



NORTHERN IRELAND WAITING TIME STATISTICS: INPATIENT WAITING TIMES QUARTER ENDING MARCH 2012

This publication presents information on waiting times for inpatient treatment in Northern Ireland at 31st March 2012. 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 31st March 2012 stood at 50,828, down 5,642 (-10.0%) on the 56,470 waiting to be admitted at the end of the previous quarter, and also down 2,052 (-3.9%) on the number (52,880) waiting to be admitted at 31st March 2011 (Figure 1 & Table 1).
- Almost one third (32.2%), 16,387 of the people waiting for admission to hospital at the end of March 2012 were waiting for ordinary admission, with the other 67.8% (34,441) waiting for day case admission (Figure 1 & Table 1).
- Over three-quarters (78.5%) of patients were waiting for inpatient treatment within one of the following seven specialties: General Surgery (21.7%); Trauma and Orthopaedic Surgery (T&O) (16.0%); Ophthalmology (10.5%); Urology (9.9%); Gynaecology (8.3%); Ear, Nose and Throat (7.4%) and Cardiology (4.6%) (Figure 2 & Table 2a).
- At the end of March 2012, 18,109 (35.6% of total number waiting) patients were waiting more than 13 weeks for inpatient treatment. This was down 6,059 (-25.1%) on the comparable number in the previous quarter (24,168) (Figures 4, 5, 6 & Tables 2a, 2b, 3a & 3b).
- 775 patients were waiting longer than 36 weeks, a decrease of 4,238 (-84.5%) on the 5,013 waiting at the end of the previous quarter and also down 486 (-38.5%) on the 1,261 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 55,194, up 4,131 (+8.1%) on the previous quarter, and up 7,808 (+16.5%) on the quarter ending March 2011 (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

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Technical Notes

This statistics release is the sixth 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

Rounding

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

On occasion the percentage of patients waiting within overall totals, or percentage changes between quarters, are presented. In some instances these percentages are less than 0.1% or more than 99.9%. Users should be aware that in such cases, the percentage is rounded to zero or 100%.

Data Quality

All waiting time information presented in this bulletin has been validated and quality assured by HSC Trusts prior to publication. HIB perform a series of checks to verify that downloaded information is consistent over time, both within and across specialties. 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, data may be amended.

Finally, prior to the publication of this information, the data are 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 time 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/Perfomedataandstatistics/ReferraltoTreatmentstatistics/index.htm>

Scotland

<http://www.isdscotland.org/Health-Topics/Waiting-Times/Publications/>

Wales

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/headlines/health2012/1205101/?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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Waiting Times for Inpatient Treatment

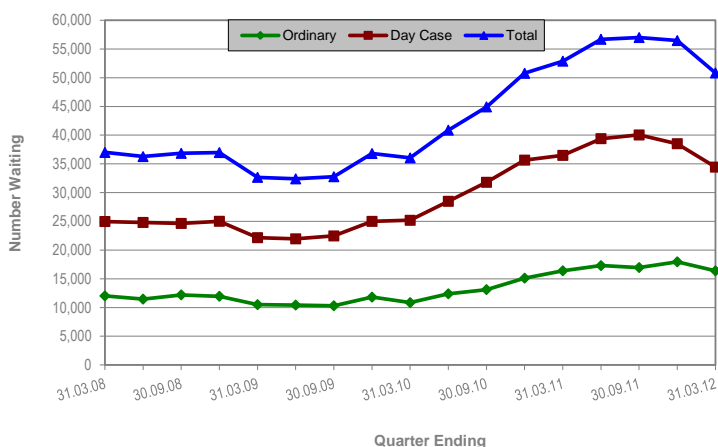
Inpatient treatment

Data contained in this publication relate to waiting times for inpatient treatment at HSC Trusts in Northern Ireland at 31st March 2012. The patients may be admitted for treatment to hospitals in Northern Ireland as either Ordinary or Day Case admissions.

Total patients waiting¹

At 31st March 2012, a total of 50,828 people were waiting for admission to hospital as day cases or as ordinary admissions in Northern Ireland. This was a decrease of 5,642 (-10.0%) on the 56,470 waiting at the end of the previous quarter and was also down 2,052 (-3.9%) on the 52,880 waiting at 31st March 2011 (Figure 1 & Table 1).

