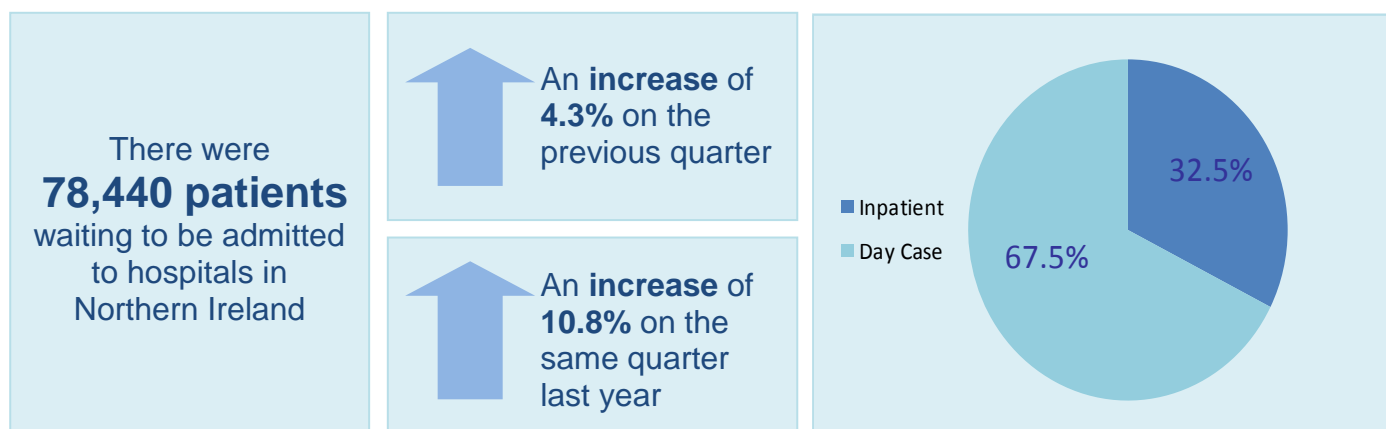
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Contents

Total number of patients waiting for Inpatient and Day Case Admissions	4
Patients waiting longer than 13 weeks for Inpatient and Day Case Admissions.....	5
Patients waiting longer than 52 weeks for Inpatient and Day Case Admissions.....	6
Completed waits for Inpatient and Day Case Activity commissioned by the Health Service...	7
Appendix 1: Tables.....	8
Appendix 2: Explanatory Notes.....	11

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.

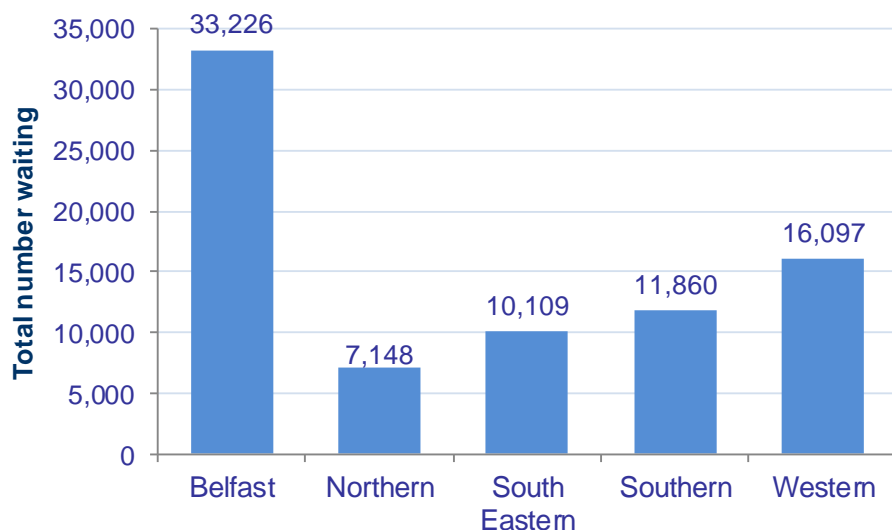
Total number of patients waiting at 31st December 2017



Source: DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

At 31st December 2017, a total of 78,440 patients were waiting to be admitted to hospitals in Northern Ireland, 4.3% (3,200) more than at 30th September 2017 (75,240), and 10.8% (7,658) more than at 31st December 2016 (70,782) (Table 1).

Almost one third (32.5%, 25,460) of those waiting for admission at 31st December 2017 were waiting for an inpatient admission, with the remaining 67.5% (52,980) 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).

