

Publication Report



Emergency Department Activity

(formerly Emergency Department Waiting Times)

Quarter ending 30 September 2011

Publication date – 29 November 2011



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About ISD

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

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

Purpose: To deliver effective national and specialist intelligence services to improve the health and wellbeing of people in Scotland.

Mission: Better Information, Better Decisions, Better Health

Vision: To be a valued partner in improving health and wellbeing in Scotland by providing a world class intelligence service.

Official Statistics

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

ISD's statistical publications are currently classified as one of the following:

- National Statistics (i.e. assessed by the UK Statistics Authority as complying with the Code of Practice)
- National Statistics (i.e. legacy, still to be assessed by the UK Statistics Authority)
- Official Statistics (i.e. still to be assessed by the UK Statistics Authority)
- other (not Official Statistics)

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

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs;
- are well explained and readily accessible;
- are produced according to sound methods, and
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.

Introduction

Emergency Department data has been submitted to ISD since July 2007. This was primarily established to support the 4-hour waiting time standard. Since that time the information has been used to support a variety of other purposes both by NHS Boards and Scottish Government. Information on compliance with the 4-hour wait has been published since 2007 and we are now expanding the information which will be available in the public domain.

This release includes several new charts and tables which present additional information about attendances across Scotland. The information is provided at both Scotland level and at NHS Board level (see the [Further Data section](#) below).

Emergency Department information is often presented at two levels; 1) larger sites which are 24-hour Emergency Medicine Consultant led departments and 2) smaller sites including Minor Injury Units (MIUs), community A&Es and in some cases health centres. A list of how departments are classified for this publication can be found on the [Emergency Department Activity - Data Collection](#) webpage.

The tables and charts in this publication include;

- monthly summary of number of total attendances for Emergency Departments and MIU/Others in Scotland.
- Attendances and admission (to a hospital bed) rates by age band and gender – for the latest 12 months.
- 4-hour wait performance.

Please note that previous releases of the 4-hour wait performance publication were known as 'Accident and Emergency Waiting Times'. The naming convention of 'Accident and Emergency (A&E) Department' has been updated to the more accurate term 'Emergency Department'. However, in some instances there may still be reference to the former term.

Previous Emergency Department Waiting Times publication reports are available on the [ISD Waiting Times web pages](#).

Key points

- During the quarter ending 30 September 2011, the number of new and unplanned return patients attending Emergency Departments across Scotland was approximately; 140,700 in July, 139,900 in August and 137,600 in September.
- During the quarter ending 30 September 2011, the proportion of new and unplanned return patients attending Emergency Departments across Scotland that were seen within 4 hours was; 97.2 % in July, 97.0% in August and 96.0 % in September.
- During the quarter ending 30 September 2011, the rate of new and unplanned return attendances (per 100,000 population) at Emergency Departments across Scotland was; 2,695 in July, 2,679 in August and 2,634 in September.
- The 0-4 age band shows the highest attendance and admission rates for younger ages, while for the remaining younger ages the attendance rate peaks at 20-24 for males and 15-19 for females.
- From the age of 75 onwards both males and females have at least a 1 in 2 chance of being admitted to a hospital bed following an Emergency Department attendance.