Figure 1: Total number of patients waiting for inpatient admission to hospital in Northern Ireland (31st March 2008 to 31st March 2012)



Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

Some 32.2% (16,387) of people on the inpatient waiting list in Northern Ireland at 31st March 2012 were waiting for admission to hospital as ordinary admissions, with the other 67.8% (34,441) waiting for day case admission (Figure 1 & Table 1).

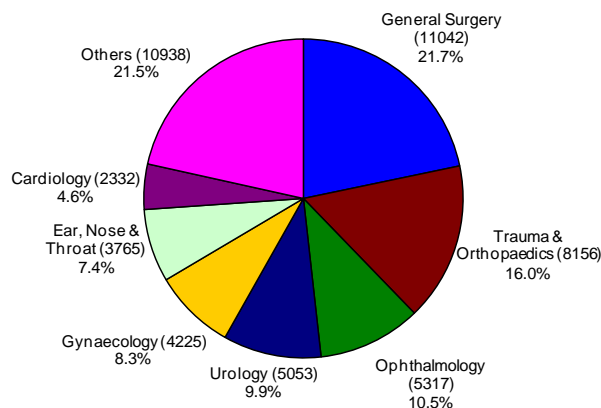
Compared to 31st December 2011, the number waiting for ordinary admission decreased by 1,569 (-8.7%) and the number waiting for day case admission decreased by

4,073 (-10.6%). Compared to 31st March 2011, the number waiting for ordinary admission decreased by nine (-0.1%) and the number waiting for day case admission decreased by 2,043 (-5.6%) (Figure 1 & Table 1).

Inpatients Waiting by Specialty¹

Over three-quarters (78.5%, 39,890) of the 50,828 patients waiting for inpatient treatment were within seven specialties: General Surgery; Trauma and Orthopaedic Surgery (T&O); Ophthalmology; Urology; Gynaecology; Ear, Nose and Throat and Cardiology (Figure 2 & Table 2a).

Figure 2: Total number of patients waiting for inpatient admission by Specialty (31st March 2012)



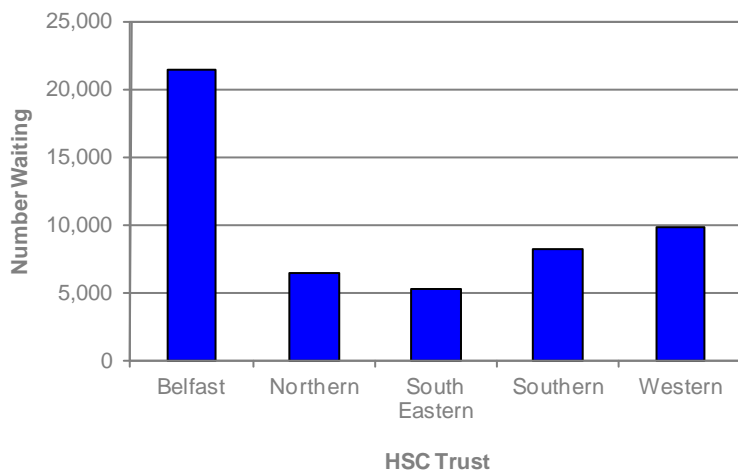
Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

Total patients waiting by HSC Trust¹

Over two-fifths (42.0%, 21,366) of patients waiting for admission were waiting in the Belfast HSC Trust. 19.2% (9,772) of those waiting were waiting in the Western HSC Trust, 15.9% (8,106) in the Southern HSC Trust, 12.5% (6,345) in the Northern HSC Trust and 10.3% (5,239) in the South Eastern HSC Trust (Figure 3 & Table 3a).

¹ Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-9

Figure 3: Total number of patients waiting for inpatient admission by HSC Trust (31st March 2012)



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 target¹

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	Yes
Southern	Yes	No
Western	Yes	No
Northern Ireland	Yes	No

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

All of the Trusts in Northern Ireland met the target at the end of March 2012 that at least 50% of patients should wait no longer than 13 weeks for inpatient or day case treatment. All Trusts, apart from the South Eastern HSC Trust, had patients waiting longer than 36 weeks at the end of March 2012. Northern HSC Trust narrowly missed the 36 week target by two patients (Figure 4 & Tables 3a & 3b).