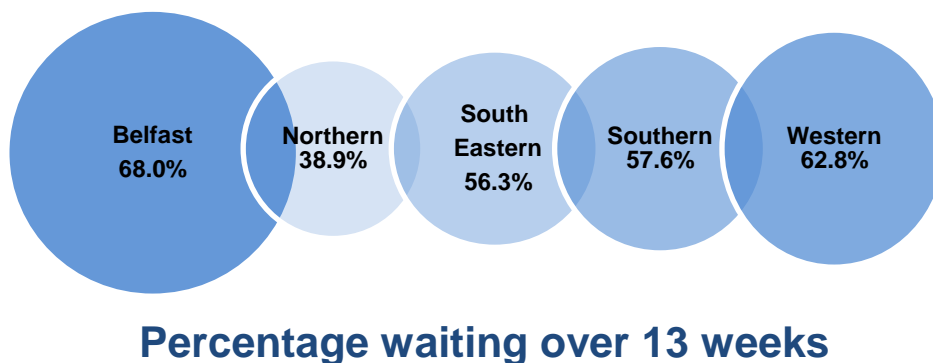
Over two fifths (42.4%) were waiting to be admitted in the Belfast HSC Trust, with a further 20.5% waiting in the Western HSC Trust, 15.1% in the Southern HSC Trust, 12.9% in the South Eastern HSC Trust and 9.1% in the Northern HSC Trust (Table 2a).

Over three quarters (79.0%, 61,934) of the 78,440 patients were waiting for admission in one of the following specialties: General Surgery (15,596); Trauma and Orthopaedic (T&O) Surgery (15,202); Ophthalmology (8,262); Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) (7,110); Urology (6,850); Gynaecology (4,931) and Gastroenterology (3,983) (Table 3a).

Patients waiting more than 13 weeks at 31st December 2017

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

61.2%
of patients were waiting longer than 13 weeks



Percentage waiting over 13 weeks

Source: DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

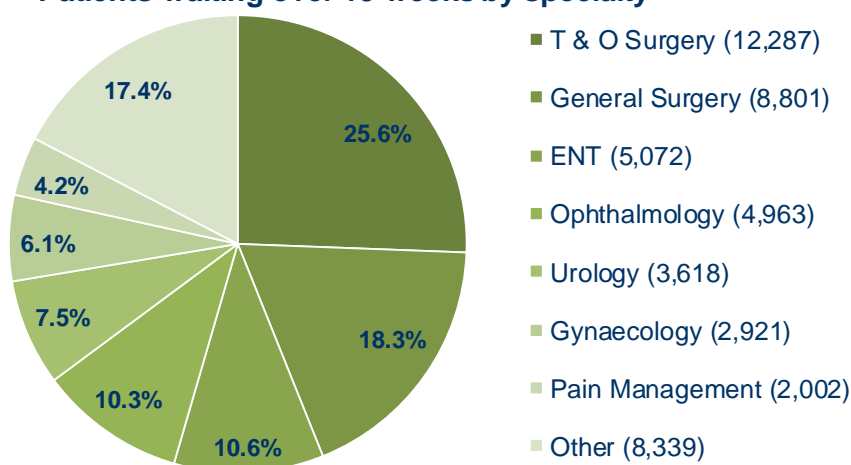
Achievement of the 13 week target requires that less than 45% of patients should be waiting over 13 weeks for inpatient or day case admission.

At 31st December 2017, 61.2% (48,003) of patients were waiting more than 13 weeks to be admitted for treatment, compared with 62.5% (47,009) at 30th September 2017 and 55.3% (39,123) at 31st December 2016 (Table 1).

At 31st December 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 (75.6%, 19,243) of those patients waiting for an inpatient admission, were waiting over 13 weeks. This is compared with 54.3% (28,760) waiting over 13 weeks for a day case admission (Table 1).

Patients waiting over 13 weeks by specialty



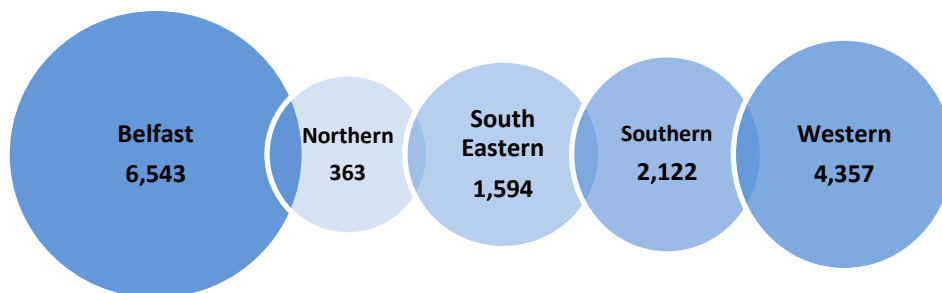
Just over four fifths (82.6%, 39,664) of the 48,003 patients waiting more than 13 weeks at 31st December 2017 were in one of the following specialties: Trauma and Orthopaedic (T&O) Surgery; General Surgery; Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT); Ophthalmology; Urology; Gynaecology; and Pain Management (Table 3a).

