

Statistics Release



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

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AN ROINN

**Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta
agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí**

MÄNNYSTRIE O

**Poustie, Resydënter Heisin
an Fowk Siccar**

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Northern Ireland Waiting Lists – March 2009

This statistics release gives details of the number of people waiting for either inpatient treatment, a first outpatient assessment or a selected diagnostic service at hospitals in Northern Ireland at the end of March 2009, the most recent quarter for which figures are available.

Inpatients

Headline Totals¹ – Table 1

The total number of patients waiting to be admitted to hospitals in Northern Ireland at the end of March 2009 stood at 32,663.

Over the quarter, comparing the end of March 2009 with the end of December 2008 (36,900), the total number waiting has decreased by 4,237 (-11.5%). Comparing the end of March 2009 with the end of March 2008 (36,994), the total number waiting has decreased by 4,331 (-11.7%).

Table 1 Quarterly Inpatient Waiting Lists – March 2009

Waiting for:	Quarter Ending March 2009	Change compared with end of previous quarter	Change compared with end same quarter – previous year
Ordinary Admissions	10,558	-1,404	-1,467
Day case Admissions	22,105	-2,833	-2,864
Total Waiting	32,663	-4,237	-4,331

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

¹ Refer to technical notes – points 1-3 & 6-9.

Detailed notes and definitions are provided in the Technical Notes.



Numbers Waiting for Ordinary Admission and Day Case Treatment

People on the inpatient waiting list in Northern Ireland can be waiting for admission to hospital as day cases or as ordinary admissions.

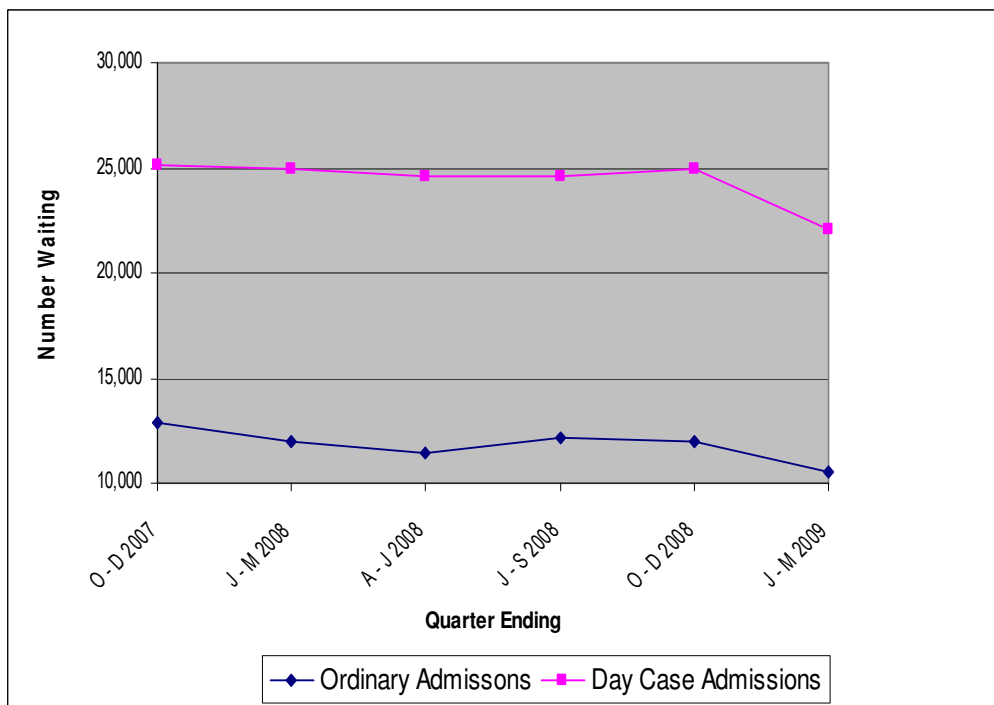
Of the 32,663 people waiting for admission to hospital at the end of March 2009, 10,558 (32.3%) were waiting for ordinary admission and 22,105 (67.7%) were waiting for day case admission (Table 1).

Since the end of December 2008, the number of cases waiting for ordinary admission has decreased by 1,404 (-11.7%) and the number waiting for day case admission has decreased by 2,833 (-11.4%). Compared with the end of March 2009, the number waiting for ordinary admission decreased by 1,467 (-12.2%) with the number waiting for day case admission decreased by 2,864 (-11.5%).

Trends

The total number of patients waiting for both ordinary and day case admission has remained reasonably constant over the previous five quarters and shows a decrease this quarter.

Figure 1 Number of patients waiting for (i) Ordinary Admissions and (ii) Day case Admissions, Six Quarterly Trends December 2007 – March 2009



Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

Ordinary Admission and Day Cases Waiting More Than 13 Weeks² – Table 2

The 2008/09 Priority for Action target relating to waiting times for inpatient treatment, states that from April 2008 no patient should wait longer than 21 weeks for inpatient or day case treatment, reducing to 13 weeks by 31st March 2009.

At the end of March 2009, there were 387 patients waiting more than 13 weeks for inpatient treatment, of which 107 were waiting more than 21 weeks. Of the 387 patients waiting more than 13 weeks, 268 (69.3%) were awaiting ordinary admission and 119 (30.7%) were awaiting day case procedures.

Table 2 Patients Waiting More Than 13 Weeks² – March 2009

Waiting for:	Quarter Ending March 2009	Change compared with end of previous quarter	Change compared with end same quarter - previous year
Ordinary Admissions	268	-1,489	-2,731
Day Case Admissions	119	-2,494	-4,363
Total Waiting	387	-3,983	-7,094

