

Publication Report



Audiology 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](#).

Introduction

In 2007, the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Wellbeing stated that "A whole journey waiting time target of 18 weeks from general practitioner referral to treatment" be delivered "by December 2011", with Audiology services to be measured as part of this 18 weeks Referral To Treatment target (18 Weeks RTT).

Information relating to audiology waiting times in NHS Boards has been collected nationally since April 2007 with a revised dataset introduced in December 2008. Audiology data is under development and systems are being developed to improve the completeness and quality of the data.

Aggregated figures are submitted to ISD in single weeks wait grouping where waiting times for audiology appointments are worked out using a calculation that takes into account any periods a patient is unavailable or where a patient has missed or cancelled appointments.

Whilst systems are implemented to measure the 18 weeks RTT pathway for the specialty of Audiology, a pragmatic interim solution is to measure and report the best available information about the different 'stages' of the journey:

- for a first contact appointment
- from assessment to fitting of hearing aid(s)
- from assessment to treatment (where treatment is other than fitting of a hearing aid)
- from fitting of hearing aid(s) to review (this final stage is not subject to the 18 Weeks RTT target)

These 'stages' of the journey are an indicator of progress towards the 18 Weeks RTT target. Some NHS Boards have introduced 'one-stop clinics' where patients can be assessed and treated at a single visit. From January 2011, NHS Boards have the option to record Audiology 'one-stop' patients separately from the stages of treatment.

Key points

- These data are developmental. ISD is actively working with the NHS Boards to improve the quality and completeness of these data.
- For those patients recorded as seen during quarter ending 30 September 2011:
 - 84.6% (of 18 068 patients) waited less than 12 weeks for a first contact appointment,
 - 93.4% (of 9 826 patients) waited less than 12 weeks from assessment to fitting of hearing aid(s) and
 - 96.5% (of 2 147 patients) waited less than 12 weeks from assessment to treatment (excluding fitting of hearing aids).

This compares to 73.9%, 89.6% and 97.0% who waited less than 12 weeks in quarter ending 30 June 2011, respectively for the three stages

- As NHS Boards progress towards managing their patients along an 18 Weeks Referral To Treatment pathway, several NHS Boards have introduced a 'one-stop' service, where patients can be assessed and treated at a single visit. NHS Borders, Fife, Highland and Tayside are recording Audiology patients who experience a one-stop service separately from the stages of treatment. For those patients recorded as seen during quarter ending 30 September 2011:
 - 94.8% (of 1 723 patients) waited less than 18 weeks from referral to treatment at a one-stop clinic.

Results and Commentary

Waiting times for Audiology services are currently subject to the 18 weeks Referral To Treatment target. However, in the absence of complete journey measurement for Audiology services, formal arrangements to collect 'stage of treatment' Audiology data nationally has been in place since December 2008. NHS Boards work to locally agreed 'stage of treatment' targets where the wait to first contact appointment and wait to treatment are split into targets which total 18 weeks (e.g. 9 weeks and 9 weeks or 11 weeks and 7 weeks).

As NHS Boards progress towards managing their patients along an 18 Weeks Referral To Treatment pathway, several NHS Boards have introduced 'one-stop' clinics, where patients can be assessed and treated in a single appointment. From January 2011, NHS Boards have the option to record Audiology 'one-stop' patients separately from the stages of treatment. In this publication NHS Borders, Fife & Tayside & NHS Highland have recorded completed waits for 'one-stop' patients distinctly from stage of treatment and this data has been presented separately in a new table entitled 'Referral to treatment at a one-stop clinic'.

Patients seen during the quarter

The information in this section presents a summary of Audiology waiting times information at Scotland level, for patients who have been seen and for whose stage of treatment wait is completed during the quarter.

For patients seen, a median and 90th percentile can be calculated for each quarter; the median is displayed in Table 1, below, at Scotland level for the most recent quarter and for each stage of treatment. As audiology data is collected in single week groupings, a median wait of 6 weeks from referral to first contact appointment represents a median wait of 42 – 48 days.