Source: DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

Patients waiting more than 52 weeks at 31st December 2017

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

14,979
patients were waiting longer than 52 weeks



Number waiting over 52 weeks

Source: DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

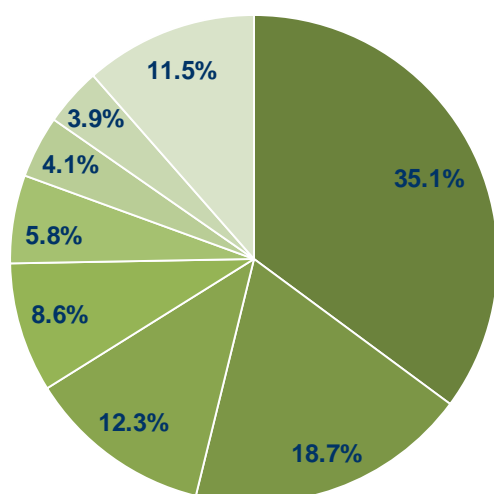
At 31st December 2017, 19.1% (14,979) of patients were waiting more than 52 weeks for either an inpatient or day case admission, compared with 17.5% (13,176) at 30th September 2017, and 12.0% (8,470) at 31st December 2016 (Table 1).

At 31st December 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).

Over a quarter (27.1%, 4,357) of patients in the Western HSC Trust were waiting longer than 52 weeks at 31st December 2017, 19.7% (6,543) in the Belfast HSC Trust, 17.9% (2,122) in the Southern HSC Trust, 15.8% (1,594) in the South Eastern HSC Trust, and 5.1% (363) in the Northern HSC Trust (Table 2a).

Of those waiting more than 52 weeks, 8,180 were waiting for an inpatient admission and 6,799 were waiting for a day case admission (Table 1).

Patients waiting over 52 weeks by specialty



- T & O Surgery (5,262)
- General Surgery (2,802)
- ENT (1,839)
- Urology (1,288)
- Gynaecology (875)
- Plastic Surgery (618)
- Ophthalmology (578)
- Other (1,717)

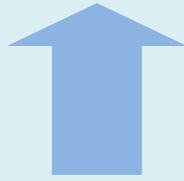
A total of 88.5% (13,262) of the 14,979 patients waiting more than 52 weeks to be admitted were in one of the following specialties: Trauma and Orthopaedic (T&O) Surgery; General Surgery; Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT); Urology; Gynaecology; Plastic Surgery and Ophthalmology (Table 3a).

Source: DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

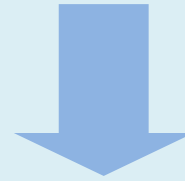
Completed waits for inpatient and day case activity during quarter ending 31st December 2017

