

# Statistical Publication Notice



## Waiting Times

### Comprises:

**Inpatient, Day case and Outpatient stage of treatment waiting times  
(formerly known as New Ways)**

**Accident and Emergency Waiting Times**

**Diagnostic Waiting Times**

**Audiology Waiting Times**

**Quarter ending 31 March 2011**

**Publication date – 31 May 2011**



## About this Release

This release details monthly and/or quarterly summary of waiting times and waiting lists in the acute sector, attendances and performance against the 4 hour waiting time standard at Accident and Emergency (A&E) departments, patients waiting for the eight key diagnostic tests and investigations, audiology stage of treatment waiting times and waiting lists for NHSScotland (includes data to 31 March 2011).

## Key Points

- At 31 March 2011, 99.9% of new outpatients (all sources of referral) had been waiting 12 weeks or less. This is the statistic used by NHS Boards from 31 March 2010 to measure performance against Scottish Government waiting times standards for new outpatients. Due to technical difficulties, NHS Grampian data has been excluded from NHS Scotland figures.
- At 31 March 2011, 99.7% of inpatients and day cases were waiting less than the 9-week national standard. This is the statistic used by NHS Boards to measure performance against Scottish Government waiting times standards for inpatients and day cases. 9 weeks is the new national standard that came into place on 31 March 2011. Due to technical difficulties, NHS Grampian data has been excluded from NHS Scotland figures.

- During the quarter ending 31 March 2011, the proportion of patients attending A&E departments across Scotland that were seen within 4 hours was; 93.6 % in January, 94.9 % in February and 95.6 % in March.
- At 31 March 2011, 39,683 patients were waiting for 1 of 8 key diagnostic tests and investigations. Of these patients over 97.6% were recorded as having been waiting no longer than 6 weeks. This compares to over 93.6% of patients waiting no longer than 6 weeks at 31 December 2010.
- The following audiology data are classed as developmental, Official Statistics.
- For those audiology patients recorded as seen during quarter ending March 2011, 73.0% waited no longer than 12 weeks for a first contact appointment, 80.1% waited no longer than 12 weeks from assessment to fitting of hearing aid(s) and 97.4% waited no longer than 12 weeks from assessment to treatment (excluding fitting of hearing aids).
- For those audiology patients recorded as waiting at month end March 2011, 79.7% were waiting no longer than 12 weeks for a first contact appointment, 90.1% were waiting no longer than 12 weeks from assessment to fitting of hearing aid(s) and 57.2% were waiting no longer than 12 weeks from assessment to treatment (excluding fitting of hearing aids).
- As NHS Boards progress towards managing their patients along an 18 Weeks Referral To Treatment pathway, several NHS Boards have brought in 'one-stop' clinics, where patients can be assessed and treated in a single appointment. From January 2011, NHS Boards have the option to record audiology 'one-stop' patients separate from the stages of treatment.

## Background

### Inpatient, Day case and Outpatient stage of treatment

This is the latest publication of waiting times statistics following the introduction of 'New Ways of defining and measuring waiting times' on 1 January 2008. This introduced a significant change in how NHS Scotland collects and defines waiting times, and also how waiting lists are clinically and administratively managed.

Waiting times are calculated taking account of any periods of unavailability and missed or cancelled appointments.

Further information can be found in the 'inpatient, day case and stage of treatment' [Full Publication Report](#)

### Accident and Emergency Waiting Times

In 2004 the Scottish Government (SG) announced a new waiting times target for A&E departments, stating that by the end of 2007 at least 98 % of patients should be seen and then admitted, transferred or discharged within four hours.

The four hour target applied to all areas of emergency care such as assessment units, minor injury units, community hospitals, health centres, anywhere where A&E type activity takes place.

Further information can be found in the 'Accident and Emergency Waiting Times' [Full Publication Report](#)

## Diagnostic Waiting Times

In 2007, the Cabinet Secretary of Health and Wellbeing stated that "A whole journey waiting time target of 18 weeks from general practitioner referral to treatment ... by December 2011". Diagnostic Waiting Times are an important component in the delivery of this 18 Weeks Referral To Treatment target (18 Weeks RTT).

Information on the following eight key diagnostic tests and investigations waiting times has been collected nationally since 2006: Upper Endoscopy, Lower Endoscopy (excluding Colonoscopy) , Colonoscopy, Cystoscopy, CT Scan, MRI Scan, Barium Studies, Ultrasound.

The Scottish Government introduced a 9 week maximum waiting time for these 8 key diagnostic tests and investigations from 31 December 2007. This wait was reduced to 6 weeks from 31 March 2009.

Further information can be found in the 'Diagnostic Waiting Times' [Full Publication Report](#)

## Audiology Waiting Times

These data are developmental. NHS Boards are working with Scottish Government and ISD to update systems in order to improve information capture to support the measuring and reporting of the whole patient journey from referral to treatment. While systems are implemented, a pragmatic interim solution is to measure and report the best available information about the different 'stages' of the journey: for a first contact appointment, from assessment to fitting of hearing aid(s), from assessment to treatment (where treatment is other than fitting of a hearing aid), from fitting of hearing aid(s) to review (this final stage is not subject to the 18 Weeks RTT target). These 'stages' of the journey are an indicator of progress towards the 18 Weeks RTT target.

Further information can be found in the 'Audiology Waiting Times' [Full Publication Report](#)

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## Further Information

Further information can be found in the on the [ISD website](#)

### About ISD

Scotland has some of the best health service data in the world combining high quality, consistency, national coverage and the ability to link data to allow patient based analysis and follow up.

Information Services Division (ISD) is a business operating unit of NHS National Services Scotland - and has been in existence for over 40 years. We are an essential support service to NHSScotland and the Scottish Government Health Department and others, responsive to the needs of NHSScotland as the delivery of health and social care evolves.

### Official Statistics

Information Services Division (ISD) is the principal and authoritative source of statistics on health and care services in Scotland. ISD is designated by legislation as a producer of 'Official Statistics'. Our official statistics publications are produced to a high professional standard and comply with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. The Code of Practice is produced and monitored by the UK Statistics Authority which is independent of Government. Under the Code of Practice, the format, content and timing of statistics publications are the responsibility of professional staff working within ISD.

Further information on ISD's statistics, including compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics, and on the UK Statistics Authority, is available on the [ISD website](#).