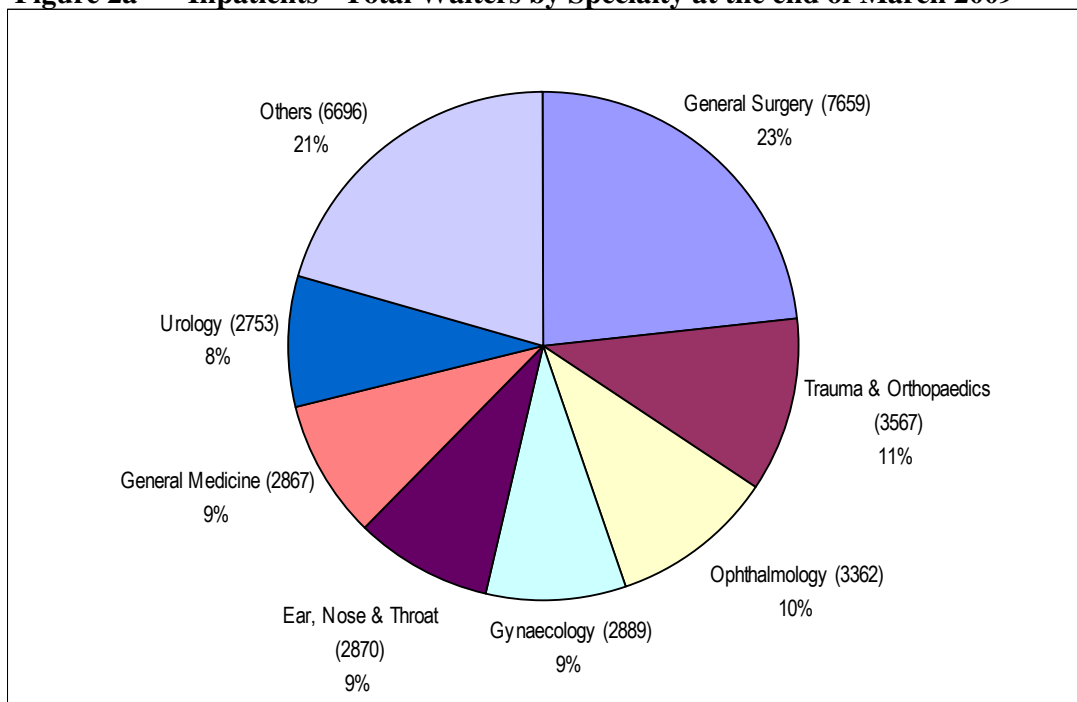
Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

² Refer to Technical Notes – points 1-10.

Inpatients Waiting by Specialty

The overwhelming majority of those waiting (79.0%) were within seven specialties: General Surgery; Trauma and Orthopaedic Surgery (T&O); Ophthalmology; Gynaecology (Gynae); Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT); General Medicine and Urology (Figure 2a).

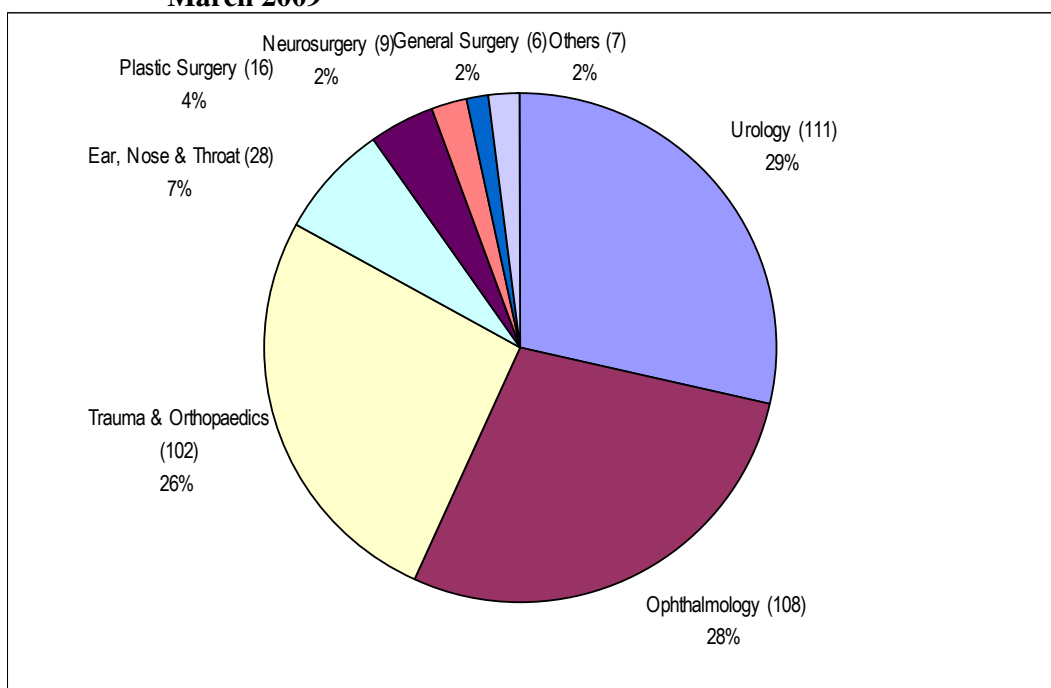
Figure 2a Inpatients - Total Waiters by Specialty at the end of March 2009²



Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

² Refer to Technical Notes – points 1-10.

Figure 2b Inpatients – Patients waiting more than 13 weeks by Specialty at the end of March 2009²



Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

² Refer to Technical Notes – points 1-10.

Inpatient Waiting Time by Specialty

Waiting times for inpatients by specialty are shown in Tables 3a and 3b. Overall 98.8% of those waiting for admission were waiting 13 weeks or less. More than 99% of patients were waiting for treatment in the Acute Services Programme of Care.

Table 3a Number of Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting and Specialty – March 2009²

Specialty	Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting				Total Number of Patients Awaiting Admission
	0 - 6	>6 - 13	>13 - 21	>21	
General Surgery	4,814	2,839	6	0	7,659
Trauma & Orthopaedics	1,772	1,693	82	20	3,567
Ophthalmology	1,613	1,641	75	33	3,362
Gynaecology	1,659	1,230	0	0	2,889
Ear, Nose & Throat	1,610	1,232	25	3	2,870
General Medicine	1,927	940	0	0	2,867
Urology	1,778	864	71	40	2,753
Gastroenterology	1,068	789	0	0	1,857
Cardiology	590	347	1	0	938
Pain Management	402	343	0	0	745
Oral Surgery	414	191	0	0	605
Plastic Surgery	262	217	10	6	495
Dermatology	211	143	0	0	354
General Practice (Other)	277	23	0	0	300
Rheumatology	119	144	0	0	263
Cardiac Surgery	137	119	1	1	258
Paediatric Surgery	131	46	1	0	178
Neurosurgery	89	70	5	4	168
Nephrology	47	36	0	0	83
Paediatric Dentistry	39	39	1	0	79
Other	274	97	2	0	373
All Specialties	19,233	13,043	280	107	32,663

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

² Refer to Technical Notes – points 1-10.

