

# Publication Summary



## Cancer Waiting Times to March 2012

Quarterly update of Cancer Waiting Times statistics

Publication date - 26 June 2012

### About this Release

Quarterly update of Cancer Waiting Times statistics, reporting on the time patients have waited for their first cancer treatment. The information provided addresses two different standards: 62 days from referral to first cancer treatment for patients urgently referred with a suspicion of cancer; and 31 days from decision to treat to their first treatment, regardless of the route of referral. The data are presented by NHS Board, Cancer Network and Cancer Type, up to 31 March 2012.

### Key Points

In the period January – March 2012:

- Across Scotland, 94.8% of patients started treatment within 62 days of urgent referral with suspicion of cancer, a decrease from 96.9% during the period October - December 2011.
- 97.9% of patients started treatment within 31 days of decision to treat, regardless of the route of referral, which is similar to the period October - December 2011.

### Background

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

- Extend the 62-day urgent 'referral to treatment' target from [patients previously subject](#) to cancer waiting times targets to include patients that had had a positive cancer screening test, and to 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 statements in the [Action Plan](#) formed the basis for new targets for cancer waiting times, where 95% of all eligible patients should wait no longer than 31 or 62 days. A 5% tolerance level was applied to these targets, as for some patients it may not have been clinically appropriate for treatment to begin within target. Performance against these targets was achieved by December 2011, the timescale agreed by the Scottish Government. These targets are considered as [National Standards](#) from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012 and continue to be published on a quarterly basis.

The Information Services Division works in partnership with the Scottish Government Cancer Performance Support Team and NHS Boards to measure NHSScotland's performance against the National Standards, and to provide a wide range of users with faster access to the statistics they need.

## Contact

### Cancer Waiting Times Team

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## 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/](http://www.isdscotland.org/About-ISD/About-Our-Statistics/)