Table 1: Summary - Patients seen during the quarter July to September 2011, Scotland

Stage of treatment	Patients seen	6 weeks and over Number (percentage)	9 weeks and over Number (percentage)	12 weeks and over Number (percentage)	18 weeks and over Number (percentage)	Median (weeks)
Referral to first contact appointment	18 068	9 918 (54.9%)	6 423 (35.5%)	2 782 (15.4%)		6
Assessment to fitting of hearing aid	9 826	4 738 (48.2%)	2 474 (25.2%)	649 (6.6%)		5
Assessment to treatment (excluding fitting of hearing aids)	2 147	246 (11.5%)	144 (6.7%)	76 (3.5%)		0
Fitting of hearing aid to review*	4 978	3 490 (70.1%)	2 264 (45.5%)	1 467 (29.5%)		8
Referral to treatment at a one-stop clinic**	1 723			933 (54.1)	90 (5.2%)	12

* Fitting of hearing aid to review is not subject to the 18 week referral to treatment target.

** NHS Borders, Fife, Highland and Tayside record waiting times separately for patients who experience a one-stop service.

For those patients recorded as seen during quarter ending 30 September 2011, Table 1 shows that 15.4% of patients waited 12 weeks and over for a first contact appointment and therefore it follows that:

84.6% of patients waited less than 12 weeks for a first contact appointment,

93.4% of patients waited less than 12 weeks from assessment to fitting of hearing aid(s) and

96.5% of patients waited less than 12 weeks from assessment to treatment (excluding fitting of hearing aids)

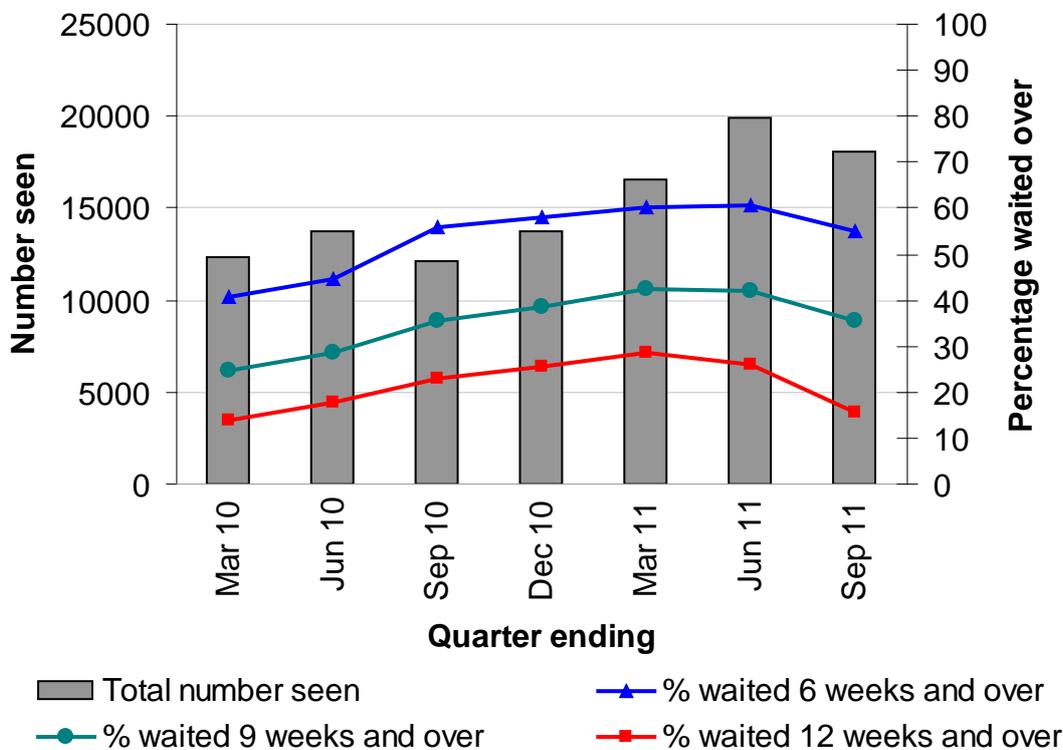
94.8% of patients waited less than 18 weeks from referral to treatment at a one-stop clinic

Charts 1 to 3 present the Scotland trend data over the last seven quarters, displaying the total number of patients seen each quarter as a bar chart and the percentage of patients who waited 6, 9 and 12 weeks and over as a line graph.

