



# NORTHERN IRELAND WAITING TIME STATISTICS: INPATIENT WAITING TIMES QUARTER ENDING DECEMBER 2011

This publication presents information on waiting times for inpatient treatment in Northern Ireland at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011. It details information on the number of patients waiting, and length of time waiting, for Ordinary and Day Case admissions at Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts in Northern Ireland. This information reports on performance against the 2011/12 Ministerial waiting time target which states that at least 50% of patients should wait no longer than 13 weeks, and no patient should wait longer than 36 weeks, for inpatient admission. Data are presented by HSC Trust, specialty and time band. The number of completed inpatient waits is also presented in this release by HSC Trust.

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## Key Points

- The total number of patients waiting to be admitted to hospitals in Northern Ireland at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011 stood at 56,470, down 523 (-0.9%) on the 56,993 waiting to be admitted at the end of the previous quarter, and up 5,701 (+11.2%) on the number (50,769) waiting to be admitted at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010 (Figure 1 & Table 1).
- Almost one third (31.8%), 17,956 of the people waiting for admission to hospital at the end of December 2011 were waiting for ordinary admission, with the other 68.2% (38,514) waiting for day case admission (Figure 1 & Table 1).
- Over three-quarters (77.0%) of patients were waiting for inpatient treatment within one of the following seven specialties: General Surgery (24.8%); Trauma and Orthopaedic Surgery (T&O) (14.6%); Urology (10.0%); Ophthalmology (9.1%); Gynaecology (6.9%); General Medicine (5.9%) and Ear, Nose and Throat (5.7%) (Figure 2 & Table 2a).
- At the end of December 2011, 24,168 (42.8% of total number waiting) patients were waiting more than 13 weeks for inpatient treatment. This was down 2,443 on the comparable number in the previous quarter (26,611) (Figures 4, 5, 6 & Tables 2a, 2b, 3a & 3b).
- 5,013 patients were waiting longer than 36 weeks, an increase of 714 (+16.6%) on the 4,299 waiting at the end of the previous quarter and up 2,748 on the 2,265 patients waiting longer than 36 weeks at the same time last year (Figure 7 & Tables 2a, 3a & 4).
- In total, the number of Health Service (HSC) patients admitted for inpatient treatment, in both the HSC and the Independent Sector was 50,890, up 6,158 (+13.8%) on the previous quarter, and up 5,847 (+13.0%) on the quarter ending December 2010 (Figures 10, 11 & Tables 5 to 7).

## Reader Information

Purpose	Report on the number of patients waiting, and length of time waiting for inpatient treatment at HSC Trusts in Northern Ireland.
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## About the 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 Health & Social Care (HSC) Trusts and the HSC Board. Statistical information is collected routinely from a variety of electronic patient level administrative systems 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 HSC Committee, Professional Advisory Groups, policy branches within the DHSSPS, other Health organisations, academia, private sector organisations, charity/voluntary organisations as well as the general public. The statistical information collected is used to contribute to major exercises such as reporting on the performance of the HSC system, other comparative performance exercises, target setting and monitoring, development of service frameworks as well as policy formulation and 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/hospital-stats.htm](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats_research/hospital-stats.htm)

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## Technical Notes

This statistics release is the fifth of a quarterly data series presenting information on waiting times for inpatient treatment at HSC Trusts in Northern Ireland. Prior to the Quarter Ending (QE) December 2010, this information on the number of patients waiting for Ordinary and Day Case admissions, and the length of time they were waiting at the end of each quarter, as well as information on completed inpatient 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 the DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset, the Hospital Inpatient System and the Departmental IS1 Part 2 statistical return provided by the HSC Board.

Data providers are supplied with technical guidance documents outlining the methodologies that should be used in the collection, reporting and validation of each of these data returns. These documents can be accessed at the following link:

[http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats\\_research/hospital-stats/hib\\_guidance\\_manuals.htm](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats_research/hospital-stats/hib_guidance_manuals.htm)

### Rounding

Percentages have been rounded to one decimal place and as a consequence some percentages may not sum to 100.

### Data Quality

All waiting time information presented in this bulletin has been validated and quality assured by HSC Trusts prior to publication. HSC Trusts 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 for final sign-off.

Information on completed waits within the Independent Sector is provided by the HSC Board. HSC Trusts are provided with guidance, detailing how they should record details of patients transferred to the Independent Sector for treatment, on their Patient Administration System. Following treatment, the Independent Sector provider informs the transferring HSC Trust who records the patient's inpatient wait as being complete. These records are then validated against financial invoices received by the HSC Trust from the Independent Sector provider for each transferred patient. HSC Trusts then submit these data to the HSC Board who forward the information to Hospital Information Branch for inclusion in this publication. These data are not National Statistics; however, they have been published to provide users with a comprehensive view of completed inpatient waits during each quarter.

### Main Uses of Data

Data contained in this release are published primarily to provide an indication of HSC performance. They allow the general public and the DHSSPS Health Committee to assess the performance of the DHSSPS, the HSC Board and HSC Trusts in providing timely access to hospital services in Northern Ireland. These data also provide policy makers with the necessary information to formulate and evaluate health services and are helpful in assessing the effectiveness of resource allocation in providing services that are fully responsive to patient needs. Additionally, hospital waiting time information is used to inform the media, special interest groups and academics, and by the DHSSPS to respond to parliamentary/assembly questions and ad hoc queries from the public. An additional aim of this publication is to make waiting times information publicly available to those people using health services in Northern Ireland. Further advice on uses for these data is outlined in Appendix 2 of this publication.