There were
44,773

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



An **increase** of 7.1% on the previous quarter

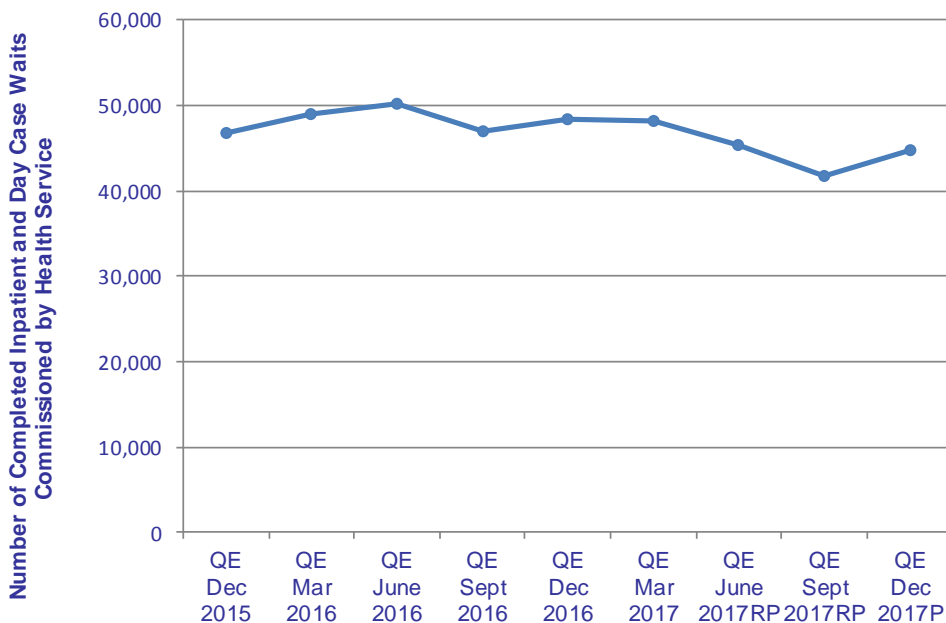


A **decrease** of 7.6% on the same quarter last year

Source: Hospital Inpatient System & IS1 Part 2 Return

A total of 44,232 patients were admitted to Health Service hospitals in Northern Ireland during the quarter ending December 2017, 6.7% (2,764) more than during the quarter ending September 2017 (41,468), and 3.5% (1,611) less than during the quarter ending December 2016 (45,843) (Table 4).

During the quarter ending December 2017, 541 patients received inpatient or day case treatment commissioned by the Health Service, within the Independent Sector, 61.0% (205) more the number seen during the quarter ending September 2017 (336), and 79.1% (2,048) less than the same quarter last year (2,589) (Table 4).



Source: Hospital Inpatient System & IS1 Part 2 Return

^P Data are currently provisional

^R Revised figures

When the number of completed inpatient and day case waits within the Independent Sector during the quarter ending December 2017 (541) is combined with those treated in Health Service hospitals during the same period (44,232), provisional figures indicate that 44,773 inpatients and day cases received

treatment in Northern Ireland commissioned by the Health Service. This was a 7.1% (2,969) increase in the number of completed waits commissioned by the Health Service between the quarter ending September 2017 (41,804) and the quarter ending December 2017 (44,773) and a decrease of 7.6% (3,659) compared to quarter ending December 2016 (48,432) (Table 4).

Appendix 1: Tables

Table 1: Quarterly inpatient and day case waiting lists – 31st December 2017¹

Type of Admission		Current Quarter (31 st Dec 2017)	Previous Quarter (30 th Sept 2017)	Same Quarter Last Year (31 st Dec 2016)
Inpatient	Total Patients Waiting	25,460	24,364	22,148
	Number waiting over 13 weeks	19,243	18,768	15,590
	<i>Percentage waiting over 13 weeks</i>	75.6%	77.0%	70.4%
	Number waiting over 52 weeks	8,180	7,193	4,496
Day Case	Total Patients Waiting	52,980	50,876	48,634
	Number waiting over 13 weeks	28,760	28,241	23,533
	<i>Percentage waiting over 13 weeks</i>	54.3%	55.5%	48.4%
	Number waiting over 52 weeks	6,799	5,983	3,974
All Admissions	Total Patients Waiting	78,440	75,240	70,782
	Number waiting over 13 weeks	48,003	47,009	39,123
	<i>Percentage waiting over 13 weeks</i>	61.2%	62.5%	55.3%
	Number waiting over 52 weeks	14,979	13,176	8,470

Source: DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

¹Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–14

Table 2a: Number of patients waiting for inpatient and day case admissions by HSC Trust and weeks waiting – 31st December 2017¹

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	4,824	5,808	4,852	2,307	8,892	6,543	33,226
Northern	2,452	1,918	1,138	329	948	363	7,148
South Eastern	2,395	2,021	1,354	550	2,195	1,594	10,109
Southern	2,708	2,324	1,594	648	2,464	2,122	11,860
Western	3,148	2,839	1,705	789	3,259	4,357	16,097
Total	15,527	14,910	10,643	4,623	17,758	14,979	78,440

Source: DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

¹Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–14

Table 2b: Percentage of patients waiting for inpatient and day case admissions by HSC Trust and weeks waiting – 31st December 2017¹

HSC Trust	Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting					
	0 - 6	>6 - 13	>13 - 21	>21 - 26	>26-52	>52
Belfast	14.5%	17.5%	14.6%	6.9%	26.8%	19.7%
Northern	34.3%	26.8%	15.9%	4.6%	13.3%	5.1%
South Eastern	23.7%	20.0%	13.4%	5.4%	21.7%	15.8%
Southern	22.8%	19.6%	13.4%	5.5%	20.8%	17.9%
Western	19.6%	17.6%	10.6%	4.9%	20.2%	27.1%
Total	19.8%	19.0%	13.6%	5.9%	22.6%	19.1%

Source: DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

¹Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–14

Table 3a: Number of patients waiting for inpatient and day case admissions by weeks waiting and specialty – 31st December 2017¹

