

Publication Summary



New Cancer Waiting Times to March 2011

Quarterly update of New Cancer Waiting Times statistics

Publication date - 28 June 2011

About this Release

Quarterly update of New Cancer Waiting Times statistics for the 62-day target for patients urgently referred with a suspicion of cancer to first cancer treatment; and for the 31-day target for patients regardless of the route of referral from date decision to treat to first cancer treatment. Includes data presented by NHS Board, Cancer Network and Cancer Type to 31 March 2011.

Key Points

During the period January – March 2011:

- 96.0% of patients started treatment within 62 days of urgent referral with suspicion of cancer; an increase of 0.3 percentage points compared to the period October - December 2010. Within the same period, 97.7% of patients started treatment within 31 days of decision to treat (regardless of the route of referral); an increase of 0.7 percentage points compared to the period October - December 2010. The target, for both the 31-day and 62-day, set by the Scottish Government is 95% by October – December 2011.
- For all cancer types combined, NHS Dumfries & Galloway reported that 98.9% of patients started treatment within 62 days, the highest of the mainland NHS Boards in Scotland. The lowest proportion of patients that started treatment within 62 days was found in NHS Borders, with 94.1%. Aside from Island Boards and the Golden Jubilee, the highest proportion of patients that started treatment within 31 days was found in NHS Ayrshire & Arran, with 99.4%; the lowest proportion was found in NHS Forth Valley, with 93.6%.

Background

In October 2008, the Scottish Government published [Better Cancer Care - An Action Plan](#), where it announced it would:

- Extend the 62-day urgent referral to treatment target to include screened positive and all patients referred urgently with a suspicion of cancer.
- Introduce a new 31-day target for all patients diagnosed with cancer (whatever their route of referral) from decision to treat to treatment.

The action plan states that these new targets are to be delivered by October – December 2011. A 5% tolerance level is applied to these targets, as for some patients it may not be clinically appropriate for treatment to begin within target. Therefore, by October – December 2011, 95% of all eligible patients should wait no longer than 31 or 62 days.

This is the fourth publication release providing statistics relating to the new 31-day target; data relating to the new 62-day target was first published in June 2010. These statistics replace reporting against the old cancer waiting times targets. It is important to highlight that some patients who would have been excluded from the old targets are now included and have waiting times adjustments applied to take into account periods of patient unavailability and/or medical suspensions. Therefore, comparisons should not be made between the old and new statistics. For information on reporting against the previous cancer waiting times targets please go to the [Historical](#) pages of our website.

This is the second quarter that includes data on the full cohort of cancer patients; direct comparisons can now be made between quarters from Quarter 4 2010.

NHS Boards have reported that some data are not yet finalised and may be subject to change in future publications. However, this publication is considered to give a reasonable reflection of the current position, and therefore useable by the public.

Contact

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Further Information

Further information can be found in the [Full Publication Report](#) or on the [ISD website](#).

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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.

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