Results and Commentary

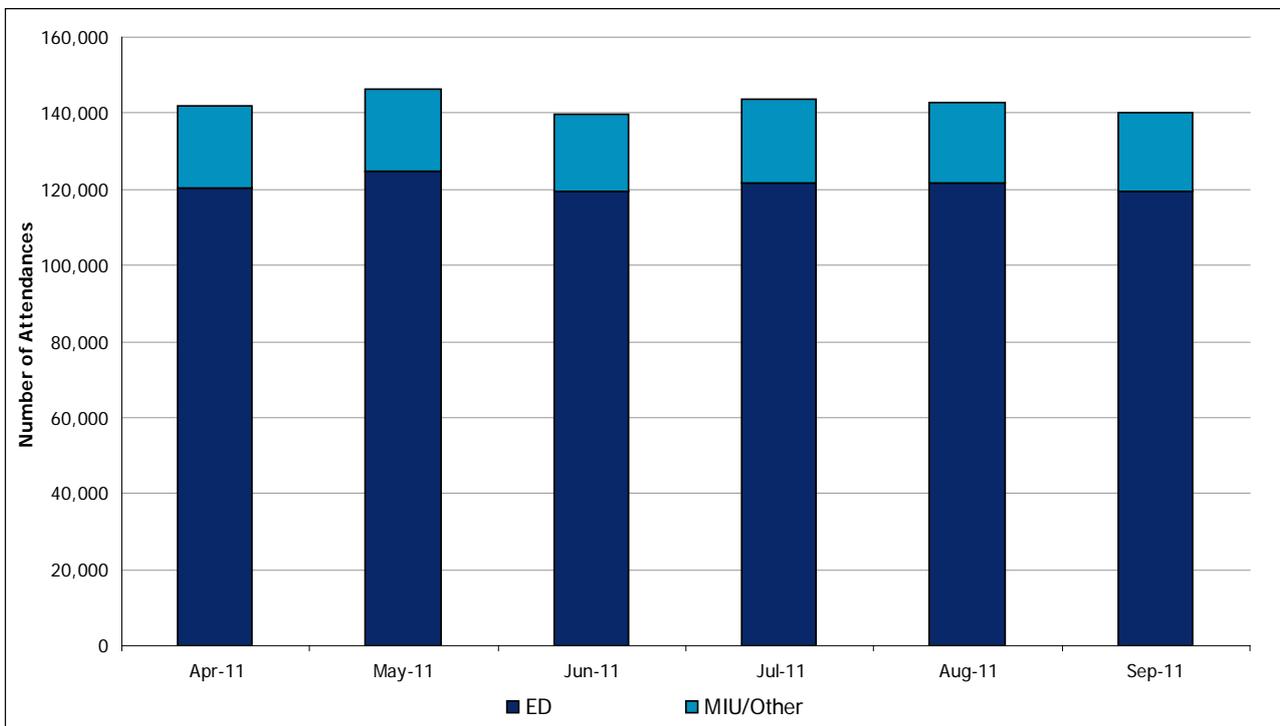
Total Attendances by Site Type

The chart below shows the total number of attendances at Emergency Departments (EDs) across Scotland for the first 6 months of the 2011/12 financial year. It can be seen that over the past 6 months the number of attendances have remained fairly constant at approximately 140,000 with May showing the highest number. The proportion of attendances is higher at the larger EDs at approximately 120,000 with the remaining 20,000 attending smaller sites such as Minor Injury Units (MIUs).

These total attendance figures include all attendance categories; new, unplanned returns, planned returns and recall attendances. The first two categories are classed as new presentations while the latter two are follow-up attendances connected with the original complaint. It should be noted that the number of attendances quoted in the 4-hour waiting time standard and the HEAT target quoted later in this report are different as they only include new and unplanned return attendances.

To see the proportion of the different attendance categories presenting at Emergency Departments, please refer to the [Further Data section](#) of this report.

Chart 1: Total attendances by site type at Emergency Departments across Scotland, April 2011 to September 2011