Table 3b Percentage of Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting and Specialty – March 2009²

Specialty	Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting			
	0 - 6	>6 - 13	>13 - 21	>21
General Surgery	62.9%	37.1%	0.1%	0.0%
Trauma & Orthopaedics	49.7%	47.5%	2.3%	0.6%
Ophthalmology	48.0%	48.8%	2.2%	1.0%
Gynaecology	57.4%	42.6%	0.0%	0.0%
Ear, Nose & Throat	56.1%	42.9%	0.9%	0.1%
General Medicine	67.2%	32.8%	0.0%	0.0%
Urology	64.6%	31.4%	2.6%	1.5%
Gastroenterology	57.5%	42.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Cardiology	62.9%	37.0%	0.1%	0.0%
Pain Management	54.0%	46.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Oral Surgery	68.4%	31.6%	0.0%	0.0%
Plastic Surgery	52.9%	43.8%	2.0%	1.2%
Dermatology	59.6%	40.4%	0.0%	0.0%
General Practice (Other)	92.3%	7.7%	0.0%	0.0%
Rheumatology	45.2%	54.8%	0.0%	0.0%
Cardiac Surgery	53.1%	46.1%	0.4%	0.4%
Paediatric Surgery	73.6%	25.8%	0.6%	0.0%
Neurosurgery	53.0%	41.7%	3.0%	2.4%
Nephrology	56.6%	43.4%	0.0%	0.0%
Paediatric Dentistry	49.4%	49.4%	1.3%	0.0%
Other	73.5%	26.0%	0.5%	0.0%
All Specialties	58.9%	39.9%	0.9%	0.3%

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

² Refer to Technical Notes – points 1-10.

Inpatient Waiting Times by Provider Trust

Waiting times for inpatients by Trust are shown in Table 4.

Table 4 Number of Patients Waiting for Admission by Provider Trust and by Weeks Waiting – March 2009²

Provider Trust	Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting				Total Number of Patients Waiting
	0 - 6	>6 - 13	>13 - 21	>21	
Belfast	7,231	5,819	265	103	13,418
Northern	3,211	2,011	0	0	5,222
South Eastern	2,606	1,335	0	0	3,941
Southern	2,700	2,007	0	0	4,707
Western	3,485	1,871	15	4	5,375
Total	19,233	13,043	280	107	32,663

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

² Refer to Technical Notes – points 1-10.

Completed Inpatient Waits – March 2009

Waiting times for completed inpatient waits, for patients treated within Health Service hospitals in Northern Ireland are shown in Table 5. A total of 47,834 inpatients were admitted to Health Service hospitals during the March 2009 quarter.

Table 5 **Completed Inpatient Waits³**

Quarter	Total Number of Completed Inpatient Waits	
	Excluding patients who self deferred or did not attend on a previously arranged admission date	Including patients who self deferred or did not attend on a previously arranged admission date
J - M 2006	41,240	45,827
A - J 2006	39,425	43,553
J - S 2006	36,858	41,004
O - D 2006	39,973	44,994
J - D 2006	157,496	175,378
J - M 2007	41,197	46,645
A - J 2007	40,856	46,140
J - S 2007	38,530	43,853
O - D 2007	40,538	46,230
J - D 2007	161,121	182,868
J - M 2008	39,091	45,217
A - J 2008	42,372	48,612
J - S 2008	38,811	44,802
O - D 2008	42,045	48,132
J - D 2008	162,319	186,763
J - M 2009	41,346	47,834

Source: Departmental Return CH2

³ Refer to Technical Notes – point 11.

Completed Inpatient Waits including Independent Sector Activity – March 2009

During the March 2009 quarter, a number of patients received inpatient treatment commissioned by the Health Service, within the Independent Sector. Estimates of the number of patients admitted for inpatient treatment within the Independent Sector have been provided by the commissioning Trust.

It is estimated that approximately 6,568 Health Service patients were treated within the Independent Sector during the quarter ending March 2009. When this number is combined with that for inpatients admitted to Health Service hospitals during the quarter, it is estimated that approximately 54,402 inpatients were admitted to hospital in Northern Ireland for treatment commissioned by the Health Service.

Table 6a Completed Inpatient Waits by Trust including Independent Sector Activity⁴

Provider Trust	Number of Completed Inpatient Waits within Health Service Hospitals	Number of Completed Inpatient Waits in Independent Sector	Total Number of Completed Inpatient Waits Commissioned by Health Service
Belfast	20,744	1,941	22,685
Northern	5,898	1,232	7,130
South Eastern	6,838	883	7,721
Southern	6,749	903	7,652
Western	7,605	1,609	9,214
Total Treated	47,834	6,568	54,402

Source: Health and Social Care Trusts

⁴ Refer to Technical Notes – points 11-13.

Completed Inpatient Waits including Independent Sector Activity, Quarter Ending 31 March 2008 – Quarter Ending 31 March 2009

Table 6b has been included to reflect the total completed inpatient waits for Health Service patients for the past five quarters.

Table 6b Completed Inpatient Waits by Trust Including Independent Sector Activity⁴, 31 March 2008 – 31 March 2009

Provider Trust	Total Number of Completed Inpatient Waits Commissioned by Health Service				
	31 March 2008	30 June 2008	30 September 2008	31 December 2008	31 March 2009
Belfast	21,069	21,006	20,278	22,193	22,685
Northern	5,817	6,897	6,325	6,212	7,130
South Eastern	7,000	7,443	7,017	7,745	7,721
Southern	6,716	7,088	7,171	8,027	7,652
Western	7,270	8,395	7,677	8,674	9,214
Total	47,872	50,829	48,468	52,851	54,402

Source: Health and Social Care Trusts

⁴ Refer to Technical Notes – points 11-13.

Outpatients

Headline Totals - Table 7

The number of patients waiting for a first outpatient appointment (including cancellations and deferrals) at the end of March 2009 stood at 68,942.

Over the quarter, comparing the end of March 2009 with the end of December 2008 (68,734), the total number has increased by 208 (+0.3%).

Over the year, comparing the end of March 2009 with the end of March 2008 (72,957), the total number waiting decreased by 4,015 (-5.5%).

Excluding cancellations and deferrals, the quarterly increase was 2.2% and annual decrease was -5.1%.

