



# NORTHERN IRELAND WAITING TIME STATISTICS: OUTPATIENT WAITING TIMES QE DECEMBER 2010

This publication presents information on waiting times for a first outpatient assessment in Northern Ireland at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010. It details information on the number of patients waiting, and length of time waiting, for consultant led and ICATS outpatient services at HSC Trusts in Northern Ireland. Data are presented by HSC Trust, specialty and time band. The number of completed outpatient attendances is also presented by HSC Trust.

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## Background

The data contained in this publication was previously published as part of the Northern Ireland Waiting List Bulletin which was published each quarter until the QE September 2010.

## Key Points

- The number of patients waiting for a first outpatient appointment at the end of December 2010 stood at 124,589, 4,246 (-3.3%) less than at the end of September 2010 (128,835) and 42,019 (50.9%) more than at the end of December 2009 (82,570) (Figure 1 & Table 1).
- The number of patients waiting more than 9 weeks was 54,472 (43.7%). This was 2,146 more than at the end of September 2010 (52,326 waiting more than 9 weeks) and 38,757 more than at the same quarter last year (15,715) (Figure 4 & Table 4).
- When attendances from Health Service hospitals and Health Service commissioned Independent Sector activity is combined, it is estimated that approximately 125,858 outpatients attended a first appointment in Northern Ireland for an assessment by the Health Service in the quarter October to December 2010 (Figure 9 & Table 5).
- There were 6,203 patients waiting for a first Tier 2 ICATS appointment at the end of December 2010. This was 1,296 (-17.3%) less than at the end of September 2010 (7,499) (Figure 10 & Table 8).

## Reader Information

Purpose	Report on the number of patients waiting, and length of time waiting for consultant led and ICATS outpatient services at HSC Trusts in Northern Ireland.
Authors	Kerry McColgan, Rodney Redmond, Laura Smyth.
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## Hospital Information Branch (HIB)

Hospital Information Branch is responsible for the collection, quality assurance, analysis and publication of timely and accurate information derived from a wide range of statistical information returns supplied by the HSC Trusts and the Health and Social Care Board. Statistical information is collected routinely from a variety of electronic patient level administrative system and pre-defined EXCEL survey return templates. The Head of the Branch is the Principal Statistician, Mrs. Laura Smyth.

The Branch aims to present information in a meaningful way and provide advice on its uses to customers in the Health and Social Care Committee, Professional Advisory Groups and policy branches within the DHSSPS. The statistical information collected is used to contribute to major exercises such as reporting on corporate monitoring, Health & Personal Social Services (HPSS) performance tables, other comparative performance exercises, target setting, management frameworks and policy evaluation. In addition, the information is used in response to a significantly high volume of Parliamentary / Assembly questions and ad-hoc queries each year.

Information is disseminated through a number of key statistical publications, including: Inpatient Activity, Outpatient Activity, Emergency Care, Mental Health & Learning Disability and Waiting Time Statistics (Inpatient, Outpatient, Diagnostics and Cancer). A detailed list of these publications is available from:

**Website:** [http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats\\_research/stats-activity\\_stats-2.htm](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats_research/stats-activity_stats-2.htm)

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## Technical Notes

This statistics release is the first of a quarterly data series presenting information on waiting times for outpatient services at HSC Trusts in Northern Ireland. Historically, this information on the number of patients waiting for outpatient services, and the length of time they were waiting at the end of each quarter, as well as information on completed outpatient waits during the quarter, was included within the NI Waiting List publication. This publication has now been discontinued.

### Data Collection

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

- Departmental returns CH3, IS1, Quarterly Outpatient Activity Return (QOAR), and ICATS Waiting Time Datasets.

### Rounding

Percentages have been rounded to whole numbers and as a consequence some percentages may not sum to 100.

### Data Quality

All information presented in this bulletin has been validated and quality assured by HSC Trusts and Hospitals prior to publication. HSC Trusts and Hospitals are given a set period of time to submit the information to HIB. Following submission, HIB perform a series of checks to verify that information is consistent both within and across returns. Trend analyses are used to monitor annual variations and emerging trends. Queries arising from validation checks are presented to HSC Trusts for

clarification and if required returns may be amended and/or re-submitted.

Finally, prior to the publication of this information the data is presented to HSC Trusts and Hospitals for final sign-off.

### Main Uses of Data

The main uses of these data are to monitor waiting times for a first outpatient appointment to help assess Trust performance, for corporate monitoring, to inform and monitor related policy, and to respond to parliamentary / assembly questions and ad-hoc queries from the public.

### Waiting Time Information Elsewhere in the United Kingdom

While it is our intention to direct users to waiting time information elsewhere in the UK, users should be aware that hospital waiting times in other administrations are not always measured in a comparable manner to those in Northern Ireland. Details of the hospital waiting times published elsewhere in the UK can be found as detailed below.