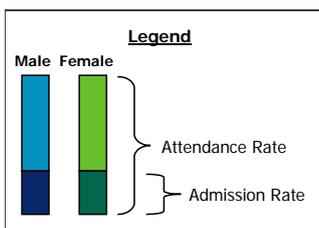
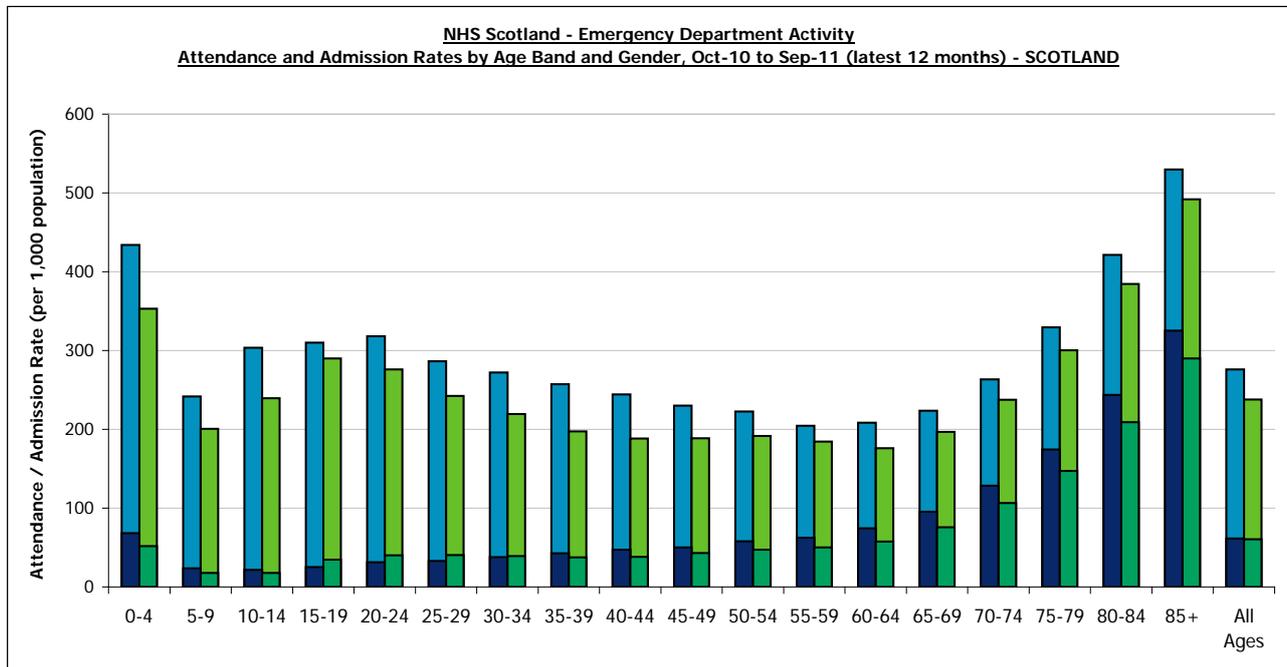
Attendances & Admission Rates by Age Band and Gender

The chart below provides at Scotland level for the latest 12 month period (October 2010 to September 2011) the attendance rate and the rate of admission to a hospital bed, by age band and gender for new and unplanned returns.

It can be seen that;

- The attendance and admission rates peak at the highest over 85s age band for both males and females.
- The 0-4 age band shows the highest attendance and admission rates for younger ages, while for the remaining younger ages the attendance rate peaks at 20-24 for males and 15-19 for females.
- Males are more likely to attend an ED across all age bands
- Females have a higher admission rate than males only in the 15 – 34 age range following an attendance
- From the age of 10 onwards the older you are the more likely you are to be admitted to a hospital bed
- From the age of 75 onwards both males and females have at least a 1 in 2 chance of being admitted to a hospital bed following an attendance

Chart 2: Attendance and admission rates by age band and gender, October 2010 to September 2011 (latest 12 months)



Waiting Times (4-hour standard)

The national standard for Emergency Department (ED) waiting times states that at least 98 % of new and unplanned return patients should be seen and then admitted, transferred or discharged within 4 hours. This standard applies to all areas of emergency care such as assessment units, minor injury units, community hospitals, health centres, anywhere where emergency care type activity takes place. The 4-hour waiting time standard came into place in 2007 and continues to be the measure by which the Scottish Government (SG) monitors NHS boards' performance within EDs.