Chart 1 shows that although the number of patients recorded as seen for a first contact appointment continues to be greater than 15 000 for the third quarter, the percentage of patients who waited 12 weeks and over has continued to reduce over the three quarters. For patients who waited for a first contact appointment, 15.4% of patients waited 12 weeks and over at the quarter ending September 2011 compared with 26.1% for the quarter ending June 2011 and 28.7% for the quarter ending March 2011.

The percentage of patients who waited '9 weeks and over' and '6 weeks and over' for a first contact appointment follows a similar trend.

**Chart 1: Referral to first contact appointment, Scotland
Total number seen and percentage waited 6, 9, 12 weeks and over**

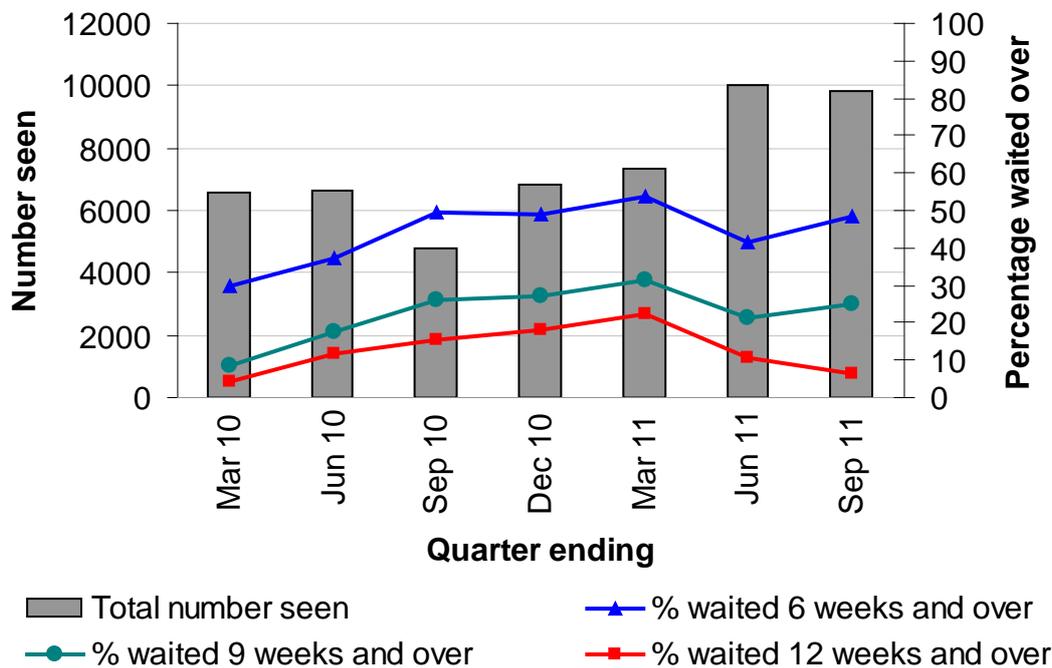


Note that patients who received a first contact appointment at a one-stop clinic in NHS Borders, Fife, Highland or Tayside are recorded separately in a one-stop table (see [List of Tables](#)).

Chart 2 shows that although the number of patients recorded as waited from assessment to fitting of hearing aid continues to be at its highest, the percentage of patients who waited 12 weeks and over has continued to decrease. For patients who waited from assessment to fitting of a hearing aid, 6.6% of patients waited 12 weeks and over at the quarter ending September 2011 compared with 10.4% for the quarter ending June 2011.

The percentage of patients who waited '9 weeks and over' and '6 weeks and over' has risen this quarter but is still an improvement on the percentage of patients who waited within these time periods for quarter ending March 2011.