#### England

<http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Statistics/Perfomancedataandstatistics/ReferraltoTreatmentstatistics/index.htm>

#### Scotland

<http://www.isdscotland.org/isd/5627.html>

#### Wales

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/headlines/health2011/1102101/?lang=en>

## **A National Statistics Publication**

National Statistics are produced to a high professional standard set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political interference. As we want to engage with users of our statistics, we invite you to feedback your comments on this publication to:

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## Northern Ireland Outpatient Waiting Lists

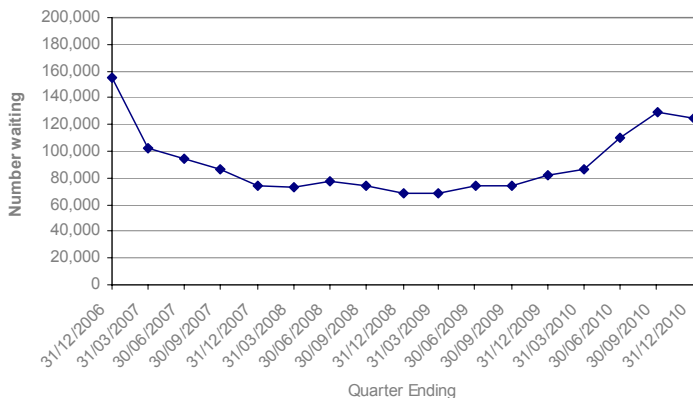
### Consultant-led Outpatient Services

Data contained in this publication relates to the waiting times for a first outpatient assessment in services within HSC Trusts in Northern Ireland at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010. An outpatient appointment is to enable a patient to see a consultant, a member of their firm or locum for such a member, in respect of one referral.

### Total patients waiting<sup>1</sup>

The number of patients waiting for a first outpatient appointment at the end of December 2010 stood at 124,589, which is 4,246 (-3.3%) less than at the end of September 2010 (128,835) and 42,019 (50.9%) more than at the end of December 2009 (82,570) (Figure 1 & Table 1).

**Figure 1: Total number of patients waiting: Quarterly trends 31<sup>st</sup> December 2006 – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010<sup>1</sup>**

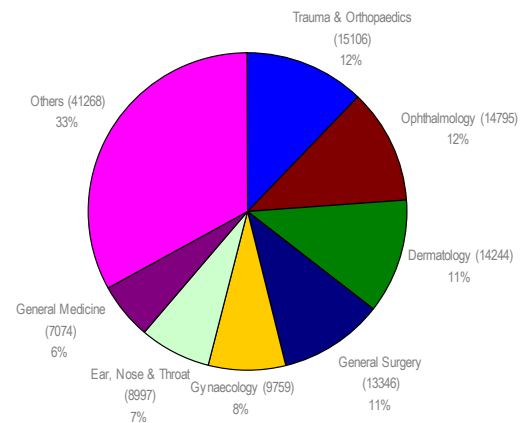


Source: Departmental Return CH3 Parts 1 & 2

### Total Patients Waiting by Specialty<sup>1</sup>

Just over two-thirds of the 124,589 (66.9%, 83,321) patients waiting for a first outpatient appointment were within seven specialties: Trauma & Orthopaedics; Ophthalmology; Dermatology; General Surgery; Gynaecology; Ear, Nose & Throat (ENT) and General Medicine (Figure 2 & Table 2).

**Figure 2: Total number of patients waiting by specialty at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010**



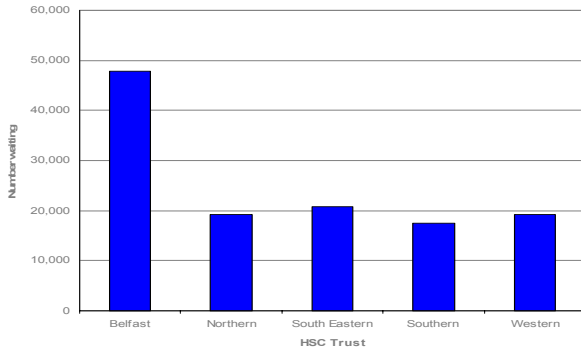
Source: Departmental Return CH3 Parts 1 & 2

### Total Patients Waiting by HSC Trust<sup>1</sup>

Over a third (38.3%, 47,779) of patients waiting for a first appointment were waiting in the Belfast HSC Trust. 16.7% (20,825) of those waiting were waiting in the South Eastern HSC Trust, 15.5% (19,288) in the Western HSC Trust, 15.4% (19,245) in the Northern HSC Trust and 14.0% (17,452) in the Southern HSC Trust (Figure 3 & Table 3).

<sup>1</sup> Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-3

**Figure 3: Total number of patients waiting by HSC Trust at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010**



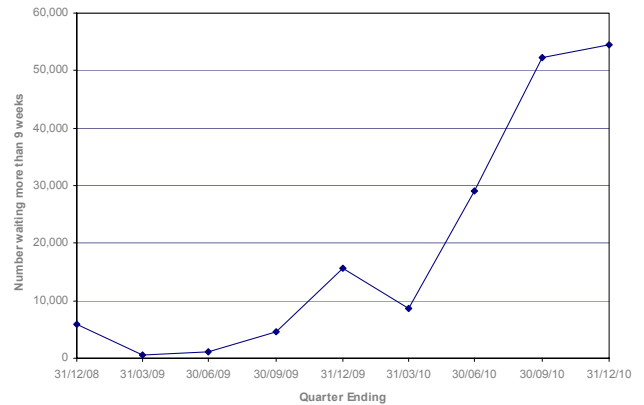
Source: Departmental Return CH3 Parts 1 & 2

**Patients waiting longer than 2010/11 maximum waiting time target<sup>2</sup>**

The 2010/11 Priority for Action Target relating to Waiting Times for a first outpatient appointment states that by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011, no patient should wait longer than 9 weeks for a first outpatient appointment.