## 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.isdscotlandarchive.scot.nhs.uk/isd/5616.html>

### Wales

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/headlines/health2012/120209/?lang=en>

Data on the length of time waited for a selection of inpatient procedures, that are comparable across the UK, are available at the link below (see Chapter 6 Table 6.6).

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/publications/re-reference-tables.html?edition=tcm%3A77-213417>

## 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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**Tel:** (028) 90 523264

## Waiting Times for Inpatient Treatment

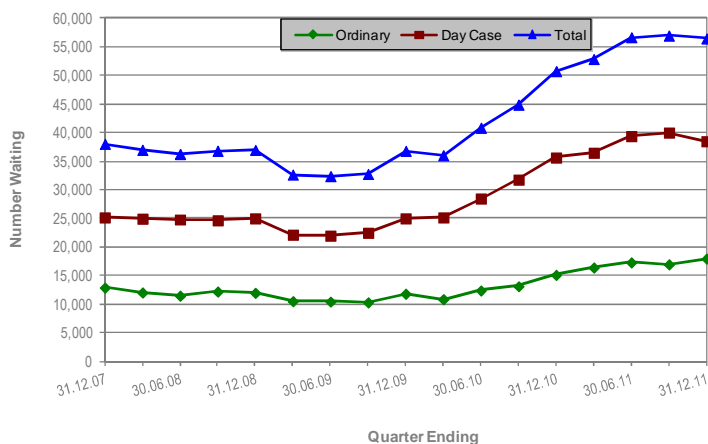
### Inpatient treatment

Data contained in this publication relate to waiting times for inpatient treatment at HSC Trusts in Northern Ireland at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011. The patients may be admitted for treatment to hospitals in Northern Ireland as either Ordinary or Day Case admissions.

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

At 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011, a total of 56,470 people were waiting for admission to hospital as day cases or as ordinary admissions in Northern Ireland. This was a decrease of 523 (-0.9%) on the 56,993 waiting at the end of the previous quarter and was up 5,701 (+11.2%) on the 50,769 waiting at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010 (Figure 1 & Table 1).

**Figure 1: Total number of patients waiting for inpatient admission to hospital in Northern Ireland (31<sup>st</sup> December 2007 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011)**



Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

Some 31.8% (17,956) of people on the inpatient waiting list in Northern Ireland at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011 were waiting for admission to hospital as ordinary admissions, with the other 68.2% (38,514) waiting for day case admission (Figure 1 & Table 1).

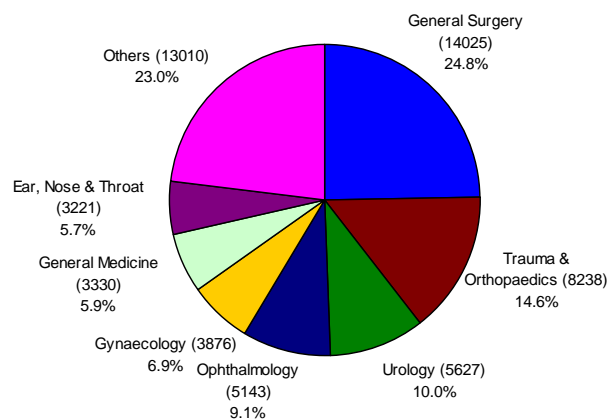
Compared to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2011, the number waiting for ordinary admission increased by 1,000 (+5.9%) and the number waiting for day case admission decreased by

1,523 (-3.8%). Compared to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010, the number waiting for ordinary admission increased by 2,843 (+18.8%) and the number waiting for day case admission increased by 2,858 (8.0%) (Figure 1 & Table 1).

### Inpatients Waiting by Specialty<sup>1</sup>

Over three-quarters (77.0%, 43,460) of the 56,470 patients waiting for inpatient treatment were within seven specialties: General Surgery; Trauma and Orthopaedic Surgery (T&O); Urology; Ophthalmology; Gynaecology; General Medicine and Ear, Nose and Throat (Figure 2 & Table 2a).

**Figure 2: Total number of patients waiting for inpatient admission by Specialty (31<sup>st</sup> December 2011)**



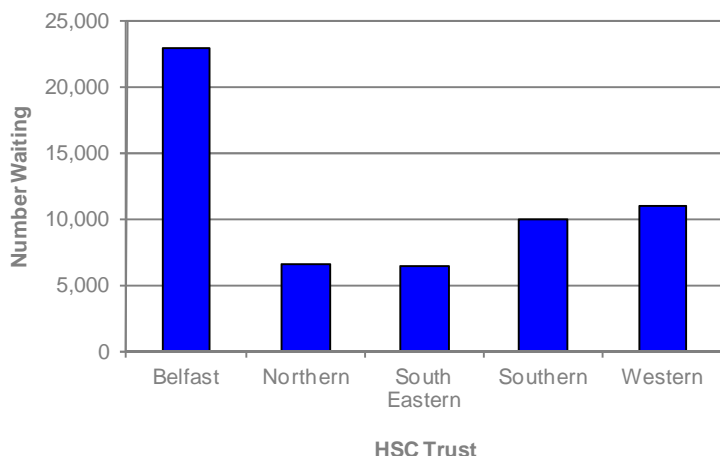
Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

### Total patients waiting by HSC Trust<sup>1</sup>

Over two-fifths (40.4%, 22,812) of patients waiting for admission were waiting in the Belfast HSC Trust. 19.4% (10,936) of those waiting were waiting in the Western HSC Trust, 17.5% (9,894) in the Southern HSC Trust, 11.5% (6,488) in the Northern HSC Trust and 11.2% (6,340) in the South Eastern HSC Trust (Figure 3 & Table 3a).