Chart 2: Assessment to fitting of hearing aid, Scotland
Total number seen and percentage waited 6, 9, 12 weeks and over

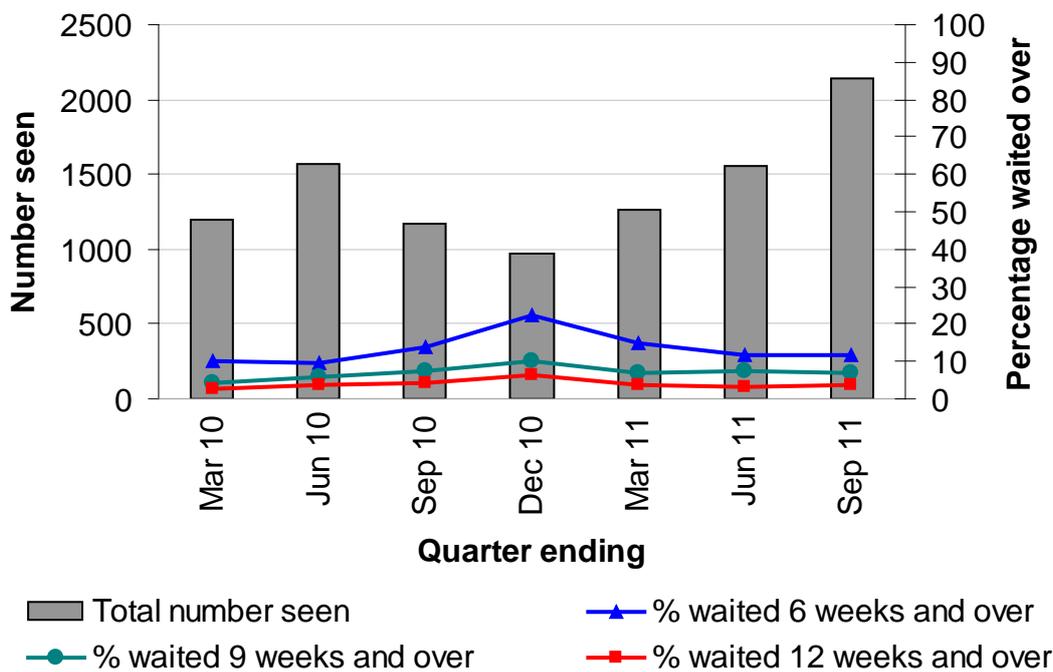


Note that patients who were fitted with a hearing aid at a one-stop clinic in NHS Borders, Fife, Highland or Tayside are recorded separately in a one-stop table (see [List of Tables](#)).

Chart 3 shows the number of patients who waited from assessment to treatment (other than fitting of hearing aids). These treatments include, for example, addressing balance problems and treatment for tinnitus. The number of patients seen in this stage of treatment is significantly less than in the previous charts as many patients are referred to other specialties for treatment.

Although the number of patients recorded as seen for treatment has increased from the last quarter, the percentage of patients who waited 6, 9 or 12 weeks and over has plateaued.

**Chart 3: Assessment to treatment (excluding fitting of hearing aids), Scotland
Total number seen and percentage waited 6, 9, 12 weeks and over**



Note that patients who attended a one-stop clinic in NHS Borders, Fife, Highland or Tayside, which resulted in treatment, are recorded separately in a one-stop table (see [List of Tables](#)).

Patients waiting at month end

The information in this section presents a summary of Audiology waiting times information at Scotland level, for patients who are still waiting at the month end. This is the most useful measure for NHS managers who may need to take prospective action to make sure patient waits do not exceed the local target for that stage of treatment. This measure, however, does not report how long patients actually waited until they received care.

For those patients recorded as still waiting at month end 30 September 2011, Table 2 shows that 5.6% of patients were waiting 12 weeks and over for a first contact appointment and therefore it follows that:

94.4% of patients were waiting less than 12 weeks for a first contact appointment, 96.8% of patients were waiting less than 12 weeks from assessment to fitting of hearing aid(s) and 90.3% of patients were waiting less than 12 weeks from assessment to treatment (excluding fitting of hearing aids).

