

Publication Summary



Audiology Waiting Times

Quarter ending 31 December 2011

Publication date – 28 February 2012

About this Release

The Scottish Government has set a standard for the NHS in Scotland to achieve an 18 weeks maximum wait from referral to treatment from 31 December 2011, with Audiology services to be measured as part of this.

This quarterly 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 stage is not subject to the 18 Weeks standard)

This publication also reports waits for patients who received treatment at a one-stop clinic.

Key Points

- During the quarter ending December 2011, approximately 24 000 patients were seen for a first assessment with an Audiology specialist.
- Nationally, waiting times for Audiology have improved in the last year. However, there are variations in waiting times between different NHS Boards.
- Half of patients seen by an Audiology specialist between October and December 2011 had their first appointment within five weeks of being referred and 87.3 % within 12 weeks.
- Half of patients were fitted with a hearing aid within five weeks of their assessment appointment and 97.4% within 12 weeks.
- For those sites which report on 'one-stop clinics', half of patients attended and were treated within 12 weeks of their referral to that service and 98.0% within 18 weeks; meeting the Scottish Government standard.

Background

Waiting times for Audiology services are currently subject to the 18 weeks Referral To Treatment standard. 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 which total 18 weeks (e.g. maximum 11 week wait from referral to assessment and a maximum 7 week wait from assessment to fitting of hearing aid).

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.

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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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