<sup>1</sup> Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-9

**Figure 3: Total number of patients waiting for inpatient admission by HSC Trust (31<sup>st</sup> December 2011)**



Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

Data users should be aware that many inpatient services are not provided at each of the five HSC Trusts in 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. It is therefore not possible to accurately calculate the number of patients waiting per head of the population in any specific HSC 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.

### Performance against 2011/12 waiting time target<sup>1</sup>

The Ministerial target, for inpatient waiting times, states that from April 2011, at least 50% of patients should wait no longer than 13 weeks for inpatient or day case treatment, and no patient should wait longer than 36 weeks for inpatient or day case treatment.

**Figure 4: HSC Trust Performance against the 2011/12 waiting time target**

HSC Trust	Target Achieved?	
	At least 50% of patients should wait no longer than 13 weeks	No patient waiting longer than 36 weeks
Belfast	Yes	No
Northern	Yes	No
South Eastern	Yes	No
Southern	Yes	No
Western	Yes	No
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

All of the Trusts in Northern Ireland met the target at the end of December 2011 that at least 50% of patients should wait no longer than 13 weeks for inpatient or day case treatment. All Trusts had patients waiting longer than 36 weeks at the end of December 2011 (Figure 4 & Tables 3a & 3b).

### Proportion of patients waiting longer than 13 weeks<sup>1</sup>

At 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011, 24,168 people were waiting more than 13 weeks for inpatient admission out of a total of 56,470 – this is 42.8% of the total.

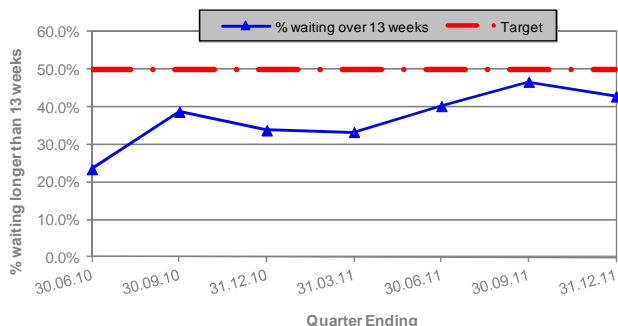
At 30<sup>th</sup> September 2011, 26,611 people were waiting more than 13 weeks for inpatient admission out of a total of 56,993 people waiting for inpatient admission – this is 46.7% of the total. This equates to a decrease of 3.9 percentage points in the proportion of people waiting more than 13 weeks between September 2011 and December 2011.

At 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010, 17,156 people were waiting more than 13 weeks for inpatient admission out of a total number of 50,769 people waiting – this is 33.8% of the total. This equates to an increase of 9.0 percentage points in the proportion of people waiting more than 13 weeks between December 2010 and December 2011 (Figure 5).

<sup>1</sup> Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-9



**Figure 5: Proportion of patients waiting longer than 13 weeks: Quarterly trends 30<sup>th</sup> June 2010 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011**



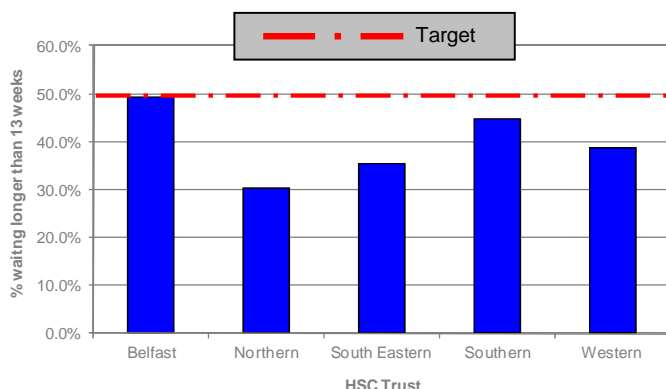
Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

**Proportion of patients waiting longer than 13 weeks by HSC Trust<sup>1</sup>**

Given that inpatient services are not provided on a uniform basis across all HSC Trusts in Northern Ireland, a more accurate gauge of HSC Trust performance for patients waiting over the maximum waiting time is the proportion of total waiters within each HSC Trust waiting longer than the maximum waiting time.

The proportion of patients waiting longer than 13 weeks was 49.4% at the Belfast HSC Trust, 44.9% at the Southern HSC Trust, 38.8% at the Western HSC Trust, 35.3% at the South Eastern HSC Trust and 30.4% at the Northern HSC Trust (Figure 6 & Table 3b).

**Figure 6: Proportion of patients waiting longer than 13 weeks by HSC Trust (31<sup>st</sup> December 2011)**

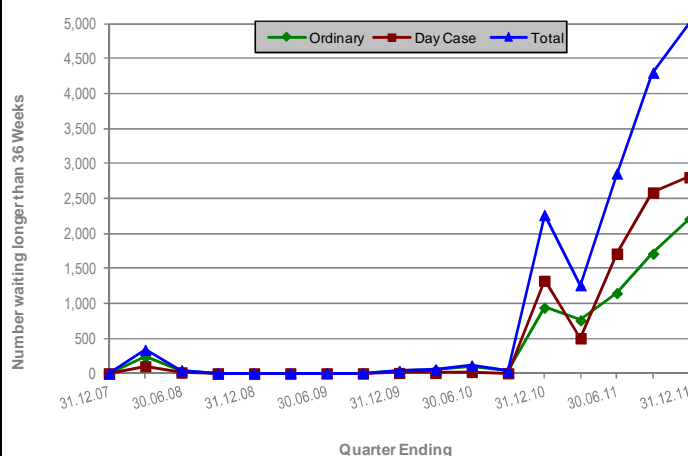


Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

**Patients waiting longer than 2011/12 maximum waiting time target<sup>1</sup>**

At 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011, there were 5,013 (8.9%) patients waiting more than 36 weeks for inpatient treatment. Of the 5,013 patients waiting more than 36 weeks, 2,208 (44.0%) were awaiting ordinary admission and 2,805 (56.0%) were awaiting day case procedures (Figure 7 & Table 4)