Table 2: Summary - Patients waiting at 30 September 2011, Scotland

Stage of treatment	Patients waiting	6 weeks and over Number (percentage)	9 weeks and over Number (percentage)	12 weeks and over Number (percentage)	18 weeks and over Number (percentage)
Referral to first contact appointment	11 553	4 740 (41.0%)	2 213 (19.2%)	651 (5.6%)	
Assessment to fitting of hearing aid	4 085	1 243 (30.4%)	374 (9.2%)	132 (3.2%)	
Assessment to treatment (excluding fitting of hearing aids)	669	305 (45.6%)	160 (23.9%)	65 (9.7%)	
Fitting of hearing aid to review*	6 309	3 474 (55.1%)	2 469 (39.1%)	1 741 (27.6%)	
Referral to treatment at a one-stop clinic**	923			106 (11.5%)	0 (0.0%)

* Fitting of hearing aid to review is not subject to the 18 week referral to treatment target.

** Only NHS Borders and Fife record waiting times separately for those patients who are waiting to attend a one-stop service.

For those patients waiting to attend a one-stop clinic at 30 September 2011, Table 2 shows that 100.0% were waiting less than 18 weeks from referral to treatment. Only NHS Borders and Fife separately identify these patients waiting. Other NHS Boards that provide a one-stop service record these patients waiting within the remaining stage of treatment tables.

Glossary

Census date: A point in time, usually month end, which is used as an end date when calculating the length of time that patients have been on a waiting list.

Patients waiting for a first contact appointment: The number of patients who have been referred to Audiology Services from any source, for assessment of any kind, waiting for a first contact appointment that will commence a new episode of care (i.e. include re-assessments). The number of patients waiting at the census date corresponds to the time that has elapsed from the receipt of the referral.

Experienced waiting time for a first contact appointment: The waiting time experienced by patients who received a first contact appointment, for assessment of any kind that commenced a new episode of care, during the quarter (i.e. include re-assessments). The number of patients seen corresponds to the length of time they waited.

Patients waiting from assessment to fitting of hearing aid(s): The number of patients waiting for fitting of hearing aid(s). The number of patients waiting at the census date corresponds to the time that has elapsed from the date of the decision that a hearing aid is to be fitted.

Experienced waiting time from assessment to fitting of hearing aid(s): The waiting time experienced by patients for fitting of hearing aid(s). The number of patients fitted with hearing aids during the quarter corresponds to the length of time that elapsed from the date of the decision that a hearing aid is to be fitted to the date of the fitting. If the hearing aid was fitted at the first contact appointment, the waiting time experienced by the patient is recorded as zero weeks.

Patients waiting from assessment to treatment: The number of patients waiting for audiology treatment other than the fitting of a hearing aid, this includes but is not limited to; treatment of balance problems, tinnitus treatment and counselling. The number of patients waiting at the census date corresponds to the time that has elapsed from the date of the decision to treat.

Experienced waiting time from assessment to treatment: The waiting time experienced by patients for audiology treatment other than the fitting of a hearing aid, this includes but is not limited to; treatment of balance problems, tinnitus treatment and counselling. The number of patients treated during the quarter corresponds to the length of time that elapsed from the date of the decision to treat to the date of treatment. If the treatment was administered at the first contact appointment, the waiting time experienced by the patient is recorded as zero weeks.

Patients waiting from fitting of hearing aid(s) to review: The number of patients waiting for a first hearing aid review following fitting. The number of patients waiting at the census date corresponds to the time that has elapsed from the date of fitting. This final stage is not subject to the 18 Weeks RTT target.

Experienced waiting time from fitting of hearing aid(s) to review: The waiting time experienced by patients for a first hearing aid review following fitting. The number of patients who received a first hearing aid review during the quarter corresponds to the length of time that elapsed from the date of fitting.