Proportion of patients waiting longer than 13 weeks¹

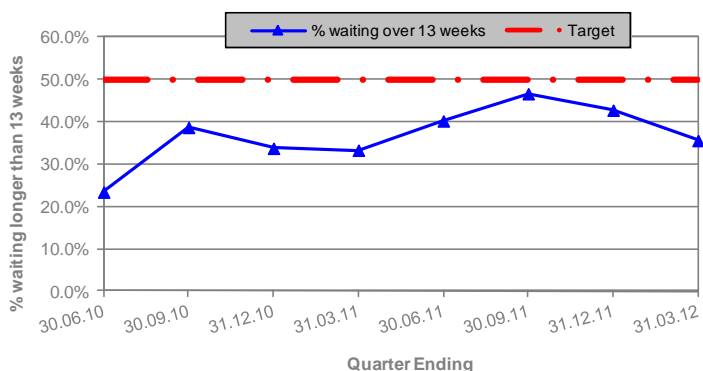
At 31st March 2012, 18,109 people were waiting more than 13 weeks for inpatient admission out of a total of 50,828 – this is 35.6% of the total.

At 31st December 2011, 24,168 people were waiting more than 13 weeks for inpatient admission out of a total of 56,470 people waiting for inpatient admission – this is 42.8% of the total. This equates to an decrease of 7.2 percentage points in the proportion of people waiting more than 13 weeks between December 2011 and March 2012.

At 31st March 2011, 17,630 people were waiting more than 13 weeks for inpatient admission out of a total number of 52,880 people waiting – this is 33.3% of the total. This equates to an increase of 2.3 percentage points in the proportion of people waiting more than 13 weeks between March 2011 and March 2012 (Figure 5).

¹ Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-9

Figure 5: Proportion of patients waiting longer than 13 weeks: Quarterly trends 30th June 2010 to 31st March 2012



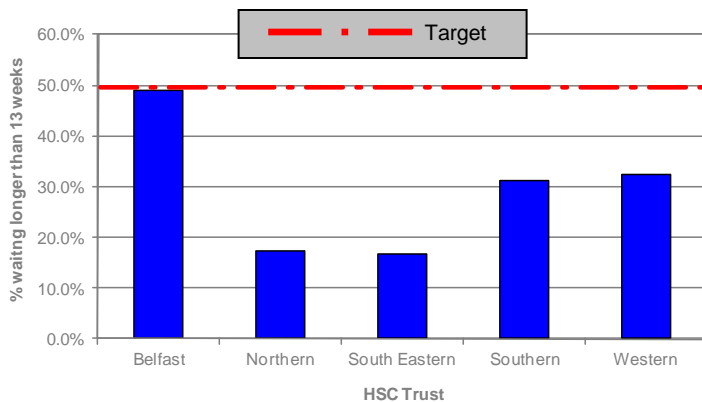
Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

Proportion of patients waiting longer than 13 weeks by HSC Trust¹

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 48.8% at the Belfast HSC Trust, 32.3% at the Western HSC Trust, 31.2% at the Southern HSC Trust, 17.4% at the Northern HSC Trust and 16.8% at the South Eastern HSC Trust (Figure 6 & Table 3b).

Figure 6: Proportion of patients waiting longer than 13 weeks by HSC Trust (31st March 2012)