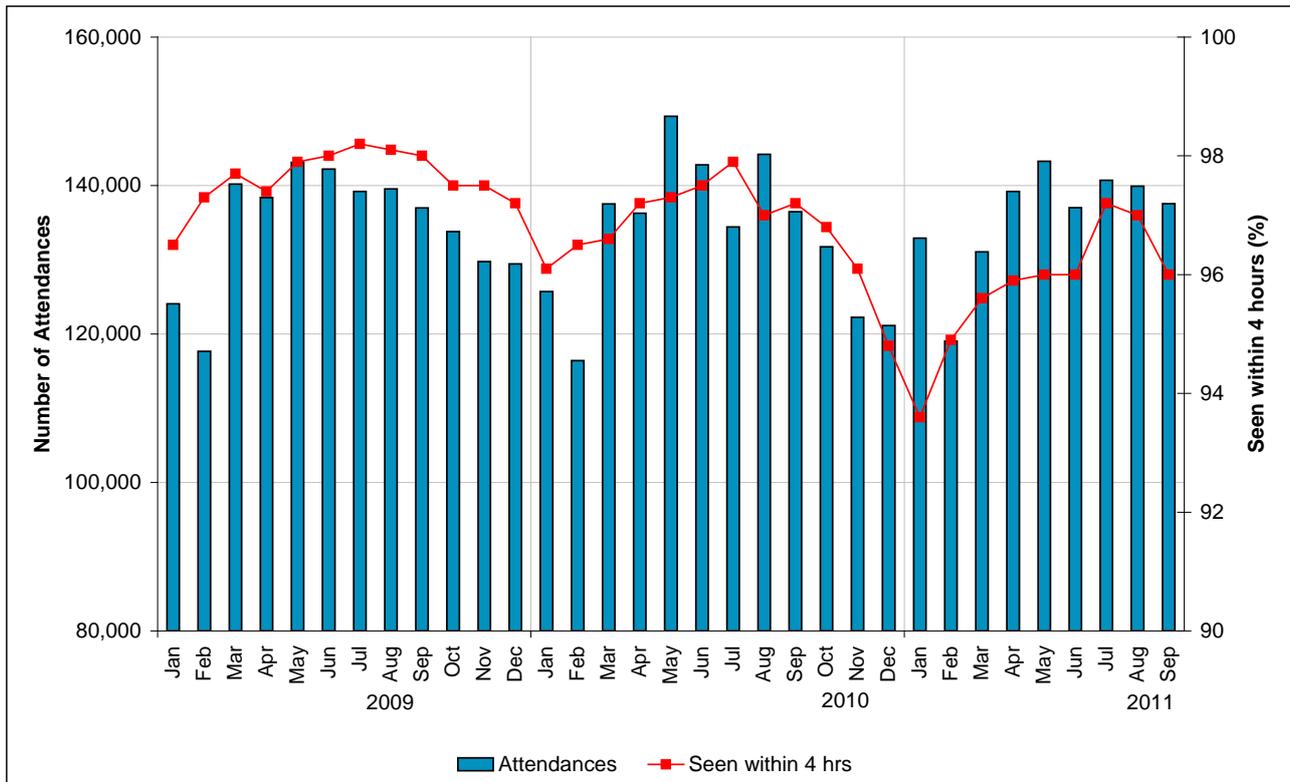
In the 12 months to September 2011, the number of new and unplanned return patients attending Emergency Departments across Scotland each month ranged from approximately 119,000 (February 2011) to 143,300 (October 2010). In the same time period, the proportion of patients seen within 4 hours ranged from 93.6% (January 2011) to 97.2 % (July 2011).

Table 1: Number of new and unplanned attendances at Emergency Departments across Scotland and proportion of those seen within 4 hours, July 2011 to September 2011.

Month	Number of attendances	Seen within 4 hours (%)
Jul-11	140,714	97.2
Aug-11	139,903	97.0
Sep-11	137,558	96.0

The longer term monthly trend since January 2009 is illustrated in the chart below.