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	3,584	3,211	2,195	859	2,945	2,802	15,596
T & O Surgery	829	2,086	1,779	857	4,389	5,262	15,202
Ophthalmology	1,468	1,831	1,426	700	2,259	578	8,262
ENT	957	1,081	925	388	1,920	1,839	7,110
Urology	1,767	1,465	774	306	1,250	1,288	6,850
Gynaecology	1,117	893	605	270	1,171	875	4,931
Gastroenterology	1,591	981	785	243	339	44	3,983
General Medicine	1,288	681	311	194	634	269	3,377
Pain Management	337	492	404	217	866	515	2,831
Cardiology	636	590	347	183	482	349	2,587
Plastic Surgery	286	307	292	115	570	618	2,188
Oral Surgery	252	265	156	61	274	161	1,169
Paediatric Surgery	136	129	149	68	247	212	941
Dermatology	301	217	104	32	64	19	737
GP Other	293	199	78	30	19	0	619
Paediatrics	48	95	99	36	107	5	390
Rheumatology	134	95	13	0	21	29	292
Neurology	69	36	21	8	50	49	233
Neurosurgery	69	57	48	14	24	3	215
Other	365	199	132	42	127	62	927
All Specialties	15,527	14,910	10,643	4,623	17,758	14,979	78,440

Source: DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

¹Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–14

Table 3b: Percentage of patients waiting for inpatient and day case admissions by weeks waiting and specialty – 31st December 2017¹

Specialty	Percentage of Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting					
	0 - 6	>6 - 13	>13 - 21	>21 - 26	>26-52	>52
General Surgery	23.0%	20.6%	14.1%	5.5%	18.9%	18.0%
T & O Surgery	5.5%	13.7%	11.7%	5.6%	28.9%	34.6%
Ophthalmology	17.8%	22.2%	17.3%	8.5%	27.3%	7.0%
ENT	13.5%	15.2%	13.0%	5.5%	27.0%	25.9%
Urology	25.8%	21.4%	11.3%	4.5%	18.2%	18.8%
Gynaecology	22.7%	18.1%	12.3%	5.5%	23.7%	17.7%
Gastroenterology	39.9%	24.6%	19.7%	6.1%	8.5%	1.1%
General Medicine	38.1%	20.2%	9.2%	5.7%	18.8%	8.0%
Pain Management	11.9%	17.4%	14.3%	7.7%	30.6%	18.2%
Cardiology	24.6%	22.8%	13.4%	7.1%	18.6%	13.5%
Plastic Surgery	13.1%	14.0%	13.3%	5.3%	26.1%	28.2%
Oral Surgery	21.6%	22.7%	13.3%	5.2%	23.4%	13.8%
Paediatric Surgery	14.5%	13.7%	15.8%	7.2%	26.2%	22.5%
Dermatology	40.8%	29.4%	14.1%	4.3%	8.7%	2.6%
GP Other	47.3%	32.1%	12.6%	4.8%	3.1%	0.0%
Paediatrics	12.3%	24.4%	25.4%	9.2%	27.4%	1.3%
Rheumatology	45.9%	32.5%	4.5%	0.0%	7.2%	9.9%
Neurology	29.6%	15.5%	9.0%	3.4%	21.5%	21.0%
Neurosurgery	32.1%	26.5%	22.3%	6.5%	11.2%	1.4%
Other	39.4%	21.5%	14.2%	4.5%	13.7%	6.7%
All Specialties	19.8%	19.0%	13.6%	5.9%	22.6%	19.1%

Source: DoH Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

¹Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–14

Table 4: Number of completed inpatient and day case waits commissioned by the Health Service: QE December 2015 - QE December 2017²

Quarter Ending	Number of Completed Inpatient and Day Case Waits		
	Within Health Service Hospitals	Independent Sector*	Total Commissioned by Health Service
QE Dec 2015	45,700	1,081	46,781
QE Mar 2016	44,109	4,883	48,992
QE June 2016	45,776	4,517	50,293
QE Sept 2016	42,939	4,118	47,057
QE Dec 2016	45,843	2,589	48,432
QE Mar 2017	44,541	3,719	48,260
QE June 2017 ^{RP}	44,634	677	45,311
QE Sept 2017 ^{RP}	41,468	336	41,804
QE Dec 2017 ^P	44,232	541	44,773

Source: Hospital Inpatient System & IS1 Part 2 Return

^PData are currently provisional

^RData has been revised

*Not National Statistics

²Refer 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-december-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-december-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 31st March 2018 will be released on Thursday 31st May 2018.

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

Jennifer Finlay

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✉ Email: statistics@health-ni.gov.uk

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