Table 7 Quarterly Outpatient Waiting Lists – March 2009⁵

Waiting for:	Quarter Ending March 2009	Change compared with end of previous quarter	Change compared with end same quarter - previous year
Excluding Cancellations and Deferrals	63,510	1,362	-3,930
Cancellations and Deferrals	5,432	-1,154	-85
Total Waiting	68,942	+ 208	-4,015

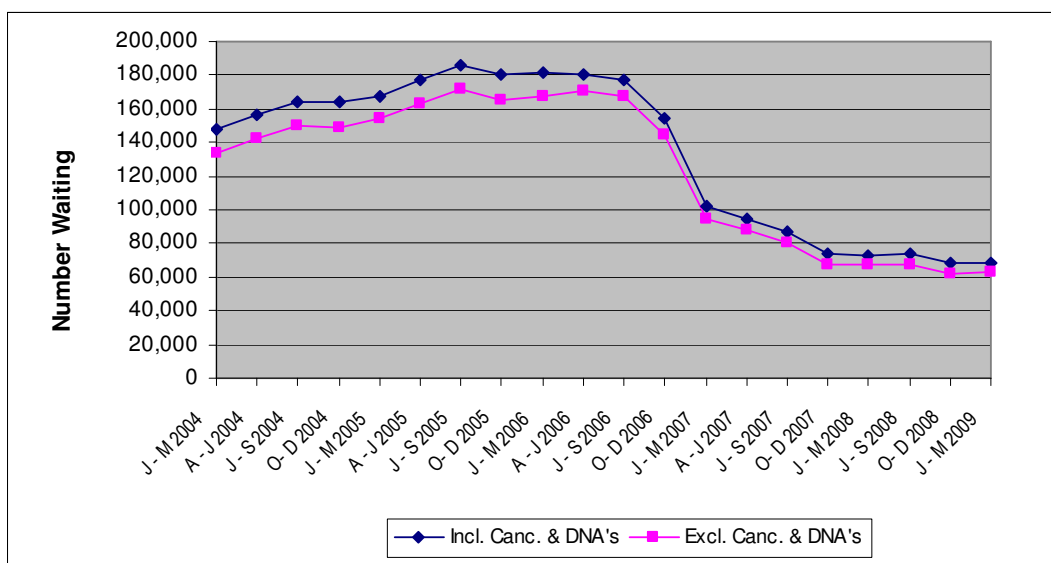
Source: Departmental Return CH3 parts 1 & 2

⁵ Refer to Technical Notes 14-16.

Trends

The total number of people waiting for a first outpatient appointment peaked in September 2005. There has been a downward trend since this peak and the outpatient waiting lists total has decreased in eight of the previous ten quarters.

Figure 3 Outpatients Waiting for a First Appointment (including and excluding cancellations and deferrals), Five Yearly Trends March 2004 – March 2009



Source: Departmental Return CH3 parts 1 & 2.

Outpatients Waiting More than 9 Weeks

The 2008/09 Priority For Action Target relating to Waiting Times for a first outpatient appointment states that 'Trusts should ensure that, from April 2008, no patient waits longer than 13 weeks for a first outpatient appointment, reducing to 9 weeks by March 2009'. At the end of March 2009, the number of patients waiting more than 9 weeks for a first outpatient appointment was 488, 0.7% of the total waiting. Of this number, 241 were waiting more than 13 weeks.

Table 8 Patients Waiting More than 9 Weeks⁶ - March 2009

Waiting for:	Quarter Ending March 2009	Change compared with end of previous quarter
Excluding Cancellations and Deferrals	480	-5,121
Cancellations and Deferrals	8	-222
Total Waiting	488	-5,343

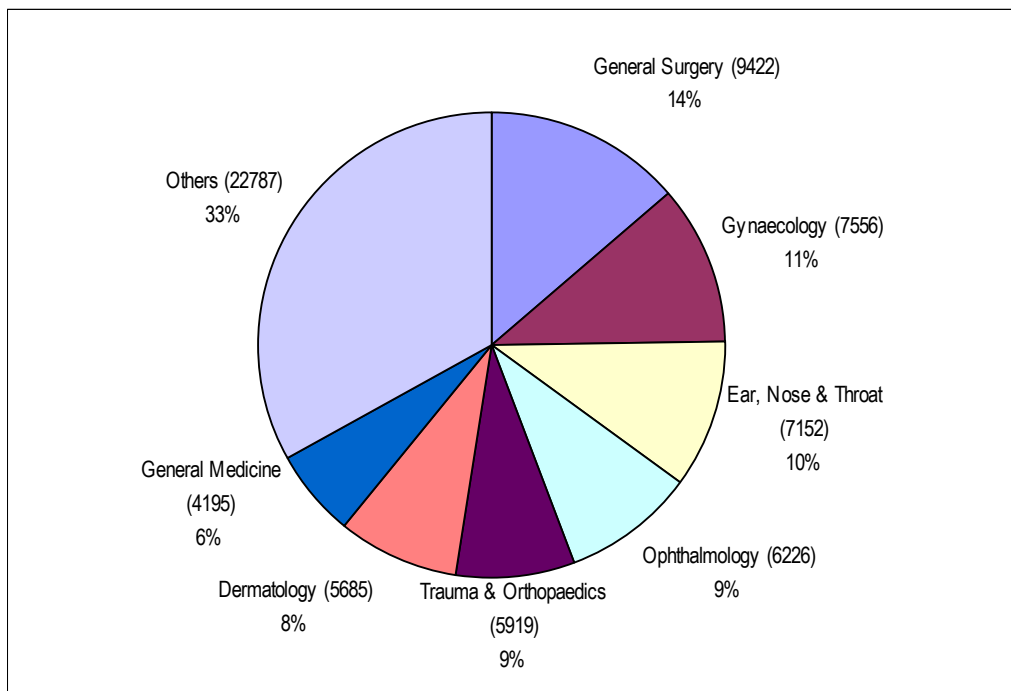
Source: Departmental Return CH3 parts 1 & 2.

⁶ Refer to Technical Notes 14-19.