Chart 3: Number of attendances at Emergency Departments across Scotland and proportion of those seen within 4 hours, July 2011 to September 2011



HEAT Target Reducing Attendance Rates at Emergency Departments

In order to reduce the number of attendances at Emergency Departments across Scotland, the Scottish Government has introduced a [HEAT target](#) performance measure. NHS Boards are tasked with reductions in the rates of attendance at EDs between 2009/10 and 2013/14. The aim is to reduce attendances with better provision and use of primary care services, better preventative and continuous care in the home and improved self care. The target generally only applies to Emergency Departments and excludes MIU/Others.

In the 12 months to September 2011, the rate of new and unplanned attendances at Emergency Departments across Scotland each month ranged from approximately 2,292 (February 2011) to 2,743 (May 2011) per 100,000 population. For the HEAT target the range was 1,967 (February 2011) to 2,327 (May 2011) per 100,000 population.

Table 2: Number and rate of new and unplanned attendances at Emergency Departments across Scotland, July 2011 to September 2011.

Month	Total (all sites)		HEAT Target sites	
	Number of attendances	Rate (per 100,000)	Number of attendances	Rate (per 100,000)
Jul-11	140,714	2,695	117,985	2,268
Aug-11	139,903	2,679	117,711	2,263
Sep-11	137,558	2,634	115,725	2,225

Further Data

- Comparable information on total attendances by site type and attendance category broken down by NHS Board is available on the ISD website:

[ED site type and attendance category: 2011/12](#)  [109 KB]

- Comparable information on attendance and admission rates by age band and gender broken down by NHS Board is available on the ISD website:

[ED attendance & admission rates: latest 12 months](#)  [131 KB]

- Comparable information on attendances and performance against the 4-hour waiting time standard broken down by NHS Board and at individual site level is available on the ISD website:

[ED attendances and waiting times: 2011/12](#)  [121 KB] [PDF](#)  [113 KB]

- Comparable information on attendances and rate of attendance (total and HEAT target sites) broken down by NHS Board is available on the ISD website:

[ED HEAT rates: 2011/12](#)  [58 KB] [PDF](#)  [30 KB]

Historical Data

The following previously published data can be found on the [Emergency Department Activity – Statistics](#) web page.

- Total attendances by site type and attendance category broken down by NHS Board – from April 2010
- Attendance and admission rates by age band and gender broken down by NHS Board – from April 2010
- Attendances and performance against the 4-hour waiting time standard broken down by NHS Board and at individual site level – from April 2006
- Attendances and rate of attendance (total and HEAT target sites) broken down by NHS Board – from April 2009.

Notes

1) Borders - Borders General Hospital transferred to a new patient management system at the end of November 2010. There was an issue with the new system that prevented the recording of different attendance categories from April to September 2011. This results in the attendance figures for Borders General being artificially inflated by approximately 0.8 % (estimated from the data 12 months leading up to transfer), please interpret with caution.

2) Greater Glasgow & Clyde - due to the implementation of a new patient management system at Inverclyde Royal Hospital, no data for 19 to 30 September has been submitted as yet. This results in the attendance figures being approximately 1,300 lower than expected (estimated from the previous 12 months data), please interpret with caution.

3) Greater Glasgow & Clyde - Stobhill Hospital changed from having both an ED and MIU to only having an MIU in April 2011.

4) Lanarkshire - the three EDs transferred to a new patient management system during March 2011. There was an issue with the new system that prevented the recording of different attendance categories from April to June 2011. This results in the attendance figures for the three EDs being artificially inflated by approximately 5.0 % (estimated from the data 12 months leading up to transfer), please interpret with caution.

5) Forth Valley - As of 08:00 on 12 July 2011 the ED at Stirling Royal Infirmary closed and became an MIU at Stirling Community Hospital; a new ED opened at Forth Valley Royal Hospital and the MIU at Falkirk Community Hospital closed.