At the end of December 2010, the number of patients waiting more than 9 weeks for a first outpatient appointment was 54,472 (43.7%). This was 2,146 more than at the end of September 2010 (52,326 waiting more than 9 weeks) and 38,757 more than at the same time last year (15,715 waiting more than 9 weeks). Of the 54,472 patients waiting more than 9 weeks, 37,655 (30.2%) were waiting more than 13 weeks (Figure 4 & Table 4).

**Figure 4: Outpatients waiting more than 9 weeks: Quarterly Trends 31<sup>st</sup> December 2006 – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010**

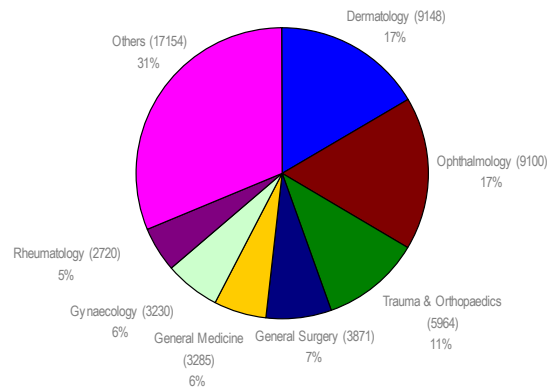


Source: Departmental Return CH3 Parts 1 & 2

**Patients waiting longer than 2010/11 maximum waiting time target by specialty<sup>2</sup>**

Over two-thirds (68.5%, 37,318) of the 54,472 patients waiting more than 9 weeks were within seven specialties as shown in Figure 5 below.

**Figure 5: Patients waiting more than 9 Weeks by specialty at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010**



Source: Departmental Return CH3 Parts 1 & 2

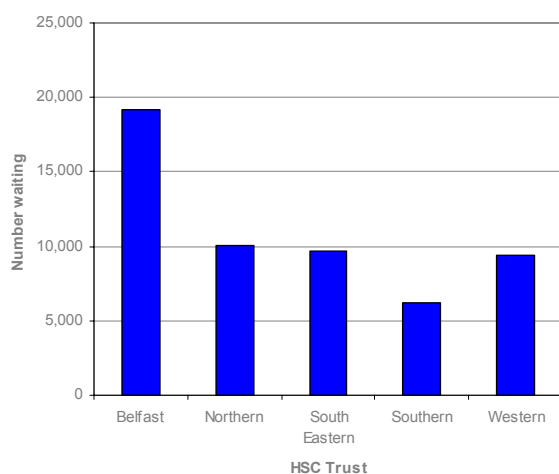
<sup>2</sup> Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-5



## Patients waiting longer than 2010/11 maximum waiting time by HSC Trust<sup>2</sup>

Of the 54,472 patients waiting more than 9 weeks for a first outpatient appointment, 35.2% (19,157) were waiting in the Belfast HSC Trust, with 18.4% (10,043), 17.8% (9,692), 17.3% (9,403) and 11.3% (6,177) waiting at the Northern, South Eastern, Western and Southern HSC Trusts respectively (Figure 6 & Table 3).

**Figure 6: Total number of patients waiting over 9 weeks by HSC Trust at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010**

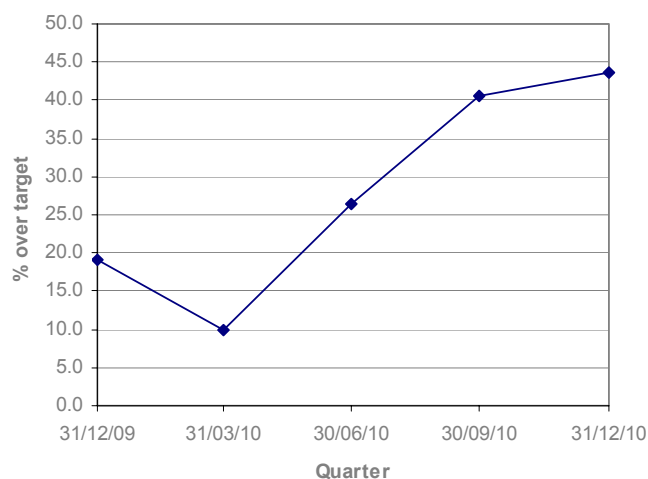


Source: Departmental Return CH3 Parts 1 & 2

## Proportion of patients waiting over the maximum waiting time target<sup>2</sup>

At the quarter ending December 2010, 43.7% of patients waited more than nine weeks for a first outpatient appointment (54,472 out of a total of 124,589), compared with 40.6% (52,326 out of 128,835 total patients waiting) waiting at the end of September 2010 and 19.0% (15,715 out of 82,570 total patients waiting) at the end of December 2009 (Figure 7 & Table 2).