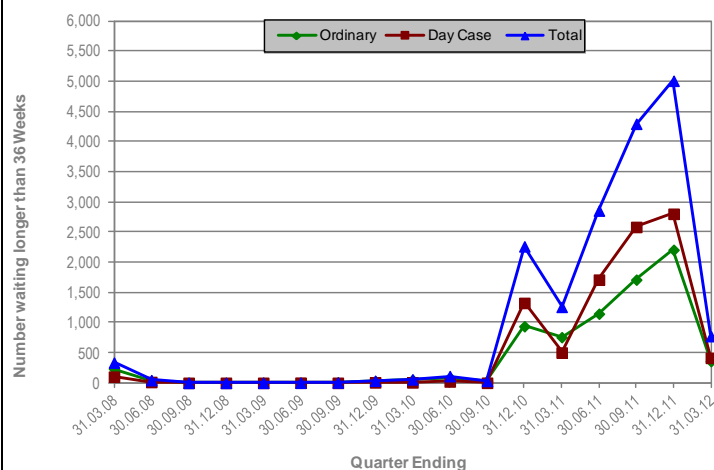


Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

Patients waiting longer than 2011/12 maximum waiting time target¹

At 31st March 2012, there were 775 (1.5%) patients waiting more than 36 weeks for inpatient treatment. Of the 775 patients waiting more than 36 weeks, 360 (46.5%) were awaiting ordinary admission and 415 (53.5%) were awaiting day case procedures (Figure 7 & Table 4)

Figure 7: Number of patients waiting longer than 36 weeks for inpatient admission (31st March 2008 to 31st March 2012)



Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

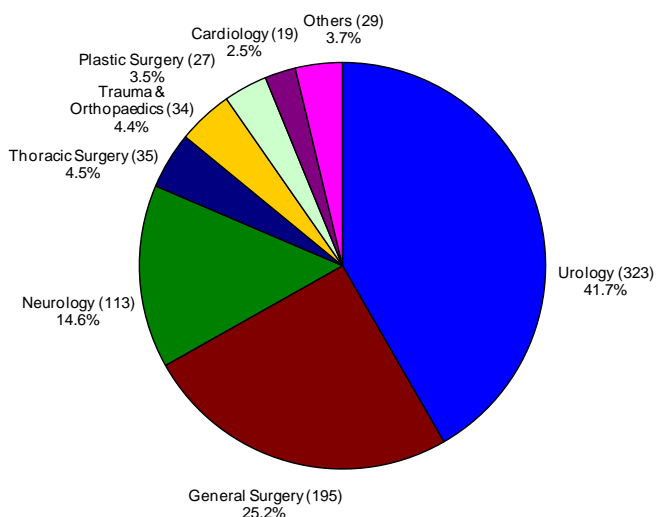
At the end of March 2012, the number of patients waiting more than 36 weeks was 4,238 less than at the end of December 2011 (5,013 waiting more than 36 weeks) and 486 less than at the same time last year (1,261 waiting more than 36 weeks) (Figure 7 & Table 4).

Patients waiting longer than 2010/11 maximum waiting time target by Specialty¹

Over nine-tenths (96.3%, 746) of the 775 patients waiting more than 36 weeks were within seven specialties: Urology; General Surgery; Neurology; Thoracic Surgery; Trauma and Orthopaedic Surgery (T&O); Plastic Surgery and Cardiology (Figure 8 & Table 2a).

¹ Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-9

Figure 8: Total number of patients waiting longer than 36 weeks for inpatient admission by Specialty (31st March 2012)

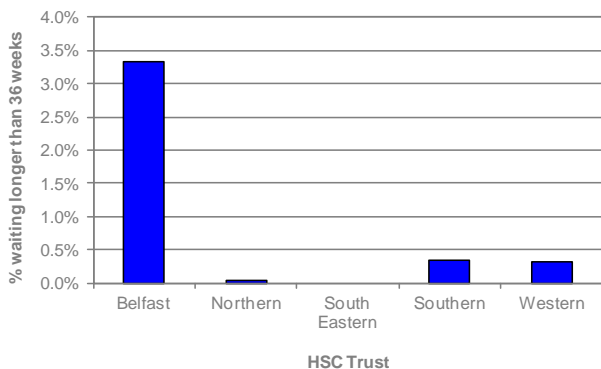


Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

Proportion of patients waiting longer than 2010/11 maximum waiting time target by HSC Trust¹

The proportion of patients waiting longer than 36 weeks was 3.3% at the Belfast HSC Trust, 0.3% at both the Southern and Western HSC Trusts, less than 0.1% at the Northern HSC Trust, and there were no patients waiting longer than 36 weeks at the South Eastern HSC Trust (Figure 9 & Table 3b).