Glossary

Emergency Department (ED)	a hospital department which provides a service primarily for the reception, assessment, examination and treatment of patients who have been involved in an accident, or have sustained an injury or who have an acute surgical or medical emergency which may require hospital facilities
Accident & Emergency (A&E) department	synonym of Emergency Department (ED)
Attendance	the presence of a patient in an Emergency Department seeking unplanned medical attention
4 hour performance	the proportion of all attendances in a calendar month that are seen within 4 hours of arrival
Patients Seen	patients who are assessed by a clinician then either admitted to hospital, discharged or transferred to another hospital
Admission	Admission to a hospital bed.
Attendance Category	A record of whether a patient is making a first or follow-up attendance at a particular Emergency Department.

List of Tables

Table No.	Name	Time period	File & size
1	Number of new and unplanned attendances at Emergency Departments across Scotland and proportion of those seen within 4 hours, July 2011 to September 2011.	1 July – 30 September 2011	Excel [114kb]
2	Number and rate of new and unplanned attendances at Emergency Departments across Scotland, July 2011 to September 2011.	1 July – 30 September 2011	Excel [58kb]

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Further Information

Further information on Emergency Department Activity can be found on the [Emergency Department Activity](#) pages of the ISD website.

Further details on ISD publications and available information can be found on the [ISD website](#).

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Appendix

A1 – Background Information

Data on Emergency Department (ED) attendances across Scotland is collected and maintained by ISD in the national data warehouse known as the A&E data mart. Data is collected on local systems, then extracted and submitted to the data mart soon after the end of each month. All sites that provide emergency care are required to submit data to the A&E data mart.

There are two types of data submitted to the A&E data mart; episode and aggregate level data. The larger hospitals with EDs generally submit episode level data containing a detailed record for each patient attendance. Smaller sites such as minor injury units or community hospitals generally only submit aggregate level data. The smaller sites only submit total monthly attendance figures as they do not have the information systems and support to enable collection of detailed patient based information.

ED attendances are also collected as part of the ISD(S)1 data submission. This data provides aggregate numbers of attendances going back to 2001, and can be found on the [Acute Hospital Activity](#) pages of the ISD website.

A2 – Publication Metadata (including revisions details)

Metadata Indicator	Description
Publication title	Emergency Department Activity
Description	Summary of activity of attendances at emergency departments including the proportion of those waiting less than 4 hours, breakdown by age and gender.
Theme	Health and Social Care
Topic	Emergency Care
Format	Excel workbooks and PDF
Data source(s)	A&E data mart
Date that data are acquired	Monthly by the 10 th
Release date	The last Tuesday of the month for each publication
Frequency	Quarterly
Timeframe of data and timeliness	From 1 July 2011 to 30 September 2011
Continuity of data	<p>1) Borders - Borders General Hospital transferred to a new patient management system at the end of November 2010. There was an issue with the new system that prevented the recording of different attendance categories from April to September 2011. This results in the attendance figures for Borders General being artificially inflated by approximately 0.8 % (estimated from the data 12 months leading up to transfer), please interpret with caution</p> <p>2) Greater Glasgow & Clyde - due to the implementation of new patient management system at Inverclyde Royal Hospital no data for 19 to 30 September has been submitted as yet. This results in the attendance figures being approximately 1,300 lower than expected (estimated from the previous 12 months data), please interpret with caution.</p> <p>3) Lanarkshire - the three EDs transferred to a new patient management system during March 2011. There was an issue with the new system that prevented the recording of different attendance categories from April to June 2011. This results in the attendance figures for the three EDs being artificially inflated by approximately 5.0 % (estimated from the data 12 months leading up to transfer), please interpret with caution.</p>
Concepts and definitions	<p>Details of data items collected and validation process : A&E Users Guide</p> <p>Data item codes, descriptions and definitions: A&E: Codes and Values</p>
Relevance and key uses of the statistics	<p>Waiting times are important to patients and are a measure of how the NHS is responding to demands for services. Measuring and regular reporting of waiting times highlights where there are delays in the system and enables</p>