**Figure 7: Proportion of patients waiting over 9 weeks: Quarterly trends December 2009 – December 2010**



Source: Departmental Return CH3 Parts 1 & 2

## Completed Waits within Health Service Hospitals<sup>3</sup>

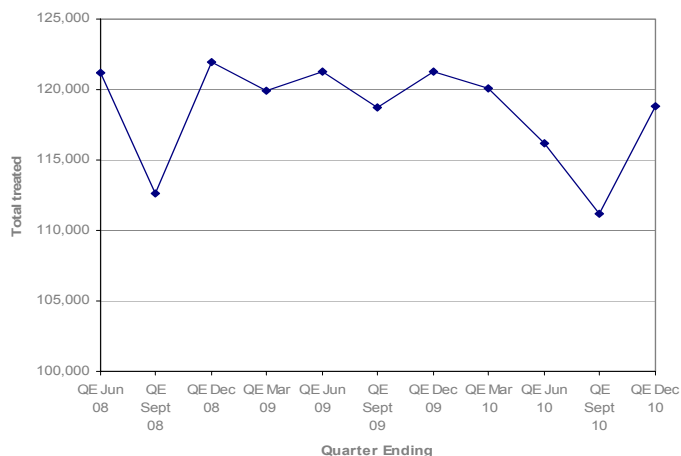
The number of completed outpatient waits, for patients treated within Health Service hospitals in Northern Ireland, is shown in Table 5. The total number of completed waits each quarter, within HSC hospitals, is derived as the total number of attendances at a first outpatient appointment (Figure 8).

During the quarter ending the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010, 118,795 patients attended a first outpatient appointment in a Health Service hospital, compared with 111,172 in the quarter ending 30<sup>th</sup> September 2010 (an increase of 6.9%) and 121,245 in the quarter ending 30<sup>th</sup> December 2009 (down 2.0%).

<sup>2</sup> Refer to Explanatory Notes 1 - 5

<sup>3</sup> Refer to Explanatory Notes 6 & 7

**Figure 8: Total number of completed waits in Health Service hospitals: Quarterly trends QE June 2008 – QE December 2010**



Source: Departmental Return QOAR.  
P-Provisional

### Completed Waits within Independent Sector<sup>3</sup>

During the December 2010 quarter, a number of patients attended a first outpatient appointment, commissioned by the Health Service, within the Independent Sector. The number of such patients attending a first outpatient appointment within the Independent Sector has been provided by the Health and Social Care Board, split by commissioning Trust (Table 6).

During the quarter ending December 2010, 7,063 Health Service patients attended a first outpatient appointment, within the Independent Sector. This is an increase on both the quarter ending September 2010 (337) and the same quarter of the previous year (2,202).

### Completed Waits Including Independent Sector Activity<sup>3</sup>

When the total number of completed outpatient waits commissioned by the Health Service, within the Independent

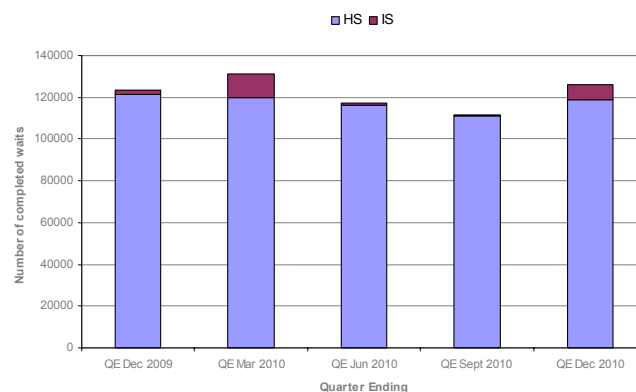
<sup>3</sup> Refer to Explanatory Notes 6 & 7

Sector, during the quarter ending December 2010 (7,063) is combined with that for outpatients attending a first outpatient appointment in Health Service hospitals during the same period (118,795), it is estimated that approximately 125,858 outpatients attended a first appointment in Northern Ireland for an assessment commissioned by the Health Service (Table 5).

Approximately 41% (51,679) of completed waits for the quarter ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010 occurred in the Belfast HSC Trust with 16% (20,174), 16% (19,816), 15% (19,071) and 12% (15,118) occurring in the South Eastern, Western, Southern and Northern Trusts respectively (Table 6).

There has been a 12.9% (14,349) increase in the total number of completed outpatient waits between September 2010 (111,509) and December 2010 (125,858) and a increase of 2.0% (2,411) from December 2009 (123,447) to December 2010 (125,858) (Figure 9 & Table 7).

**Figure 9: Completed outpatient waits including Independent Sector activity: Quarterly trends QE Dec 2009 – QE Dec 2010<sup>P</sup>**



Source: Departmental Return QOAR and IS1 Part 1  
P – Data are currently provisional

Between the quarters ending December 2009 and December 2010, there have been fluctuations in total number of completed outpatient waits commissioned by Health Service hospitals. The fall of 5,565 in completed outpatient waits reported between the quarter ending June 2010 (117,074) and September 2010 (111,509) was mainly due to the decrease in the amount of waits completed in-house (which fell by 5,033 from 116,205 to 111,172). However, the 14,349 rise in activity between the quarter ending September 2010 and December 2010 was due to both increases in in-house activity (111,172 to 118,795) and Independent Sector activity (337 to 7,063) (Figure 9 & Table 5).