**Figure 7: Number of patients waiting longer than 36 weeks for inpatient admission (31<sup>st</sup> December 2007 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011)**



Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

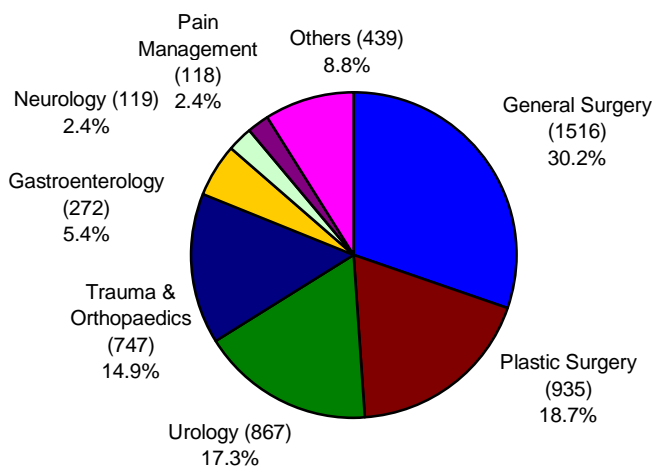
At the end of December 2011, the number of patients waiting more than 36 weeks was 714 more than at the end of September 2011 (4,299 waiting more than 36 weeks) and 2,748 more than at the same time last year (2,265 waiting more than 36 weeks) (Figure 7 & Table 4).

**Patients waiting longer than 2010/11 maximum waiting time target by Specialty<sup>1</sup>**

Over nine-tenths (91.2%, 4,574) of the 5,013 patients waiting more than 36 weeks were within seven specialties: General Surgery; Plastic Surgery; Urology; Trauma and Orthopaedic Surgery (T&O); Gastroenterology; Neurology and Pain Management (Figure 8 & Table 2a).

<sup>1</sup> Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-9

**Figure 8: Total number of patients waiting longer than 36 weeks for inpatient admission by Specialty (31<sup>st</sup> December 2011)**

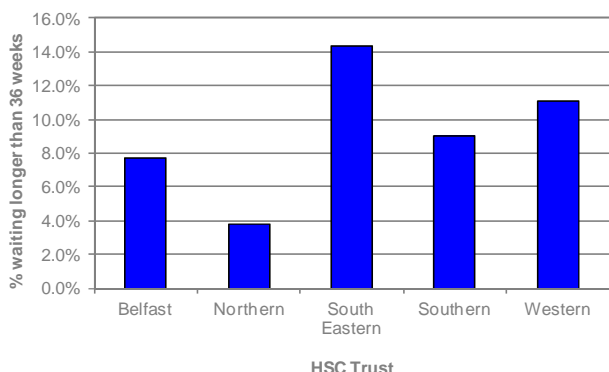


Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

**Proportion of patients waiting longer than 2010/11 maximum waiting time target by HSC Trust<sup>1</sup>**

The proportion of patients waiting longer than 36 weeks was 14.4% at the South Eastern HSC Trust, 11.0% at the Western HSC Trust, 9.0% at the Southern HSC Trust, 7.7% at the Belfast HSC Trust and 3.8% at the Northern HSC Trust (Figure 9 & Table 3b).

**Figure 9: Proportion of patients waiting longer than 36 weeks for inpatient admission by HSC Trust (31<sup>st</sup> December 2011)**



Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

<sup>1</sup> Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-9

**Completed Inpatient Waits<sup>2</sup>**

During the quarter, patients on the waiting list will have been admitted to hospital for treatment, thus ending their wait. Patients can be admitted to Health Service (HSC) hospitals in Northern Ireland for their treatment or their treatment can be carried out within the Independent sector, commissioned by the Health Service.

**Completed Inpatient Waits within the HSC<sup>2</sup>**

A total of 47,095 patients were admitted to Health Service hospitals in Northern Ireland during the quarter ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011, compared with 43,633 in the quarter ending 30<sup>th</sup> September 2011 (up 7.9%) and 43,701 in the quarter ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010, an increase of 7.8% (Tables 5 & 6).

**Completed Inpatient Waits within the Independent Sector<sup>2</sup>**

During the December 2011 quarter, a number of patients received inpatient treatment, commissioned by the Health Service, within the Independent Sector. The number of such patients receiving inpatient treatment within the Independent Sector has been provided by the Health and Social Care Board, split by commissioning HSC Trust (the HSC Trust responsible for the patient's waiting time).

HSC Trusts are provided with guidance, detailing how they should record details of patients transferred to the Independent Sector for treatment, on their Patient Administration System. Following treatment, the Independent Sector provider informs the transferring HSC Trust who records the patient's inpatient wait as being complete. These records are then validated against financial invoices received by the HSC Trust from the Independent Sector provider for each transferred patient. HSC Trusts then submit these data to the HSC Board who forward the information to Hospital

<sup>2</sup> Refer to Explanatory Notes 10 & 11

Information Branch for inclusion in this publication. These data are not National Statistics; however, they have been published to provide users with a comprehensive view of completed inpatient waits during each quarter (Tables 5 & 6).

During the December 2011 quarter, 3,795 patients received inpatient treatment commissioned by the Health Service, within the Independent Sector, compared with 1,099 in the quarter ending 30<sup>th</sup> September 2011 and 1,342 in the quarter ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010 (Tables 5 & 6).