One-stop clinic: A service provided by some NHS Boards whereby the patient will receive a specialist consultation and, where appropriate, undergo treatment at the same visit.

Median: This is a measure of the typical (average) waiting time. The median is also known as the 50th percentile and signifies that 50% of patients waited up to the time shown; 50% waited longer.

As audiology data is collected in single week groupings, the median is similarly represented in weeks. E.g. a median wait of 3 weeks represents a grouping of 21 – 27 days.

90th percentile: The 90th percentile wait indicates the maximum time 9 out of every 10 patients waited. 90% of patients waited up to the time shown; 10% waited longer.

As audiology data is collected in single week groupings, the 90th percentile is similarly represented in weeks. E.g. a 90th percentile wait of 3 weeks represents a grouping of 21 – 27 days.

List of Tables

Tables	Audiology Table reference	Description	Time period	File & size
a	<p>Completed waits: Table 1a: Referral to treatment at a one-stop clinic Table 2a: Referral to first contact appointment Table 3a: Assessment to fitting of hearing aid Table 4a: Assessment to treatment (excluding fitting of hearing aids) Table 5a: Fitting of hearing aid(s) to review</p> <p>Chart 1a: Referral to treatment at a one-stop clinic Chart 2a: Referral to first contact appointment Chart 3a: Assessment to fitting of hearing aid Chart 4a: Assessment to treatment (excluding fitting of hearing aids)</p>	All patients experienced waiting time for Audiology services at the quarter end, with breakdown by NHS Board and type of patient (Adult/paediatric)	<p>Quarter ending September 2011, June 2011, September 2010</p> <p>All quarters from December 2009 to date.</p>	Excel [630kb]
b	<p>Ongoing waits: Table 1b: Referral to treatment at a one-stop clinic Table 2b: Referral to first contact appointment Table 3b: Assessment to fitting of hearing aid Table 4b: Assessment to treatment (excluding fitting of hearing aids) Table 5b: Fitting of hearing aid(s) to review</p> <p>Chart 1b: Referral to treatment at a one-stop clinic Chart 2b: Referral to first contact appointment Chart 3b: Assessment to fitting of hearing aid Chart 4b: Assessment to treatment (excluding fitting of hearing aids)</p>	All patients waiting for Audiology services at census date, with breakdown by NHS Board and type of patient (Adult/paediatric)	<p>Months ending September 2011, August 2011, July 2011, June 2011, September 2010</p> <p>All quarters from December 2009 to date.</p>	Excel [1257kb]

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Further Information

Further information can be found on the [ISD website](#)

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Appendix

A1 – Background Information

The national maximum waiting time for the whole journey from referral to treatment will be 18 weeks from 31 December 2011. Audiology waiting times are an important component in the delivery of the 18 weeks Referral To Treatment (18 Weeks RTT) target. Audiology patient administration systems are currently being updated in order to improve information capture to support the measuring and reporting of the whole patient journey from referral to treatment.

NHS Boards are working with Scottish Government and ISD to update systems in order to improve information capture to support the measuring and reporting of the whole patient journey from referral to treatment.

While systems are implemented, a pragmatic, interim solution is to measure and report the best available information about the different 'stages' of the journey for audiology patients. The first contact appointment, assessment to fitting of hearing aid(s), assessment to treatment (excluding fitting of hearing aids) stages of the journey are an indicator of progress towards the 18 Weeks RTT target. NHS Boards submit to ISD the number of patients who are waiting at month end and the number of patients seen who experienced a waiting time during the quarter for the stages.

As NHS Boards progress towards managing their patients along an 18 Weeks RTT pathway, several NHS Boards have introduced 'one-stop' clinics, where patients can be assessed and treated in a single appointment. NHS Boards are measuring one-stop patients against an 18 Weeks RTT journey. Information relating to audiology patients on an 18 Weeks RTT pathway should be included as part of the overall 18 Weeks RTT data submission to ISD. 18 Weeks RTT data are still under development and were published in February 2011 for the first time.