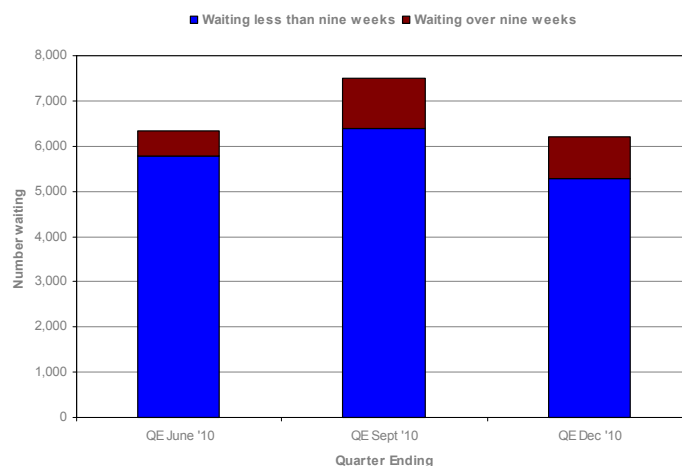
### Waiting Times for a first Tier 2 Integrated Clinical Assessment and Treatment Service (ICATS) Appointment<sup>4</sup>

During the December 2010 quarter, a number of patients were waiting for a Tier 2 appointment within Integrated Clinical Assessment and Treatment Services (ICATS). ICATS is the term used for a range of services for patients, which are provided by integrated multi-disciplinary teams of health service professionals, including GPs with special interest, specialist nurses and allied health professionals. They are provided in a variety of primary, community and secondary care settings and include assessment, treatment, diagnostic and advisory services.

There were 6,203 patients waiting for a first Tier 2 ICATS appointment at the end of December 2010. This was 1,296 (-17.3%) less than at the end of September 2010 (7,499) (Figure 10 & Table 8).

<sup>4</sup> Refer to Explanatory Notes 8 - 10

**Figure 10: Total number of patients waiting for a first Tier 2 ICATS appointment: Quarterly trends 30<sup>th</sup> June 2010 – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010**

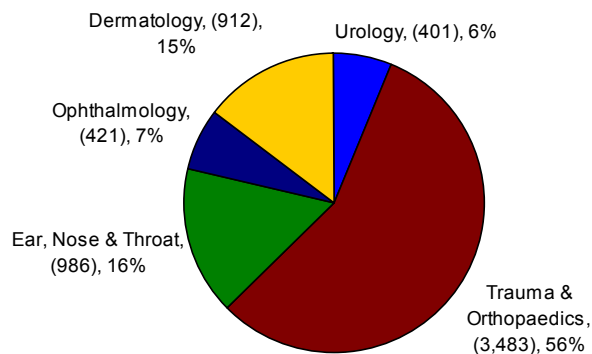


Source: ICATS Waiting Times Dataset

### Total Patients Waiting for an ICATS Appointment by Specialty<sup>4</sup>

The majority (56.2%) of those waiting for a first ICATS appointment were waiting for an appointment within the Trauma & Orthopaedics specialty (3483), followed by ENT and Dermatology (986, 15.9% and 912, 14.7% respectively). Only a small proportion of those waiting were within the Ophthalmology (421, 6.8%) and Urology specialties (401, 6.5%) (Figure 11 & Table 9).

**Figure 11: Total number of ICATS patients waiting by specialty at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010**

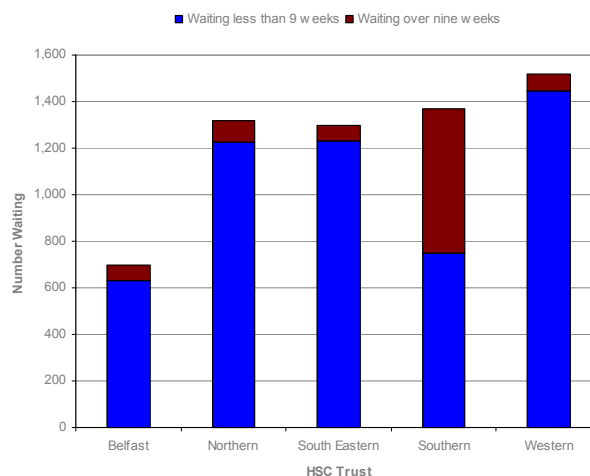


Source: ICATS Waiting Times Dataset

#### **Total Patients Waiting for an ICATS Appointment by HSC Trust<sup>4</sup>**

Just under a quarter (24.5%, 1,519) of those waiting for a first ICATS appointment were waiting in the Western HSC Trust, 22.1% (1,369) were waiting in the Southern HSC Trust, 21.3% (1,319) in the Northern HSC Trust, 21.0% (1,297) in the South Eastern HSC Trust, and 11.3% (699) in the Belfast HSC Trust (Figure 12 & Table 10).