Figure 9: Proportion of patients waiting longer than 36 weeks for inpatient admission by HSC Trust (31st March 2012)



Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

¹ Refer to Explanatory Notes 1-9

Completed Inpatient Waits²

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 HSC²

A total of 46,987 patients were admitted to Health Service hospitals in Northern Ireland during the quarter ending 31st March 2012, compared with 47,268 in the quarter ending 31st December 2011 (down 0.6%) and 44,948 in the quarter ending 31st March 2011, an increase of 4.5% (Tables 5 & 6).

Completed Inpatient Waits within the Independent Sector²

During the March 2012 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).

During the March 2012 quarter, 8,207 patients received inpatient treatment commissioned by the Health Service, within the Independent Sector, compared with 3,795 in the quarter ending 31st December 2011 and 2,438 in the quarter ending 31st March 2011 (Table 5).

² Refer to Explanatory Notes 10 & 11

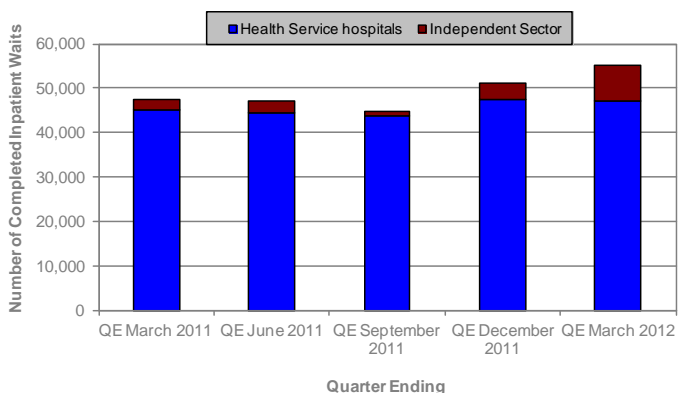
Total Completed Inpatient Waits²

When the number of completed inpatient waits within the Independent Sector (8,207) is combined with that for inpatients treated in Health Service hospitals during the same period (46,987), it is estimated that approximately 55,194 (46,987+8,207) inpatients received treatment in Northern Ireland commissioned by the Health Service during the quarter ending 31st March 2012 (Table 6).

There has been an 8.1% (4,131) increase in the number of completed inpatient waits commissioned by the Health Service between QE December 2011 (51,063) and QE March 2012 (55,194) and an increase of 16.5% (7,808) compared to QE March 2011 (47,386) (Figure 10 & Table 7).

The overall increase of 4,131 in completed inpatient waits, between QE December 2011 and QE March 2012, was made up of a decrease of 281 in completed inpatient waits within the HSC, combined with an increase of 4,412 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 March 2011 to QE March 2012)

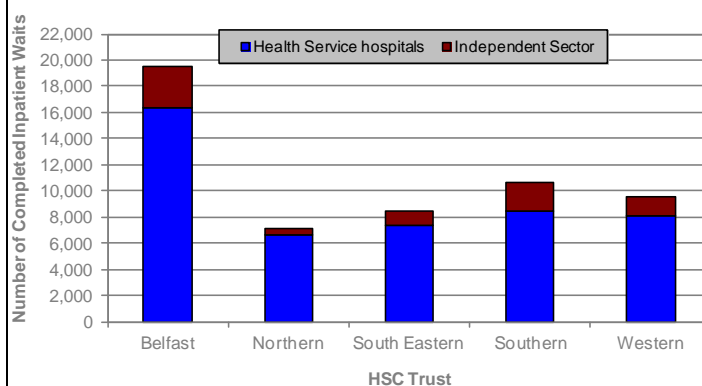


Source: Hospital Inpatient System & Departmental Return IS1 Part 2

Total number of Completed Inpatient Waits by HSC Trust²

Over one-third (35.4%, 19,549) of completed waits for the quarter ending 31st March 2012 occurred in the Belfast HSC Trust, with 19.2% (10,594), 17.2% (9,487), 15.3% (8,433) and 12.9% (7,131) occurring in the Southern, Western, South Eastern and Northern HSC Trusts respectively (Figure 11 & Table 6).