From January 2011, NHS Boards have the option to record 'one-stop' patients in their Audiology data submission to ISD. For the quarter ending 30 September 2011, some NHS Boards have submitted waiting times information for one-stop clinics for audiology patients. Further details are shown in the [Data Quality](#) section.

ISD receives aggregate Audiology data from each NHS Board and so patient information can not be systematically validated by ISD. The derivation of the figures and data accuracy is carried out by individual NHS Boards in collaboration with ISD. Further information on data quality can be found in the [Data Quality](#) section.

A2 – Data Quality

Some NHS Boards provide a one-stop service, whereby the patient will receive a specialist consultation and, where appropriate, undergo treatment at the same visit. NHS Boards have different methods for recording a patient's wait at a one-stop clinic. Some NHS Boards identify and record these patients' waits separately in a one-stop table whilst other NHS Boards record the waits for their one-stop patients within the stage of treatment tables. Please refer to the footnotes, for each NHS Board, in the publication tables (see [List of tables](#)) when interpreting any one-stop data.

General data quality issues

NHS Ayrshire & Arran: Early in 2011 NHS Ayrshire & Arran noted inaccuracies in their reported data, which has resulted in all previous data being suppressed. The quality and robustness of the data has since been improved. However, the breakdown of patients seen in length of wait is still unavailable.

NHS Dumfries & Galloway: An error has been identified in reported length of wait for some patients seen for treatment (excluding fitting of hearing aids) whereby the patients have been incorrectly recorded as having a zero week wait. This has now been fixed and figures from September 2011 are accurate.

NHS Fife: From March 2011 all adult patients are reported as being seen at a one-stop service.

NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde: NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde have been working to improve the accuracy of their Audiology reporting for Clyde. For July, August and September 2011, Clyde data is now included in the NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde figures. Previous to this, Clyde data was excluded from the NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde figures, with the exception of December 2009, February, March 2010 and quarter ending June 2010.

NHS Highland: Paediatric patients are given an immediate appointment for assessment to fitting of hearing aid(s) and as such may be reported as seen but not waiting.

NHS Lanarkshire: Data recording methods differ slightly between tables as different patient administration systems are used to record Audiology patients; first contact completed waits and numbers waiting are calculated from TrakCare whilst fitting and Treatment data is taken from Practice Navigator.

NHS Lothian: For the adult service, prior to June 2011, New Ways rules such as re-setting the waiting times clock when a patient cancels an appointment or does not attend an appointment, were not applied to audiology waits which has the impact of over-stating waiting times. This calculation has now been amended for ongoing waits and there is a high level of confidence in the quality of the reported data for adult patients waiting from June 2011 onwards. However, the figures reported on completed waits are still inflated due to data quality issues around 'New ways' adjustments.

NHS Tayside: Incorrect coding has resulted in a small number of patients showing a longer waiting time than actually experienced in the ongoing waits tables. Data will be re-submitted to resolve this issue in advance of the next publication.

Data completeness

The completeness of the data submitted for each NHS Board is summarised in the matrix below.

	Jan-2010	Feb-2010	Mar-2010	Apr-2010	May-2010	Jun-2010	Jul-2010	Aug-2010	Sep-2010	Oct-2010	Nov-2010	Dec-2010	Jan-2011	Feb-2011	Mar-2011	Apr-2011	May-2011	Jun-2011	Jul-2011	Aug-2011	Sep-2011
Ayrshire & Arran	Data not available			Data not available			Data not available			Data not available			Partial Data available			1	2		3		
Borders	Data published																				
Dumfries & Galloway	Data published																				
Fife	Data not available			Data published																	
Forth Valley	Data published		Data not available			Data published															
Grampian	Data published																				
Greater Glasgow & Clyde	4	Data published																			
Highland	Data published		Data not available		Data published																
Lanarkshire	5		5	6	Data published																
Lothian	7		7		7		Data published														
Orkney	Data published																				
Shetland	Data published																				
Tayside	Data not available			8	Data published																
Western Isles	Data not available			Data not available			Data published														

Data not available
 Partial Data available
 Data published

- 1 Data for patients seen not available. Paediatric data shown within adult data.
- 2 Distribution for patients seen not available. Paediatric data shown within adult data.
- 3 Distribution for patients seen not available.
- 4 Data for Clyde sites not available.
- 5 Data not available for adult and paediatric patients waiting for hearing aid fitting, treatment or review.
- 6 Data not available for adult patients waiting for a hearing aid fitting, treatment or review.
- 7 Distribution for adult patients seen not available. Full data available for patients waiting.
- 8 Adult data only.