**Figure 12: Total number of ICATS patients waiting by HSC Trust at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010**



Source: ICATS Waiting Times Dataset

#### **Patients waiting longer than 2010/11 maximum waiting time target for a first Tier 2 ICATS appointment by Specialty<sup>4</sup>**

The 2010/11 Priority for Action target for waiting times for a first Tier 2 appointment at ICATS states that by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011, no patient should wait longer than 9 weeks for a first Tier 2 appointment at ICATS.

Overall, 85.2% of those waiting for an appointment were waiting less than 9 weeks (Table 11). In total there were 918 patients who waited more than 9 weeks for a first ICATS outpatient appointment, a decrease of 204 from the previous quarter (1,122 waiting over nine weeks). There was the same proportion of patients (15%) who were waiting longer than nine weeks at the QE December 2010 (918 out of 6,203 waiting) as there was in the quarter ending September 2010 (1,122 out of 7,499 waiting).

<sup>4</sup> Refer to Explanatory Notes 8 - 10

**Patients waiting for an ICATS appointment longer than 2010/11 maximum waiting time target by Specialty<sup>4</sup>**

Of those waiting over nine weeks for a first outpatient appointment at ICATS, nearly half (46.4%) of those patients were waiting in the Dermatology specialty (426), and over a quarter (27.3%) waiting in Urology (251). A further 14.7% and 8.2% were waiting in the T & O (135) and Ophthalmology (75) specialties respectively. Only 3.4% (31) of these patients were waiting in the ENT at the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010 (Table 9).

**Patients waiting for an ICATS appointment longer than 2010/11 maximum waiting time target by HSC Trust<sup>4</sup>**

Of the 918 patients waiting more than nine weeks, 68.0% (622) were waiting in the Southern HSC Trust. A further 10.0% (91) were waiting in the Northern HSC Trust, with 8.0%, 7.3% and 7.1% waiting in the Western (73), Belfast (67) and South Eastern (65) HSC Trusts respectively (Table 10).

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<sup>4</sup> Refer to Explanatory Notes 8 - 10

## Consultant-led Outpatient Services

**Table 1 Quarterly Outpatient Waiting Lists – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010<sup>1</sup>**

	Quarter Ending 31st December 2010	Change compared with end of previous quarter	Change compared with end same quarter - previous year
<b>Total Waiting</b>	124,589	-4,246	+42,019

Source: Departmental Return CH3 parts 1 & 2

<sup>1</sup> Refer to Explanatory Notes 1 - 3

**Table 2 Number of Patients Waiting for a First Appointment by Weeks Waiting and Specialty – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010**

Specialty	Patients Waiting for an Appointment by Weeks Waiting					Total Number of Patients Waiting
	0-6	>6-9	>9-13	>13-26	>26	
Trauma & Orthopaedics	6,845	2,297	2,050	3,225	689	15,106
Ophthalmology	3,822	1,873	2,096	5,107	1,897	14,795
Dermatology	3,548	1,548	1,831	3,953	3,364	14,244
General Surgery	7,035	2,440	1,548	2,087	236	13,346
Gynaecology	4,799	1,730	1,709	1,449	72	9,759
Ear, Nose & Throat	4,688	2,029	1,136	973	171	8,997
General Medicine	2,841	948	959	1,562	764	7,074
Other:-	17,154	6,520	5,488	8,686	3420	41,268
Cardiology	2,203	869	671	992	269	5,004
Rheumatology	1,409	732	802	1393	525	4,861
Neurology	1,470	673	729	1393	296	4,561
Oral Surgery	1,288	556	777	1,132	466	4,219
Paediatrics	2,064	670	365	366	213	3,678
Urology	1,590	584	461	422	106	3,163
Plastic Surgery	550	238	216	720	759	2,483
Pain Management	903	409	273	444	138	2,167
Gastroenterology	1,082	357	150	280	8	1,877
Restorative Dentistry	443	241	325	256	2	1,267
Thoracic Medicine	623	215	91	217	104	1,250
Dental Medicine Specialities	236	138	167	498	206	1,245
Neurosurgery	183	99	108	170	91	651
Other	3,110	739	353	403	237	4,842
<b>All Specialties</b>	<b>50,732</b>	<b>19,385</b>	<b>16,817</b>	<b>27,042</b>	<b>10,613</b>	<b>124,589</b>

Source: Departmental Return CH3 parts 1 & 2

<sup>2</sup> Refer to Explanatory Notes 1 - 5

**Table 3 Number of Patients Waiting for a First Appointment by HSC Trust and Weeks Waiting – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010<sup>2</sup>**

HSC Trust	Patients Waiting for an Appointment by Weeks Waiting					Total Number of Patients Waiting
	0-6	>6-9	>9-13	>13-26	>26	
Belfast	20,633	7,989	6,575	9,500	3,082	47,779
Northern	6,568	2,634	2,845	5,638	1,560	19,245
South Eastern	8,254	2,879	2,169	4,426	3,097	20,825
Southern	8,013	3,262	2,401	2,850	926	17,452
Western	7,264	2,621	2,827	4,628	1,948	19,288
<b>Total</b>	<b>50,732</b>	<b>19,385</b>	<b>16,817</b>	<b>27,042</b>	<b>10,613</b>	<b>124,589</b>