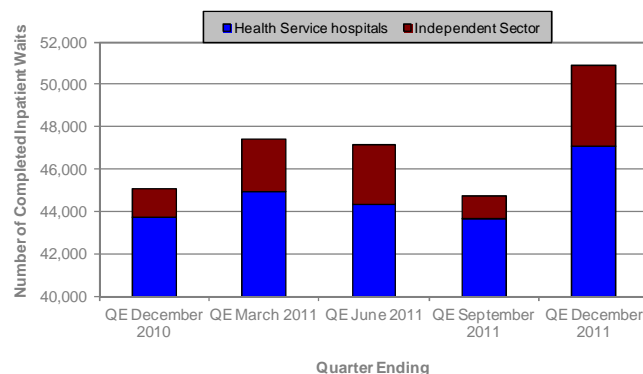
### Total Completed Inpatient Waits<sup>2</sup>

When the number of completed inpatient waits within the Independent Sector (3,795) is combined with that for inpatients treated in Health Service hospitals during the same period (47,095), it is estimated that approximately 50,890 (47,095+3,795) inpatients received treatment in Northern Ireland commissioned by the Health Service during the quarter ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011 (Table 6).

There has been a 13.8% (6,158) increase in the number of completed inpatient waits commissioned by the Health Service between QE September 2011 (44,732) and QE December 2011 (50,890) and an increase of 13.0% (5,847) compared to QE December 2010 (45,043) (Figure 10 & Table 7).

The overall increase of 6,158 in completed inpatient waits, between QE September 2011 and QE December 2011, was made up of an increase of 3,462 in completed inpatient waits within the HSC, coupled with an increase of 2,696 in the number of completed inpatient waits within the Independent Sector (Figure 10 & Table 5).

**Figure 10: Total number of Completed Waits by Quarter (QE December 2010 to QE December 2011)**

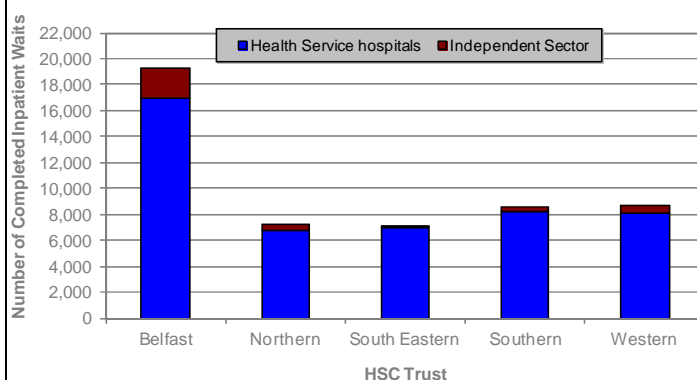


Source: Hospital Inpatient System & Departmental Return IS1 Part 2

### Total number of Completed Inpatient Waits by HSC Trust<sup>2</sup>

Almost two-fifths (37.8%, 19,240) of completed waits for the quarter ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011 occurred in the Belfast HSC Trust, with 17.2% (8,733), 16.9% (8,601), 14.3% (7,287) and 13.8% (7,029) occurring in the Western, Southern, Northern and South Eastern HSC Trusts respectively (Figure 11 & Table 6).

**Figure 11: Total number of Completed Waits by HSC Trust during QE December 2011**



Source: Hospital Inpatient System & Departmental Return IS1 Part 2

<sup>2</sup> Refer to Explanatory Notes 10 & 11

**Table 1: Quarterly Inpatient Waiting Lists – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011<sup>1</sup>**

<b>Waiting for:</b>	<b>Number of patients waiting: 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011</b>	<b>Change compared with end of previous quarter</b>	<b>Change compared with end same quarter – previous year</b>
Ordinary Admissions	17,956	+1,000	+2,843
Day Case Admissions	38,514	-1,523	+2,858
<b>Total Waiting</b>	<b>56,470</b>	<b>-523</b>	<b>+5,701</b>

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

<sup>1</sup>Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–9

**Table 2a: Number of Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting and Specialty – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011<sup>1</sup>**

Specialty	Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting						Total Number of Patients Awaiting Admission
	0 - 6	>6 - 13	>13 - 21	>21 - 26	>26 - 36	> 36	
General Surgery	4,210	3,656	2,360	841	1,442	1,516	14,025
Trauma & Orthopaedics	1,181	2,512	1,641	761	1,396	747	8,238
Urology	1,660	1,255	876	344	625	867	5,627
Ophthalmology	1,223	1,817	1,328	463	266	46	5,143
Gynaecology	1,465	1,233	695	173	204	106	3,876
General Medicine	1,567	1,113	438	89	75	48	3,330
Ear, Nose & Throat	839	1,038	740	263	286	55	3,221
Other:-	4,376	3,157	1,996	766	1,087	1,628	13,010
Gastroenterology	1,410	585	285	121	189	272	2,862
Cardiology	691	644	561	210	271	98	2,475
Plastic Surgery	285	272	201	86	194	935	1,973
Pain Management	376	546	418	152	258	118	1,868
Oral Surgery	361	195	87	27	25	13	708
Rheumatology	226	217	129	44	47	1	664
Paediatric Surgery	97	149	134	52	37	6	475
Dermatology	228	178	14	1	1	0	422
General Practice (Other)	289	86	2	0	0	0	377
Cardiac Surgery	90	96	84	25	3	0	298
Neurosurgery	91	74	34	14	12	16	241
Neurology	32	22	17	12	16	119	218
Other	200	93	30	22	34	50	429
<b>All Specialties</b>	<b>16,521</b>	<b>15,781</b>	<b>10,074</b>	<b>3,700</b>	<b>5,381</b>	<b>5,013</b>	<b>56,470</b>