Figure 11: Total number of Completed Waits by HSC Trust during QE March 2012



Source: Hospital Inpatient System & Departmental Return IS1 Part 2

² Refer to Explanatory Notes 10 & 11

Table 1: Quarterly Inpatient Waiting Lists – 31st March 2012¹

Waiting for:	Number of patients waiting: 31st March 2012	Change compared with end of previous quarter	Change compared with end same quarter – previous year
Ordinary Admissions	16,387	-1,569	-9
Day Case Admissions	34,441	-4,073	-2,043
Total Waiting	50,828	-5,642	-2,052

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

¹Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–9

Table 2a: Number of Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting and Specialty – 31st March 2012¹

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	4,354	2,991	1,715	873	914	195	11,042
Trauma & Orthopaedics	1,330	2,116	2,110	1,138	1,428	34	8,156
Ophthalmology	1,530	1,692	1,327	557	205	6	5,317
Urology	1,764	1,158	846	384	578	323	5,053
Gynaecology	1,584	1,607	758	179	97	0	4,225
Ear, Nose & Throat	1,358	1,284	673	262	184	4	3,765
Cardiology	666	617	468	243	319	19	2,332
Other:-	5,523	3,145	1,021	524	531	194	10,938
General Medicine	1,648	615	1	0	0	0	2,264
Gastroenterology	1,394	408	0	0	0	0	1,802
Pain Management	440	510	332	200	295	1	1,778
Plastic Surgery	391	442	221	115	120	27	1,316
Oral Surgery	363	230	89	26	3	0	711
Rheumatology	181	222	124	52	12	0	591
Paediatric Surgery	99	142	114	80	45	0	480
Dermatology	234	149	11	0	0	0	394
General Practice (Other)	280	40	0	0	0	0	320
Neurosurgery	97	110	42	16	17	18	300
Cardiac Surgery	118	116	42	15	3	0	294
Neurology	29	29	15	13	20	113	219
Other	249	132	30	7	16	35	469
All Specialties	18,109	14,610	8,918	4,160	4,256	775	50,828

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

¹Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–9

Table 2b: Percentage of Patients Waiting within each Specialty for Admission by Weeks Waiting – 31st March 2012¹

Specialty	Percentage of Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting					
	0 - 6	>6 - 13	>13 - 21	>21 - 26	>26 - 36	> 36
General Surgery	39.4%	27.1%	15.5%	7.9%	8.3%	1.8%
Trauma & Orthopaedics	16.3%	25.9%	25.9%	14.0%	17.5%	0.4%
Ophthalmology	28.8%	31.8%	25.0%	10.5%	3.9%	0.1%
Urology	34.9%	22.9%	16.7%	7.6%	11.4%	6.4%
Gynaecology	37.5%	38.0%	17.9%	4.2%	2.3%	0.0%
Ear, Nose & Throat	36.1%	34.1%	17.9%	7.0%	4.9%	0.1%
Cardiology	28.6%	26.5%	20.1%	10.4%	13.7%	0.8%
Other:-	50.5%	28.8%	9.3%	4.8%	4.9%	1.8%
General Medicine	72.8%	27.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Gastroenterology	77.4%	22.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Pain Management	24.7%	28.7%	18.7%	11.2%	16.6%	0.1%
Plastic Surgery	29.7%	33.6%	16.8%	8.7%	9.1%	2.1%
Oral Surgery	51.1%	32.3%	12.5%	3.7%	0.4%	0.0%
Rheumatology	30.6%	37.6%	21.0%	8.8%	2.0%	0.0%
Paediatric Surgery	20.6%	29.6%	23.8%	16.7%	9.4%	0.0%
Dermatology	59.4%	37.8%	2.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
General Practice (Other)	87.5%	12.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Neurosurgery	32.3%	36.7%	14.0%	5.3%	5.7%	6.0%
Cardiac Surgery	40.1%	39.5%	14.3%	5.1%	1.0%	0.0%
Neurology	13.2%	13.2%	6.8%	5.9%	9.1%	51.6%
Other	53.1%	28.1%	6.4%	1.5%	3.4%	7.5%
All Specialties	35.6%	28.7%	17.5%	8.2%	8.4%	1.5%

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

¹Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–9

Table 3a: Number of Patients Waiting for Admission by HSC Trust and by Weeks Waiting – 31st March 2012¹

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	5,337	5,592	4,716	2,452	2,555	714	21,366
Northern	3,200	2,043	755	195	150	2	6,345
South Eastern	2,598	1,760	532	180	169	0	5,239
Southern	3,178	2,398	1,242	608	652	28	8,106
Western	3,796	2,817	1,673	725	730	31	9,772
Total	18,109	14,610	8,918	4,160	4,256	775	50,828