Source: Departmental Return CH3 parts 1 & 2

<sup>2</sup> Refer to Explanatory Notes 1 - 5

**Table 4 Patients Waiting More than 9 Weeks – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010<sup>2</sup>**

	Quarter Ending 31st December 2010	Change compared with end of previous quarter	Change compared with end same quarter - previous year
<b>Total Waiting</b>	54,472	+2,146	+38,757

Source: Departmental Return CH3 parts 1 & 2

<sup>2</sup> Refer to Explanatory Notes 1 - 5

**Table 5 Completed Outpatient Waits: QE June 2008 – QE December 2010<sup>3</sup>**

Quarter	Total Number of Completed Outpatient Waits Within Health Service Hospitals	Total Number of Completed Outpatient Waits in Independent Sector	Total Number of Completed Outpatient Waits Commissioned by Health Service
A - J 2008	121,147	5,087	126,234
J - S 2008	112,610	7,173	119,783
O- D 2008	121,985	10,354	132,339
J - M 2009	119,942	13,260	133,202
<b>A - M 2008/9</b>	<b>475,684</b>	<b>35,874</b>	<b>511,558</b>
A - J 2009	121,244	13,246	134,490
J - S 2009	118,770	12,799	131,569
O- D 2009	121,245	2,202	123,447
J - M 2010	120,086	11,241	131,327
<b>A - M 2009/10</b>	<b>481,345</b>	<b>39,488</b>	<b>520,833</b>
A - J 2010 <sup>RP</sup>	116,205	869	117,074
J - S 2010 <sup>RP</sup>	111,172	337	111,509
O- D 2010 <sup>P</sup>	118,795	7,063	125,858

Source: Departmental Return QOAR and ISI part 1.

R – Data have been revised P – Data are currently provisional

<sup>3</sup> Refer to Explanatory Notes 6 & 7

**Table 6 Completed Outpatient Waits by Trust including Independent Sector Activity – QE December 2010<sup>3</sup>**

Provider Trust	Number of Completed Outpatient Waits within Health Service Hospitals <sup>P</sup>	Number of Completed Outpatient Waits in Independent Sector <sup>P</sup>	Total Number of Completed Outpatient Waits Commissioned by Health Service <sup>P</sup>
Belfast	44,858	6,821	51,679
Northern	15,118	0	15,118
South Eastern	20,174	0	20,174
Southern	19,071	0	19,071
Western	19,574	242	19,816
<b>Total Treated</b>	<b>118,795</b>	<b>7,063</b>	<b>125,858</b>

Source: Departmental Returns QOAR and IS1 part 1

P – Data are currently provisional

<sup>3</sup> Refer to Explanatory Notes 6 & 7



**Table 7 Completed Outpatient Waits by Trust including Independent Sector Activity, QE December 2009- QE December 2010<sup>3</sup>**

Provider Trust	Total Number of Completed Outpatient Waits Commissioned by Health Service				
	QE December 2009	QE March 2010	QE June 2010 <sup>RP</sup>	QE September 2010 <sup>RP</sup>	QE December 2010 <sup>P</sup>
Belfast	45,959	47,142	46,094	44,060	51,679
Northern	16,708	19,251	15,124	13,697	15,118
South Eastern	18,881	23,651	19,461	19,552	20,174
Southern	19,870	18,195	17,627	15,987	19,071
Western	22,029	23,088	18,768	18,213	19,816
<b>Total</b>	<b>123,447</b>	<b>131,327</b>	<b>117,074</b>	<b>111,509</b>	<b>125,858</b>

Source: Departmental Returns QOAR and IS1 part 1

R – Data have been revised

P – Data are currently provisional

<sup>3</sup> Refer to Explanatory Notes 6 & 7

## Integrated Clinical Assessment and Treatment Services

**Table 8 Quarterly ICATS Waiting Lists – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010<sup>4</sup>**

	<b>Quarter ending 31st December</b>	<b>Change compared with end of previous</b>
<b>Total Waiting</b>	6,203	-1,296

Source: ICATS Waiting Times Dataset

<sup>4</sup> Refer to Explanatory Notes 8 - 10

**Table 9 Number of Patients Waiting for a First ICATS Tier 2 Appointment by Weeks Waiting and Specialty – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010<sup>4</sup>**

<b>Specialty</b>	<b>Patients Waiting for an Appointment by Weeks Waiting</b>					<b>Total Number of Patients Waiting</b>
	<b>0-6</b>	<b>&gt;6-9</b>	<b>&gt;9-13</b>	<b>&gt;13-26</b>	<b>&gt;26</b>	
Urology	97	53	94	142	15	401
Trauma & Orthopaedics	2,426	922	115	18	2	3,483
Ear, Nose & Throat	841	114	24	6	1	986
Ophthalmology	253	93	35	32	8	421
Dermatology	347	139	65	253	108	912
<b>All Specialties</b>	<b>3,964</b>	<b>1,321</b>	<b>333</b>	<b>451</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>6,203</b>

Source: ICATS Waiting Times Dataset

<sup>4</sup> Refer to Explanatory Notes 9 & 10

**Table 10 Number of Patients Waiting for a First ICATS Tier 2 Appointment by HSC Trust and Weeks Waiting – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010<sup>4</sup>**