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

<sup>1</sup>Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–9

**Table 2b: Percentage of Patients Waiting within each Specialty for Admission by Weeks Waiting – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011<sup>1</sup>**

Specialty	Percentage of Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting					
	0 - 6	>6 - 13	>13 - 21	>21 - 26	>26 - 36	> 36
General Surgery	30.0%	26.1%	16.8%	6.0%	10.3%	10.8%
Trauma & Orthopaedics	14.3%	30.5%	19.9%	9.2%	16.9%	9.1%
Urology	29.5%	22.3%	15.6%	6.1%	11.1%	15.4%
Ophthalmology	23.8%	35.3%	25.8%	9.0%	5.2%	0.9%
Gynaecology	37.8%	31.8%	17.9%	4.5%	5.3%	2.7%
General Medicine	47.1%	33.4%	13.2%	2.7%	2.3%	1.4%
Ear, Nose & Throat	26.0%	32.2%	23.0%	8.2%	8.9%	1.7%
Other:-	33.6%	24.3%	15.3%	5.9%	8.4%	12.5%
Gastroenterology	49.3%	20.4%	10.0%	4.2%	6.6%	9.5%
Cardiology	27.9%	26.0%	22.7%	8.5%	10.9%	4.0%
Plastic Surgery	14.4%	13.8%	10.2%	4.4%	9.8%	47.4%
Pain Management	20.1%	29.2%	22.4%	8.1%	13.8%	6.3%
Oral Surgery	51.0%	27.5%	12.3%	3.8%	3.5%	1.8%
Rheumatology	34.0%	32.7%	19.4%	6.6%	7.1%	0.2%
Paediatric Surgery	20.4%	31.4%	28.2%	10.9%	7.8%	1.3%
Dermatology	54.0%	42.2%	3.3%	0.2%	0.2%	0.0%
General Practice (Other)	76.7%	22.8%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Cardiac Surgery	30.2%	32.2%	28.2%	8.4%	1.0%	0.0%
Neurosurgery	37.8%	30.7%	14.1%	5.8%	5.0%	6.6%
Neurology	14.7%	10.1%	7.8%	5.5%	7.3%	54.6%
Other	46.6%	21.7%	7.0%	5.1%	7.9%	11.7%
<b>All Specialties</b>	<b>29.3%</b>	<b>27.9%</b>	<b>17.8%</b>	<b>6.6%</b>	<b>9.5%</b>	<b>8.9%</b>

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

<sup>1</sup>Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–9

**Table 3a: Number of Patients Waiting for Admission by HSC Trust and by Weeks Waiting – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011<sup>1</sup>**

HSC Trust	Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting						Total Number of Patients Waiting
	0 - 6	>6 - 13	>13 - 21	>21 - 26	>26 - 36	> 36	
Belfast	5,038	6,503	4,892	1,966	2,655	1,758	22,812
Northern	2,798	1,719	999	323	401	248	6,488
South Eastern	2,370	1,731	856	182	291	910	6,340
Southern	2,790	2,660	1,617	688	1,250	889	9,894
Western	3,525	3,168	1,710	541	784	1,208	10,936
<b>Total</b>	<b>16,521</b>	<b>15,781</b>	<b>10,074</b>	<b>3,700</b>	<b>5,381</b>	<b>5,013</b>	<b>56,470</b>

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

<sup>1</sup>Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–9

**Table 3b: Percentage of Patients Waiting within each HSC Trust for Admission by Weeks Waiting – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011<sup>1</sup>**

HSC Trust	Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting					
	0 - 6	>6 - 13	>13 - 21	>21 - 26	>26 - 36	> 36
Belfast	22.1%	28.5%	21.4%	8.6%	11.6%	7.7%
Northern	43.1%	26.5%	15.4%	5.0%	6.2%	3.8%
South Eastern	37.4%	27.3%	13.5%	2.9%	4.6%	14.4%
Southern	28.2%	26.9%	16.3%	7.0%	12.6%	9.0%
Western	32.2%	29.0%	15.6%	4.9%	7.2%	11.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>29.3%</b>	<b>27.9%</b>	<b>17.8%</b>	<b>6.6%</b>	<b>9.5%</b>	<b>8.9%</b>

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

<sup>1</sup>Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–9

**Table 4: Patients Waiting Longer Than 36 Weeks – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011<sup>1</sup>**

Waiting for:	Number of patients waiting: 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2011	Change compared with end of previous quarter	Change compared with end same quarter - previous year
Ordinary Admissions	2,208	+496	+1,269
Day Case Admissions	2,805	+218	+1,479
<b>Total Waiting</b>	<b>5,013</b>	<b>+714</b>	<b>+2,748</b>

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

<sup>1</sup>Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–9

**Table 5: Completed Inpatient Waits – QE June 2008 to QE December 2011<sup>2</sup>**

Quarter	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
A - J 2008	47,685	2,543	50,228
J - S 2008	43,483	3,702	47,185
O - D 2008	46,326	5,926	52,252
J - M 2009	45,397	11,544	56,941
<b>A - M 2008/09</b>	<b>182,891</b>	<b>23,715</b>	<b>206,606</b>
A - J 2009	45,375	6,866	52,241
J - S 2009	42,835	7,453	50,288
O - D 2009	44,440	2,925	47,365
J - M 2010	45,760	4,160	49,920
<b>A - M 2009/10</b>	<b>178,410</b>	<b>21,404</b>	<b>199,814</b>
A - J 2010	42,344	2,688	45,032
J - S 2010	40,521	715	41,236
O - D 2010	43,701	1,342	45,043
J - M 2011	44,948	2,438	47,386
<b>A - M 2010/11</b>	<b>171,514</b>	<b>7,183</b>	<b>178,697</b>
A - J 2011 <sup>RP</sup>	44,332	2,804	47,136
J - S 2011 <sup>RP</sup>	43,633	1,099	44,732
O - D 2011 <sup>P</sup>	47,095	3,795	50,890