Outpatients Waiting by Specialty

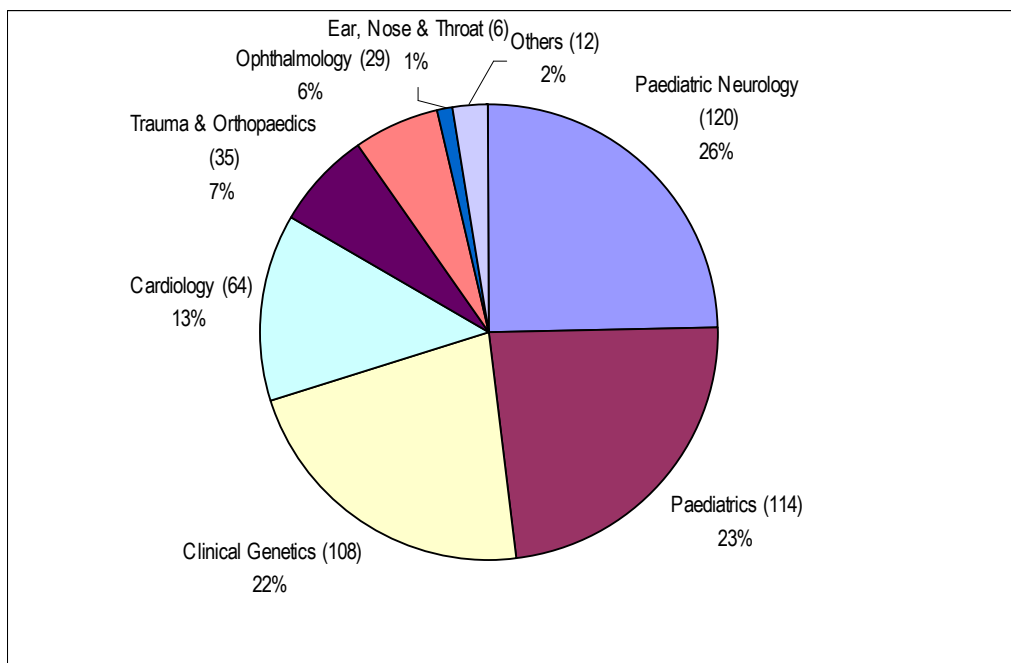
The majority of those waiting (67.0%) were within seven specialties: General Surgery; Gynaecology (Gynae); Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT); Ophthalmology; Trauma & Orthopaedics; Dermatology and General Medicine (Figure 4a). Figures represent the total number waiting for their first outpatient appointment during the March 2009 quarter including those who have cancelled or missed a previous appointment.

Figure 4a Outpatients – Total Waiters by Specialty at the end of March 2009



Source: Departmental Return CH3 Parts 1 & 2.

Figure 4b Outpatients – Patients Waiting More than 9 Weeks by Specialty at the end of March 2009



Source: Departmental Return CH3 Parts 1 & 2.

Outpatient Waiting Time by Specialty

Waiting times for outpatients by specialty are shown in Tables 9a and 9b. Overall 99.3% of those waiting for treatment were waiting less than 9 weeks.

Table 9a Number of Patients Waiting for a First Appointment by Weeks Waiting and Specialty – March 2009

Specialty	Patients Waiting for an Appointment by Weeks Waiting				Total Number of Patients Waiting
	0-6	>6-9	>9-13	>13	
General Surgery	8,254	1,166	0	2	9,422
Gynaecology	6,338	1,217	1	0	7,556
Ear, Nose & Throat	6,271	875	6	0	7,152
Ophthalmology	4,966	1,231	23	6	6,226
Trauma & Orthopaedics	4,504	1,380	34	1	5,919
Dermatology	4,727	958	0	0	5,685
General Medicine	3,589	604	2	0	4,195
Paediatrics	2,287	471	55	59	2,872
Cardiology	2,121	421	16	48	2,606
Neurology	1,801	357	0	0	2,158
Urology	1,581	262	0	0	1,843
Oral Surgery	1,431	371	0	0	1,802
Rheumatology	1,364	292	0	0	1,656
Pain Management	884	247	2	0	1,133
Gastroenterology	791	184	0	0	975
Geriatric Medicine	829	75	0	0	904
Plastic Surgery	692	162	0	0	854
Restorative Dentistry	644	195	0	0	839
Thoracic Medicine	633	135	1	0	769
Clinical Genetics	275	164	79	29	547
Other	3,259	446	28	96	3,829
All Specialties	57,241	11,213	247	241	68,942

Source: Departmental Return CH3 Parts 1 & 2

Table 9b Percentage of Patients Waiting for a First Appointment by Weeks Waiting and Specialty – March 2009

Specialty	Patients Waiting for an Appointment by Weeks Waiting			
	0-6	>6-9	>9-13	>13
General Surgery	87.6%	12.4%	0.0%	0.0%
Gynaecology	83.9%	16.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Ear, Nose & Throat	87.7%	12.2%	0.1%	<0.1%
Ophthalmology	79.8%	19.8%	0.4%	0.1%
Trauma & Orthopaedics	76.1%	23.3%	0.6%	0.0%
Dermatology	83.1%	16.9%	0.0%	0.0%
General Medicine	85.6%	14.4%	0.0%	<0.1%
Paediatrics	79.6%	16.4%	1.9%	2.1%
Cardiology	81.4%	16.2%	0.6%	1.8%
Neurology	83.5%	16.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Urology	85.8%	14.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Oral Surgery	79.4%	20.6%	0.0%	0.0%
Rheumatology	82.4%	17.6%	0.0%	0.0%
Pain Management	78.0%	21.8%	0.2%	0.0%
Gastroenterology	81.1%	18.9%	0.0%	0.0%
Geriatric Medicine	91.7%	8.3%	0.0%	0.0%
Plastic Surgery	81.0%	19.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Restorative Dentistry	76.8%	23.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Thoracic Medicine	82.3%	17.6%	0.1%	0.0%
Clinical Genetics	50.3%	30.0%	14.4%	5.3%
Other	85.1%	11.6%	0.7%	2.5%
All Specialties	83.0%	16.3%	0.4%	0.3%

Source: Departmental Return CH3 Parts 1 & 2.

Outpatient Waiting Times by Provider Trust

Waiting times for outpatients by Trust are shown in Table 10.

Table 10 Number of Patients Waiting for a First Appointment by Provider Trust and Weeks Waiting – March 2009 ⁶

Provider Trust	Patients Waiting for an Appointment by Weeks Waiting				Total Number of Patients Waiting
	0-6	>6-9	>9-13	>13	
Belfast	20,974	5,189	244	241	26,648
Northern	8,420	1,292	0	0	9,712
South Eastern	10,109	1,410	0	0	11,519
Southern	8,848	2,013	3	0	10,864
Western	8,890	1,309	0	0	10,199
Total	57,241	11,213	247	241	68,942

Source: Departmental Return CH3 Parts 1 & 2

⁶Refer to Technical Notes – points 14-19.

Outpatient Waiting Times by Programme of Care

Waiting times for a first outpatient appointment by programme of care are shown in Table 11. The vast majority (97.9%) of patients were awaiting their first outpatient appointment in the Acute Services Programme of Care.