<b>Provider Trust</b>	<b>Patients Waiting for an Appointment by Weeks Waiting</b>					<b>Total Number of Patients Waiting</b>
	<b>0-6</b>	<b>&gt;6-9</b>	<b>&gt;9-13</b>	<b>&gt;13-26</b>	<b>&gt;26</b>	
Belfast	507	125	26	33	8	699
Northern	974	254	67	16	8	1,319
South Eastern	950	282	38	25	2	1,297
Southern	424	323	131	375	116	1,369
Western	1,109	337	71	2	0	1,519
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,964</b>	<b>1,321</b>	<b>333</b>	<b>451</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>6,203</b>

Source: ICATS Waiting Times Dataset

<sup>4</sup> Refer to Explanatory Notes 8 - 10

**Table 11 Patients Waiting More than 9 Weeks for a First ICATS Tier 2 Appointment – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010<sup>4</sup>**

	<b>Quarter ending 31st December 2010</b>	<b>Change compared with end of previous quarter</b>
<b>Total Waiting &gt; 9 weeks</b>	918	-204

Source: ICATS Waiting Times Dataset

<sup>4</sup> Refer to Explanatory Notes 8 - 10

## Explanatory Notes

1. The sources for the data contained in this release are the Departmental Returns CH3, IS1, Quarterly Outpatient Activity Return (QOAR), and ICATS Waiting Time Dataset. These returns collect information from Health and Social Care Trusts and the Health and Social Care Board on a quarterly basis.
2. Trust based information (CH3, QOAR, Departmental Return IS1 and ICATS Waiting Time Datasets) returns include all patients living outside Northern Ireland and all privately funded patients waiting for treatment in Health Service hospitals in Northern Ireland.
3. Outpatient waiters are defined as patients still waiting for their first outpatient appointment at the end of the quarter, including those who have cancelled or missed a previous appointment. An outpatient appointment is to enable a patient to see a consultant, a member of their 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 outpatient appointment and ends on the date a 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 their DNA.
4. For Tables 2, 3 and 4, and Figures 4 to 7) 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.
5. The 2010/11 ministerial target for outpatient waiting times states that by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011 no patient should wait longer than 9 weeks for a first outpatient appointment. Patients waiting 'more than 9 weeks' includes all patients in the >9-13, >13-26 and >26 week timebands.
6. The total number of completed outpatient waits each quarter, within HSC hospitals, is derived as the total number of attendances at a first outpatient appointment from the Departmental Quarterly Outpatient Activity Return. Following amendments received from the Belfast HSC Trust for the quarters ending June and September 2010, there have been revisions to the number of completed outpatient waits for a first appointment within Health Service hospitals
7. The number of patients that received an outpatient assessment, commissioned by the Health Service, in the Independent Sector is provided in Tables 5 to 7. These figures are provided by the HSC Board. They are published for each transferring Health and Social Care Trust (Trust responsible for the patient's 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.
8. From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010, a number of Integrated Clinical Assessment and Treatment Services (ICATS) were officially introduced within the HSC. ICATS is the term used for a range of outpatient services for patients, which are provided by integrated multi-disciplinary teams of health service professionals, including GPs with a special interest, specialist nurses and allied health professionals. They are provided in a variety of primary, community and secondary care settings and they include assessment, treatment, diagnostic and advisory services. A first appointment at ICATS is known as a Tier 2 appointment. Waiting times for a first ICATS Tier 2 appointment are measured in a similar fashion to those for a first outpatient appointment (see point 4)
9. ICATS introduced from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010 included services in the Belfast HSCT (Ophthalmology and Dermatology), the Northern HSCT (ENT, Ophthalmology and Dermatology), the South Eastern HSCT (ENT, Ophthalmology and Dermatology), Southern HSCT (Dermatology and Urology) and the Western HSCT (ENT and Ophthalmology). ICATS in the Trauma and Orthopaedic specialty were introduced on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2007 and are provided in all five Health and Social Care Trusts.

10. An ICATS Tier 2 first appointment is considered as a non-consultant outpatient appointment and hence these waiters are not reported along with consultant led outpatient waiters. Following ICATS Triage, patients who have not been given either discharge, advice only or referral incomplete outcomes will proceed for either a (i) first outpatient appointment, (ii) a diagnostic test or (iii) an ICATS appointment. Following a first Tier 2 ICATS appointment there are a number of outcomes, including a review Tier 2 ICATS appointment or a referral for a first consultant-led outpatient appointment. If the latter is the case then the outpatient waiting time starts from the date on which this referral is received by the OP service, i.e., it is treated as a new referral.
11. 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.
12. All of the data contained in the tables are also available on a quarterly basis and can be supplied by individual specialty or Provider HSC Trust if this level of detail is required (as in previous bulletins). In addition, quarterly data relating to outpatient waiting times has also been published in spreadsheet format (Microsoft Excel), split by HSC Trust, Specialty and Programme of Care, in order to aid secondary analysis. These data are available at [http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/waiting\\_times\\_main.htm](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/waiting_times_main.htm)
13. Figures relating to the quarter ending 31<sup>st</sup> March will be released on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2011.

**Further information** on Outpatient Waiting Times in Northern Ireland, is available from:

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