Source: Hospital Inpatient System & Departmental Return IS1 Part 2

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

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

\*Not National Statistics

<sup>2</sup>Refer to Explanatory Notes 10 & 11

**Table 6: Completed Inpatient Waits by HSC Trust – QE December 2011<sup>2</sup>**

HSC Trust	Number of Completed Inpatient Waits within Health Service Hospitals <sup>P</sup>	Number of Completed Inpatient Waits in Independent Sector*	Total Number of Completed Inpatient Waits Commissioned by Health Service
Belfast	17,012	2,228	19,240
Northern	6,793	494	7,287
South Eastern	7,024	5	7,029
Southern	8,175	426	8,601
Western	8,091	642	8,733
<b>Total Treated</b>	<b>47,095</b>	<b>3,795</b>	<b>50,890</b>

Source: Hospital Inpatient System & Departmental Return IS1 Part 2

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

\*Not National Statistics

<sup>2</sup>Refer to Explanatory Notes 10 & 11



**Table 7: Completed Inpatient Waits by HSC Trust – QE December 2010 to QE December 2011<sup>2</sup>**

HSC Trust	Total Number of Completed Inpatient Waits Commissioned by Health Service				
	QE December 2010	QE March 2011	QE June 2011 <sup>RP</sup>	QE September 2011 <sup>RP</sup>	QE December 2011 <sup>P</sup>
Belfast	18,233	18,240	18,809	17,005	19,240
Northern	5,916	6,263	6,345	6,190	7,287
South Eastern	6,610	7,153	6,732	6,541	7,029
Southern	6,994	7,930	7,495	7,626	8,601
Western	7,290	7,800	7,755	7,370	8,733
<b>Total</b>	<b>45,043</b>	<b>47,386</b>	<b>47,136</b>	<b>44,732</b>	<b>50,890</b>

Source: Hospital Inpatient System & Departmental Return IS1 part 2

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

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

<sup>2</sup>Refer to Explanatory Notes 10 & 11

## Appendix 1: Explanatory Notes

1. The sources for the data contained in this release are the DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset, Hospital Inpatient System Dataset and the Departmental Return IS1. 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 (DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Time Dataset, Hospital Inpatient System Dataset and the Departmental Return IS1) returns include all patients living outside Northern Ireland and all privately funded patients waiting for treatment in Health Service hospitals in Northern Ireland.
3. Inpatient waiting list data comprise the number of patients waiting for ordinary admission to hospital and the number of patients waiting for day case treatment.
4. 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.
5. 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.
6. 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.
7. 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.
8. The Ministerial target, for inpatient waiting times, as detailed in the Schedule which is an addendum to the requirement set out in the body of the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety Commissioning Plan direction itself states that from April 2011, at least 50% of patients should wait no longer than 13 weeks for inpatient or day case treatment, and no patient should wait longer than 36 weeks for inpatient or day case treatment.
9. For Tables 2a, 2b, 3a, 3b, 4 and Figures 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9, 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) week timeband. Patients waiting 'more than 13 weeks' includes all patients in the >13 - 21, >21 - 26, >26 - 36 and >36 week timebands. Patients waiting 'more than 36 weeks' includes all patients in the > 36 week timeband.
10. The total number of completed inpatient waits within HSC hospitals each quarter is sourced from Hospital Inpatient System. During the course of each financial year, data extracted from the Hospital Inpatient System at the end of each quarter will be marked as provisional. This is because information on inpatient admissions continuously improves during the course of each year before being finalised. Consequently, quarterly

information presented in this bulletin from the Hospital Inpatient System, for the most recent financial year, will be revised on a quarterly basis.

11. The number of patients that received inpatient treatment, commissioned by the Health Service, in the Independent Sector are provided in Tables 5, 6, 7 and Figures 10 and 11. 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 inpatient waits during each quarter.
12. 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.
13. 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.
14. All of the data contained in the tables can be supplied by individual specialty or HSC Trust if this level of detail is required (as in previous bulletins). In addition, quarterly data relating to inpatient waiting times have been published in spreadsheet format (Microsoft Excel), split by HSC Trust, Specialty, Programme of Care and Intended Management of the patient (i.e. Ordinary Admission or Day Case), in order to aid secondary analysis. These data are available at [http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats\\_research/hospital-stats/waiting\\_times\\_main.htm](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats_research/hospital-stats/waiting_times_main.htm).
15. Figures relating to inpatient waiting times for the quarter ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011 will be released on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> May 2012.

## Appendix 2: Data in the publication

### General guidance on using the data

The data contained in the publication are presented on a quarterly basis. While seasonal impact should be minimal, it is advisable that data for the current quarter be compared with both the previous quarter (to gauge the most recent direction of performance), and the same quarter in the previous year (to assess any seasonal impact).

### Number of patients waiting for inpatient admission

#### Description of data

Data on the number of health service patients who are waiting for inpatient admission at a Health and Social Care (HSC) Trust in Northern Ireland. The term 'inpatient' is used to describe all patients admitted to hospital, both ordinary admissions and day case admission (see explanatory notes four and five in Appendix 1 for a description of these terms).

#### Data Provider

Data are sourced directly from the Patient Administration System, via a facility known as the HSC Data Warehouse, at each HSC Trust.

#### Data Quality Assessment

Very good – data are derived from a single administrative system. Data providers have been given in-depth guidance providing instructions for recording, collection and submission of data. In addition, variance checks are employed as an integral part of the production process with large discrepancies between the current quarter and both the previous quarter, and the corresponding quarter in the previous year, being queried with the data provider.