Table 11 Number of Patients Waiting for a First Appointment by Weeks Waiting and Programme of Care – March 2009

Programme of Care	Patients Waiting for an Appointment by Weeks Waiting				Total Number of Patients Waiting
	0-6	>6-9	>9-13	>13	
Acute Services	55,957	11,072	247	241	67,517
Maternity & Child Health	167	20	0	0	187
Elderly Care	1,083	117	0	0	1,200
Mental Health	4	2	0	0	6
Learning Disability	30	2	0	0	32
All POCs	57,241	11,213	247	241	68,942

Source: Departmental Return CH3 Parts 1 & 2

Completed Outpatient Waits – March 2009

Waiting times for completed outpatient waits, for patients treated within Health Service hospitals in Northern Ireland, are shown in Table 12. A total of 106,551 patients received a first outpatient appointment within Health Service hospitals (excluding those who had previously cancelled or not attended a previous appointment) during the March 2009 quarter. Including patients who have cancelled, or did not attend a previous appointment, the total number of patients that attended a first outpatient appointment within Health Service hospitals in Northern Ireland during the quarter was 115,223.

Table 12 Completed Outpatient Waits for First Appointment⁷

Quarter	Total Number of Completed Outpatient Waits	
	Excluding patients who had cancelled or did not attend a previous appointment	Including patients who had cancelled or did not attend a previous appointment
J - M 2006	91,695	101,249
A - J 2006	90,531	99,418
J - S 2006	90,716	100,769
O- D 2006	104,266	113,927
J - D 2006	377,208	415,363
J - M 2007	110,712	121,104
A - J 2007	105,202	114,317
J - S 2007	102,848	110,509
O- D 2007	109,135	116,634
J - D 2007	427,897	462,564
J - M 2008	104,041	112,140
A - J 2008	108,230	115,771
J - S 2008	101,318	109,341
O- D 2008	109,825	117,731
J - D 2008	423,414	454,983
J - M 2009	106,551	115,223

Source: Departmental Return CH4

⁷Refer to Technical Notes – points 20 & 21.

Completed Outpatient Waits including Independent Sector Activity– March 2009

During the March 2009 quarter, a number of patients attended a first outpatient appointment, commissioned by the Health Service, within the Independent Sector. Estimates of the number of patients attending a first outpatient appointment, within the Independent Sector have been provided by commissioning Trusts.

It is estimated that approximately 8,497 Health Service patients attended a first outpatient appointment, within the Independent Sector, during the quarter ending March 2009. When this number is combined with that for outpatients attending a first appointment in Health Service hospitals during the same period, it is estimated that approximately 123,720 outpatients attended a first appointment in Northern Ireland for an assessment commissioned by the Health Service.

Table 13a Completed Outpatient Waits by Trust including Independent Sector Activity⁸

Provider Trust	Number of Completed Outpatient Waits within Health Service Hospitals	Number of Completed Outpatient Waits in Independent Sector	Total Number of Completed Outpatient Waits Commissioned by Health Service
Belfast ⁸	44,958	-	44,958
Northern	17,749	2,130	19,879
South Eastern	19,478	2,613	22,091
Southern	15,808	1,426	17,234
Western	17,230	2,328	19,558
Total Treated	115,223	8,497	123,720

Source: Health and Social Care Trusts

⁸Refer to Technical Notes – points 21-23.

Completed Outpatient Waits including Independent Sector Activity, Quarter Ending 31 March 2008 – Quarter Ending 31 March 2009

Table 13b has been included to reflect the total completed outpatient waits in the Health Service for the past five quarters.

Table 13b Completed Outpatient Waits by Trust Including Independent Sector Activity⁸, 31 March 2008 – 31 March 2009

Provider Trust	Total Number of Completed Outpatient Waits Commissioned by Health Service				
	31 March 2008	30 June 2008	30 September 2008	31 December 2008	31 March 2009
Belfast	43,938	44,762	45,018	46,910	44,958
Northern	15,618	18,261	17,357	19,314	19,879
South Eastern	19,131	20,639	19,869	24,334	22,091
Southern	14,674	17,560	16,205	16,764	17,234
Western	22,478	20,264	19,536	20,552	19,558
Total	115,839	121,486	117,985	127,874	123,720

Source: Health and Social Care Trusts

⁸Refer to Technical Notes – points 21-23.

Diagnostic Services

Tables 14 -18 provide details of the number of people waiting for the 16 selected diagnostic services, carried out at hospitals in Northern Ireland, and covered by the maximum waiting time Ministerial target for 2008/09⁹.

Headline Totals – Table 14

The total number of patients waiting for one of the 16 selected diagnostic services at hospitals in Northern Ireland at the end of March 2009 stood at 32,963, a increase of 759 (2.4%) on the position at 31st December 2008 (32,204) and an increase of 1,655 (5.3%) on the number waiting at the end of March 2008 (31,308).

Table 14 Quarterly Diagnostic Services Waiting List – March 2009⁹

Diagnostic Service:	Number of Patients Waiting Quarter Ending March 2009	Change compared with the end of the previous quarter	Change compared with the same quarter previous year
Imaging (excluding Interventional Imaging)			
Magnetic Resonance Imaging	3,288	-82	141
Computerised Tomography	3,470	556	470
Non-obstetric ultrasound	7,537	7	912
Barium Studies	1,133	31	-170
DEXA Scan	1,516	630	542
Radio-Nuclide Imaging	654	-75	-50
Physiological Measurement			
Audiology - pure tone audiometry	540	-34	-37
Cardiology - echocardiography	3,431	234	356
Cardiology - perfusion studies	490	1	180
Neurophysiology - peripheral neurophysiology	975	252	53
Respiratory physiology - sleep studies	376	38	69
Urodynamics - pressures and flows	486	90	102
Day case Endoscopy			
Colonoscopy	2,455	-375	-195
Flexi sigmoidoscopy	1,351	-15	-79
Cystoscopy	1,456	-166	-191
Gastroscopy	3,805	-333	-448
Other Endoscopy			
Colonoscopy	0	0	0
Flexi sigmoidoscopy	0	0	0
Cystoscopy	0	0	0
Gastroscopy	0	0	0
Total waiting for selected diagnostic tests	32,963	759	1,655

Source: Departmental Return SDR1

⁹Refer to Technical Notes – points 24-30.

