About this Release

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).

This release details a summary of patients’ completed waits and ongoing waits for the following audiology stages of treatment:
- first contact appointment
- assessment to fitting of hearing aid(s)
- assessment to treatment (where treatment is other than fitting of a hearing aid)
- fitting of hearing aid(s) to review (this final stage is not subject to the 18 Weeks RTT target)
- referral to treatment at a one-stop clinic.

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.
Background

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 have 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.

Contact

Jane Goodall
Senior Information Analyst
jane.goodall@nhs.net
0131 275 6183

Judith Stark
Principal Information Analyst
judith.stark@nhs.net
0131 275 7562

Further Information

Further information can be found in the Full Publication Report or on the ISD website.

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 Health Department and others, responsive to the needs of NHSScotland as the delivery of health and social care evolves.

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.

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 www.isdscotland.org/About-ISD/About-Our-Statistics/