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

¹Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–9

Table 3b: Percentage of Patients Waiting within each HSC Trust for Admission by Weeks Waiting – 31st March 2012¹

HSC Trust	Patients Waiting for Admission by Weeks Waiting					
	0 - 6	>6 - 13	>13 - 21	>21 - 26	>26 - 36	> 36
Belfast	25.0%	26.2%	22.1%	11.5%	12.0%	3.3%
Northern	50.4%	32.2%	11.9%	3.1%	2.4%	0.0%
South Eastern	49.6%	33.6%	10.2%	3.4%	3.2%	0.0%
Southern	39.2%	29.6%	15.3%	7.5%	8.0%	0.3%
Western	38.8%	28.8%	17.1%	7.4%	7.5%	0.3%
Total	35.6%	28.7%	17.5%	8.2%	8.4%	1.5%

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

¹Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–9

Table 4: Patients Waiting Longer Than 36 Weeks – 31st March 2012¹

Waiting for:	Number of patients waiting: 31 st March 2012	Change compared with end of previous quarter	Change compared with end same quarter - previous year
Ordinary Admissions	360	-1,848	-398
Day Case Admissions	415	-2,390	-88
Total Waiting	775	-4,238	-486

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

¹Refer to Explanatory Notes 1–9

Table 5: Completed Inpatient Waits – QE June 2008 to QE March 2012²

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
A - M 2008/09	182,891	23,715	206,606
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
A - M 2009/10	178,410	21,404	199,814
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
A - M 2010/11	171,514	7,183	178,697
A - J 2011 ^{RP}	44,346	2,804	47,150
J - S 2011 ^{RP}	43,650	1,099	44,749
O - D 2011 ^{RP}	47,268	3,795	51,063
J - M 2012 ^P	46,987	8,207	55,194
A - M 2011/12^P	182,251	15,905	198,156

Source: Hospital Inpatient System & Departmental Return IS1 Part 2

^RData have been revised

^PData are currently provisional

*Not National Statistics

²Refer to Explanatory Notes 10 & 11

Table 6: Completed Inpatient Waits by HSC Trust – QE March 2012²

HSC Trust	Number of Completed Inpatient Waits within Health Service Hospitals ^P	Number of Completed Inpatient Waits in Independent Sector*	Total Number of Completed Inpatient Waits Commissioned by Health Service
Belfast	16,398	3,151	19,549
Northern	6,655	476	7,131
South Eastern	7,323	1,110	8,433
Southern	8,481	2,113	10,594
Western	8,130	1,357	9,487
Total Treated	46,987	8,207	55,194

Source: Hospital Inpatient System & Departmental Return IS1 Part 2

^PData are currently provisional

*Not National Statistics

²Refer to Explanatory Notes 10 & 11

Table 7: Completed Inpatient Waits by HSC Trust – QE March 2011 to QE March 2012²

HSC Trust	Total Number of Completed Inpatient Waits Commissioned by Health Service				
	QE March 2011	QE June 2011 ^{RP}	QE September 2011 ^{RP}	QE December 2011 ^{RP}	QE March 2012 ^P
Belfast	18,240	18,809	17,003	19,284	19,549
Northern	6,263	6,351	6,194	7,290	7,131
South Eastern	7,153	6,732	6,541	7,031	8,433
Southern	7,930	7,503	7,640	8,690	10,594
Western	7,800	7,755	7,371	8,768	9,487
Total	47,386	47,150	44,749	51,063	55,194

Source: Hospital Inpatient System & Departmental Return IS1 part 2

^RData have been revised

^PData are currently provisional

²Refer 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 the 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. The Department was informed, after the deadline for submission of information, of one further patient who was on the inpatient waiting list at the end of March 2012. This patient had been waiting one week for ordinary admission under the specialty of forensic psychiatry at the Belfast HSC Trust. This patient's waiting time will be reflected in the next waiting time bulletin.
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.
15. Figures relating to inpatient waiting times for the quarter ending 30th June 2012 will be released on Thursday 30th August 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