#### Guidance on using data

- Number of patients waiting for inpatient admission – this is the number of inpatients who are waiting for inpatient surgery following a 'decision to admit' being taken by their consultant. It does not include patients waiting for a planned procedure, regular day and night attenders, patients currently in hospital, maternity patients and patients who are currently suspended. Data relate to the numbers who have still to be admitted at the end of each quarter and provide users with an indication of demand for HSC inpatient services. It should not be used to estimate the numbers who have been admitted for an inpatient procedure (completed inpatient waits).
- Lengths of time patients are waiting for inpatient admission – this relates to the lengths of time patients have been waiting for inpatient admission. Explanatory note seven in Appendix 1 explains how these waiting times are measured. This information relates to how long patients are waiting for inpatient admission, not the length of time they waited before being admitted, also known as completed waits. Data on the total length of time patients waited for admission are not collected.
- An assessment of both the total number waiting and the length of time patients are waiting, when compared with equivalent data for previous quarters, allow users to gauge the disparity between demand for inpatient services and the overall capacity for providing these services, both within the HSC and Independent Sector providers.
- Inpatient waiting times by HSC Trust – patients will be waiting for admission to a specific HSC Trust. Patients are reported by the HSC Trusts responsible for the service that will be treating the patient. This is not necessarily the nearest HSC Trust to the patient's residence. Certain clinical services may not be provided at a patient's local HSC Trust, and in the case of more complex procedures, such as cardiac surgery, services are provided at a single regional centre for Northern Ireland. In some cases, the HSC Trust at which the patient is waiting may not be the actual facility at which the procedure will be performed, as a consultant from one HSC Trust may provide a 'visiting' service 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. 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.

- Inpatient waiting times by specialty – a consultant will decide to admit a patient for a specific clinical procedure. Following the decision to admit being taken, the patient will be added to the waiting list for a procedure, usually to be undertaken by the consultant who assessed the patient. Each consultant employed by the HSC Trust will have an allocated specialty of employment, and it will be this specialty against which the patient's waiting time will be reported. These data provide a useful insight into the differences in both demand for certain types of medical procedures, and also the existing capacity available to meet these demands.

## **Number of patients admitted for an inpatient procedure (completed inpatient waits)**

### **Description of data**

Data on the number of health service patients who were admitted for inpatient admission at either a HSC Trust, or who had been transferred by a HSC Trust for treatment by an Independent Sector provider, in Northern Ireland. The term 'inpatient' is used to describe all patients admitted to hospital, both ordinary admissions and day case admission (see explanatory notes four and five in Appendix 1 for a description of these terms). These data are also known as completed inpatient waits.

### **Data Provider**

Data on patients treated within HSC Trusts are sourced directly from the Patient Administration System, via a facility known as the HSC Data Warehouse, at each HSC Trust. Data on HSC patients treated by an Independent Sector provider are sourced from the HSC Board which is responsible for the regional commissioning of independent sector provision.

### **Data Quality Assessment**

Very good – data are derived from a range of administrative systems. For data on completed inpatient waits within HSC Trusts, data providers have been given in-depth guidance providing instructions for recording, collection and submission of data. In addition, variance checks are employed as an integral part of the production process with large discrepancies between the current quarter and both the previous quarter, and the corresponding quarter in the previous year, being queried with the data provider. Data on completed waits within the Independent Sector are estimated from financial records held by the HSC Board. Although these are not validated and are not categorised as National Statistics, they are considered as being of very good quality.

### **Guidance on using data**

- Number of HSC patients admitted for an inpatient procedure at a HSC hospital – these data relate to the number of patients who were admitted for an inpatient procedure within the HSC during each quarter. Health Service patients will be admitted for an inpatient procedure at a HSC hospital, at either a routinely provided inpatient service, or a more irregular inpatient service provided by the HSC Trust, in addition to the routine services. These latter services (sometimes referred to as 'Waiting List Initiatives') are often provided in response to a specific need, such as increases in both the number of patients waiting and lengths of time waiting. Data on the number of HSC patients admitted for an inpatient procedure at a HSC hospital provide users with a good indication of the capacity available within the HSC in treating inpatients.
- Number of HSC patients admitted for an inpatient procedure with an Independent Sector provider – these data relate to the number of Health Service patients who were admitted for an inpatient procedure provided by the Independent Sector. Independent Sector provision is introduced when the demand for certain types of inpatient service is greater than the capacity within HSC hospitals. When this situation results in increases in both the number of patients waiting and the length of time waiting, patients may be admitted for a procedure undertaken by an Independent Sector provider. The cost of treating these patients is met by the transferring HSC Trust,

who retains responsibility for the patients waiting time. Data on the number of HSC patients admitted for an inpatient procedure with an Independent Sector provider, provide users with a good indication of demand for inpatient services within the HSC exceeding available capacity.

- Total number of HSC patients admitted for an inpatient procedure – this relates to the total number of HSC patients admitted for an inpatient procedure irrespective of the location or provider of the treatment. This provides users with an indication of the number of patients who would previously have been on the waiting list but had been treated during the latest quarter. Data on the total number of inpatients admitted allow users to assess the impact that actual admissions during the quarter have had upon the total number of patients waiting for inpatient admission at the end of the quarter.



## Appendix 3: Additional Information

**Further information** on Inpatient Waiting Time Statistics in Northern Ireland, is available from:

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**This Statistical bulletin and others published by Hospital Information Branch are available to download from the DHSSPS Internet site at:**

Internet address: [http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats\\_research/hospital-stats.htm](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats_research/hospital-stats.htm)