Table 15 Diagnostic Services Waiting Times by Diagnostic Test and Weeks Waiting – March 2009⁹

Diagnostic Test	Patients Waiting for a Diagnostic Test by					Total Number of Patients Waiting
	0 - 6 weeks	>6 - 9 weeks	>9 - 13 weeks	>13 - 21 weeks	>21 weeks	
Magnetic Resonance Imaging	2,707	581	0	0	0	3,288
Computerised Tomography	3,054	416	0	0	0	3,470
Non Obstetric Ultrasound	6,848	689	0	0	0	7,537
Barium Studies	1,037	96	0	0	0	1,133
DEXA Scan	1,440	76	0	0	0	1,516
Radio Nuclide Imaging	585	69	0	0	0	654
Audiology - Pure Tone	487	53	0	0	0	540
Cardiology - Echocardiography	2,785	646	0	0	0	3,431
Cardiology - Perfusion Studies	306	103	59	22	0	490
Neurophysiology - Peripheral Neurophysiology	711	264	0	0	0	975
Respiratory Physiology - Sleep Studies	309	67	0	0	0	376
Urodynamics - Pressures & Flows	331	151	0	1	3	486
Colonoscopy	1,453	583	419	0	0	2,455
Flexi sigmoidoscopy	896	270	185	0	0	1,351
Cystoscopy	924	263	226	43	0	1,456
Gastroscopy	2,423	771	611	0	0	3,805
Total waiting for selected diagnostic tests	26,296	5,098	1,500	66	3	32,963

Source: Departmental Return SDR1

⁹Refer to Technical Notes – points 24-30.

Waiting times for diagnostic services by Trust are shown in Table 16.

Table 16 Diagnostic Services Waiting Times by Provider Trust – March 2009⁹

Diagnostic Test	Patients Waiting for a Diagnostic Test by Weeks Waiting					Total Number of Patients Waiting
	0 - 6 weeks	>6 - 9 weeks	>9 - 13 weeks	>13 - 21 weeks	>21 weeks	
Belfast	8,840	2,302	475	65	0	11,682
Northern	4,278	789	373	0	0	5,440
South Eastern	3,798	553	171	0	0	4,522
Southern	5,473	901	327	1	3	6,705
Western	3,907	553	154	0	0	4,614
Total	26,296	5,098	1,500	66	3	32,963

Source: Departmental Return SDR1

⁹Refer to Technical Notes – points 24-30.

Diagnostic Services Waiting over 9/13 Weeks

The 2008/09 Ministerial target for diagnostic services states that from April 2008, no patient should wait longer than 13 weeks for one of the selected diagnostic tests (21 weeks for a day case endoscopy) reducing to 9 weeks (13 weeks for a day case endoscopy) by 31st March 2009.

There were 85 patients waiting over 9 weeks for the 16 selected diagnostic services (except for day case endoscopies). 26 of these patients were waiting over 13 weeks.

Table 17 Selected Diagnostic Tests – Over 9 Weeks⁹

Diagnostic Test	Total Number of Patients Waiting	Total Number of Patients Waiting over 9 weeks	Total Number of Patients Waiting over 13 weeks
Magnetic Resonance Imaging	3,288	0	0
Computerised Tomography	3,470	0	0
Non Obstetric Ultrasound	7,537	0	0
Barium Studies	1,133	0	0
DEXA Scan	1,516	0	0
Radio Nuclide Imaging	654	0	0
Audiology - Pure Tone Audiometry	540	0	0
Cardiology - Echocardiography	3,431	0	0
Cardiology - Perfusion Studies	490	81	22
Neurophysiology - Peripheral Neurophysiology	975	0	0
Respiratory Physiology - Sleep Studies	376	0	0
Urodynamics - Pressures & Flows	486	4	4
Total waiting	23,896	85	26

Source: Departmental Return SDR1

⁹Refer to Technical Notes – points 24-30.

There were 43 patients waiting over 13 weeks for a day case endoscopy at the 31st March 2009, none of which were waiting more than 21 weeks.

Table 18 Day Case Endoscopies – Over 13 Weeks⁹

Diagnostic Test	Total Number of Patients Waiting	Total Number of Patients Waiting over 13 weeks	Total Number of Patients Waiting over 21 weeks
Colonoscopy	2,455	0	0
Flexi Sigmoidoscopy	1,351	0	0
Cystoscopy	1,456	43	0
Gastroscopy	3,805	0	0
Total Waiting	9,067	43	0

Source: Departmental Return SDR1

⁹Refer to Technical Notes – points 24-30.

Technical Notes

1. The sources for the data contained in this release are the DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Time Dataset and Departmental Returns CH2, CH3, CH4 and SDR1. These returns collect information from Health and Social Care Trusts on a quarterly basis.
2. Trust based information (DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Time Dataset, CH2, CH3, CH4 and SDR1) returns include all patients living outside Northern Ireland and all privately funded patients waiting for treatment in Health Service hospitals in Northern Ireland.
3. The total number of patients waiting for inpatient or day case treatment at 31st March 2009 includes 91 patients, waiting for treatment by the Independent Sector within South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust. It was not possible to differentiate these patients as ordinary or day case admissions, therefore, Hospital Information Branch used a casemix of 70% ordinary and 30% day case admissions to estimate the intended management category of these patients.
4. For Tables 2, 3a, 3b, 4 and Figure 2b, inpatient waiting time relates to the number of completed weeks a patient has been waiting for inpatient admission. For example, a patient waiting exactly 6 weeks would be included in the 0-6 week timeband and a patient waiting exactly 6 weeks and 1 day would be included in the >6-13 (greater than 6 weeks but waiting no longer than 13 weeks) timeband.
5. The current ministerial target for inpatient waiting times states that from April 2008 no patient should wait longer than 21 weeks for inpatient or day case treatment, reducing to 13 weeks by 31st March 2009. Patients waiting 'more than 13 weeks' include all patients in the >13-21 and >21 week timebands. Patients waiting 'more than 21 weeks' include all patients in the >21 week timeband.
6. Inpatient waiting list data comprises the number of patients waiting for ordinary admission to hospital and the number of patients waiting for day case treatment.
7. Ordinary admissions include both (a) patients admitted electively with the expectation that they will remain in hospital for at least one night, and (b) non-elective admissions (e.g. emergency admissions). A patient who is admitted with either of the above intentions, but who leaves hospital for any reason without staying overnight, is still counted as an ordinary admission. Day cases are not included.
8. Day Cases are patients admitted electively during the course of a day with the intention of receiving care who do not require the use of a hospital bed overnight and who return home as scheduled. If this original intention is not fulfilled and the patient stays overnight, such a patient is counted as an ordinary admission.
9. The waiting list inpatient figures presented include people waiting to be admitted as inpatients either as day cases or ordinary admissions. They do not include:
 - Patients admitted as emergency cases;
 - Outpatients;
 - Patients undergoing a planned programme of treatment e.g. a series of admissions for chemotherapy;
 - Maternity (specialties 510 and 520);
 - Patients already in hospitals but included on other waiting lists;
 - Patients who are temporarily suspended from waiting lists.