	<p>monitoring of the effectiveness of NHS performance throughout the country. The NHS in Scotland has been set a number of targets for maximum waiting times.</p> <p>Monitoring HEAT target to reduce the rate of attendance at Emergency Departments.</p> <p>Other uses of the data include information requests for a variety of customers, e.g. research charities; public companies; freedom of Information requests; information support to Boards; parliamentary questions.</p>
Accuracy	<p>In addition to any local data quality checks, the data submitted to the A&E data mart is subject to a validation procedure. For a list of the validation rules refer to Appendix A of the A&E User Guide. As well as ensuring that data for the correct site and time period is submitted, the validation ensures that the data is in the correct format and only contains accepted codes, refer to A&E: Codes and Values.</p> <p>If the submission file does not meet all of the validation rules then the whole file is rejected. The resulting errors are reported back to the submitting site where they must be amended and the file resubmitted. Once the file passes validation it is loaded into the data mart where it is then available for analysis and reporting. ISD works closely with colleagues in the NHS boards to improve the validation and accuracy of the data and to ensure that the appropriate data standards are understood and applied by all sites.</p> <p>Each month a suite of performance and monitoring reports are produced and sent to the SG. These are reviewed and any unusual or unexpected figures are raised with the NHS board for confirmation. Before the 4-hour waiting times data is published each quarter, the figures are sent back to the NHS boards to confirm their accuracy. If changes are required then they must be explained fully by the NHS board and the data is resubmitted. A log is kept noting any changes that are necessary.</p>
Completeness	<p>Following on from the Audit Scotland Review of Emergency Departments in 2010 a programme of work has begun in order to develop training for NHS Board staff on the completion and understanding of A&E data items, particularly those used for national reporting purposes. In addition to this, ongoing monitoring of the quality of data has begun; this covers the completeness, timeliness and accuracy of data recorded. Biannual meetings with data providers are being established to discuss all aspects of A&E data including data quality.</p>
Accessibility	<p>It is the policy of ISD Scotland to make its web sites and products accessible according to published guidelines. See attached link for further details:</p>

	http://www.isdscotland.org/isd/2412.html
Value type and unit of measurement	Count of total attendances. Count of attendances seen within 4 hours. Proportion of attendances seen within 4 hours. Rate of attendance by age and gender and subsequent admission.
Disclosure	The ISD protocol on Statistical Disclosure Protocol is followed.
Official Statistics designation	National Statistics (attendances and 4-hour wait). Non National Statistics remaining charts and tables
UK Statistics Authority Assessment	Assessed by UK Statistics Authority as part of the Statistics on NHS Waiting Times in Scotland report.
Last published	30 August 2011
Next published	28 February 2012
Date of first publication	Data available from 1 July 2007 (with data from main Emergency Departments back to 1 March 2006)
Help email	nss.isdunscheduledcare@nhs.net
Date form completed	14 November 2011

A3 – Early Access details (including Pre-Release Access)

Pre-Release Access

Under terms of the "Pre-Release Access to Official Statistics (Scotland) Order 2008", ISD are obliged to publish information on those receiving Pre-Release Access ("Pre-Release Access" refers to statistics in their final form prior to publication). The standard maximum Pre-Release Access is five working days. Shown below are details of those receiving standard Pre-Release Access and, separately, those receiving extended Pre-Release Access.

Standard Pre-Release Access:

Scottish Government Health Department
NHS Board Chief Executives
NHS Board Communication leads

Extended Pre-Release Access

Extended Pre-Release Access of 8 working days is given to a small number of named individuals in the Scottish Government Health Department (Analytical Services Division). This Pre-Release Access is for the sole purpose of enabling that department to gain an understanding of the statistics prior to briefing others in Scottish Government (during the period of standard Pre-Release Access).

Scottish Government Health Department (Analytical Services Division)