A3 – Publication Metadata (including revisions details)

Metadata Indicator	Description
Publication title	Audiology Waiting Times http://www.isdscotland.org/Health-Topics/Waiting-Times/Audiology/
Description	Monthly and quarterly summary of Audiology waiting times and waiting lists.
Theme	Health and Social Care
Topic	Access and Waiting Times
Format	Excel workbooks
Data source(s)	Aggregate counts accredited and derived from individual NHS Scotland Boards are submitted monthly to ISD using a defined Excel template. Associated with individual NHS Scotland Boards Local Delivery Plans integrated to the 18 Weeks RTT national standards.
Date that data are acquired	Deadline for data submission is the 22nd of each month, though files can be resubmitted up to 1 week before publication where the quality assurance process identifies differences with local figures.
Release date	The last Tuesday of the month for each publication.
Frequency	Quarterly.
Timeframe of data and timeliness	Data from July 2009 to date. There have been no delays in reporting.
Continuity of data	Information relating to audiology waiting times in NHS Boards has been collected nationally since April 2007 with a revised dataset introduced in December 2008.
Revisions statement	A correction to the methodology for counting audiology waits has been applied from the August 2011 publication. This affects the calculation of the number waiting over a given time (e.g. over 12 weeks). http://www.isdscotland.org/Health-Topics/Waiting-Times/Audiology/
Revisions relevant to this publication	http://www.isdscotland.org/Health-Topics/Waiting-Times/Audiology/
Concepts and definitions	Definitions not contained in this report are available at: http://www.isdscotland.org/Products-and-Services/Data-Definitions-and-References/
Relevance and key uses of the statistics	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 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. 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; health intelligence work; parliamentary questions and HEAT targets.
Accuracy	These data are classified as developmental. ISD only receives aggregate data from each NHS Board where the data for the previous quarter is confirmed by the submitting Board. Although aggregated data can not be systematically validated by ISD, reported data are compared to previous figures and to expected trends. Derivation of the figures and data accuracy is a matter for individual NHS Boards. Reported data are compared to previous figures and to expected trends.
Completeness	100% of submitted data is used for analysis and publication.
Comparability	Comparative waiting times information is not possible at present using these data due to inconsistencies in definitions of waiting times for treatment across the four countries. Collaborative efforts by the health departments of the four countries to produce comparable figures on waiting times is currently underway by the UK Comparative Waiting Times Group.
Accessibility	It is the policy of ISD Scotland to make its web sites and products accessible according to published guidelines .
Coherence and clarity	Key statistics for the latest quarter are linked to on the main Waiting Times page http://www.isdscotland.org/Health-Topics/Waiting-Times/ Statistics are presented within Excel spreadsheets. NHS Board and national figures are presented. Further features to aid clarity: 1. Attendances and performance data by Adult and Paediatric patients are available in separate tables to enable users to select a single measure for analysis. 2. Tables are printer friendly. 3. Key data presented graphically.
Value type and unit of measurement	Number and percentage of patients seen, number and percentage of patients waiting; by NHS Board and by patient type (adult, paediatric).
Disclosure	The ISD protocol on Statistical Disclosure Protocol is followed.
Official Statistics designation	Developmental data. Not yet undergone assessment by UK Statistics Authority.
UK Statistics Authority Assessment	Awaiting assessment by UK Statistics Authority.
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Help email	NSS.isdAudiology@nhs.net
Date form completed	29 November 2011

A4 – 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)