10. Waiting time begins from the date the clinician decided to admit the patient. Patients subsequently offered a date but unable to attend have their waiting times calculated from the most recent date offered. These are known as CNA's (Could Not Attend) and are included in the total number waiting.
11. Waiting times for completed inpatient waits are available upon request from Hospital Information Branch.
12. The number of patients that received inpatient treatment, commissioned by the Health Service, in the Independent Sector are provided in Tables 6a and 6b. These figures have been provided for each transferring Health and Social Care Trust (Health Trust responsible for the patients waiting time). They are not National Statistics and they have not been validated by the Department, however they have been included to provide users with a comprehensive view of completed inpatient waits during each quarter.
13. The number of patients that received inpatient treatment, commissioned by the Health Service, in the Independent Sector have been revised for the quarters ending June, September and December 2008 to 50,829, 48,468 and 52,851 respectively, due to amendments received from the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust and Western Health and Social Care Trust.
14. Outpatient waiters are defined as patients still waiting for their first outpatient appointment at the end of the quarter. An outpatient appointment is to enable a patient to see a consultant, a member of his firm or locum for such a member, in respect of one referral. Waiting time for a first outpatient appointment begins on the date the HSC Trust receives a referral for a first appointment and ends on the date the patient attends a first outpatient appointment. 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.
15. In previous quarters outpatient waiting list figures included patients waiting for an appointment in the Obstetrics speciality (501) and excluded all other obstetric patients (specialty 510, Obstetrics (Ante Natal) and specialty 520, Obstetrics (Post Natal)), as these services are provided on a planned rather than elective basis. From the quarter ending September 2008, all ante natal obstetric appointments are now recorded under speciality 510 (including those previously recorded as specialty 501) and all post natal obstetric appointments are recorded under specialty 520. As a result, all obstetric appointments are now excluded from outpatient waiting lists figures.
16. During 2008/09, Health and Social Care Trusts commenced a process of reclassifying a number of mental health 'consultant led' outpatient services as 'non consultant led' services. While this decision has been taken to improve the delivery of mental health services, the process has resulted in patients waiting for reclassified mental health services no longer being reported on the outpatient waiting list (see point 14). The process of reclassification has occurred on a service by service basis since the beginning of 2008/09 and relates to the following specialties; Geriatric Medicine, Mental Handicap, Mental Illness, Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, Forensic Psychiatry, Psychotherapy and Old Age Psychiatry. Services reclassified during the quarter ending March 2009 are excluded from the figures contained in this bulletin. Figures relating to services reclassified during the quarters ending June, September and December 2008 are not included in data presented for those quarters. Waiting times for 'non consultant led' mental health services are subject to an additional PfA target and are performance managed by the DHSSPS.

17. For Tables 8, 9a, 9b, 10, 11 and Figure 4b, outpatient waiting time relates to the number of completed weeks a patient has been waiting for outpatient assessment. For example, a patient waiting exactly 6 weeks would be included in the 0-6 week timeband and a patient waiting exactly 6 weeks and 1 day would be included in the >6-9 (greater than 6 weeks but waiting no longer than 9 weeks) timeband.
18. The current ministerial target for outpatient waiting times states that from April 2008 no patient should wait longer than 13 weeks for a first outpatient appointment, reducing to 9 weeks by 31st March 2009. Patients waiting 'more than 9 weeks' include all patients in the >9-13 and >13 week timebands. Patients waiting 'more than 13 weeks' include all patients in the >13 week timeband.
19. Due to technical difficulties it is not currently possible to accurately report on the total number of patients waiting for a first Integrated Clinical Assessment and Treatment Services (ICATS) appointment at 31st December 2008.
20. Waiting times for completed outpatient waits are available upon request from Hospital Information Branch.
21. Data on the number of completed outpatient waits performed within the Independent sector, as commissioned by the Belfast HSC Trust are included within the figures contained in Table 12.
22. The number of patients that received an outpatient assessment, commissioned by the Health Service, in the Independent Sector is provided in Tables 13a and 13b. These figures have been provided for each transferring Health and Social Care Trust (Trust responsible for the patients waiting time). They are not National Statistics and they have not been validated by the Department, however they have been included to provide users with a comprehensive view of completed outpatient waits during each quarter.
23. The number of patients that received an outpatient assessment, commissioned by the Health Service, in the Independent Sector have been revised for the quarters ending June, September and December 2008 to 121,486, 117,985 and 127,874 respectively, due to amendments received from the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust and Western Health and Social Care Trust.
24. The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety commenced the collection of waiting times information for diagnostic services for the quarter ending 31st December 2007, following a pilot exercise for the quarter ending 30th September 2007. The source for the data is the Information Return SDR1. This return will be collected from Hospital Trusts on a quarterly basis. The data are not National Statistics and they have had limited validation by the Department, however they have been included to provide users with a comprehensive view of waiting times for the selected diagnostic services subject to the 2008/09 Ministerial target.
25. 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.
26. The Ministerial target for diagnostic waiting times states that from April 2008, no patient should wait longer than 13 weeks for one of the selected diagnostic tests (21 weeks for a day case endoscopy) reducing to 9 weeks (13 weeks for a day case endoscopy) by 31st March 2009. The 16 selected 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; Gastroscopy.

27. The diagnostic waiting time target 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 programme are also excluded from the waiting times target.
28. 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.
29. A number of the diagnostic services reported on the SDR 1 return are managed as 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.
30. Waiting time statistics for day case endoscopies also include patients waiting for endoscopies that are managed as ordinary admissions.
31. 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.
32. Figures relating to the quarter ending 30th June 2009 will be released on Thursday, 3rd September 2009.
33. For general enquiries about National Statistics, contact the National Statistics Public Service on

020 7533 5888

minicom: 01633 812399

E-mail: info@statistics.gov.uk

Fax: 01633 652747

Letters: room DG/18, Drummond Gate,
LONDON SW1V 2QQ

You can also find National Statistics on the internet – Go to www.statistics.gov.uk.

Additional Information

Further information on waiting lists in Northern Ireland is available from:

Office Information Manager

Hospital Information Branch

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

Annexe 2

Castle Buildings

Stormont

BT4 3SQ

E-mail: statistics@dhsspsni.gov.uk

Internet address: http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/stats-hospital_community_statistics#waiting