

Publication Summary



Psychological Therapies Waiting Times in Scotland

Quarter ending 31 December 2013

Publication date – 25 February 2014

About this Release

This publication contains information about how long people waited to start treatment for psychological therapies provided by the NHS in Scotland. This information has been published quarterly since August 2013.

The systems for collecting data locally are still being developed and as a result some people who had treatment for psychological therapies are not included in this publication. However the information in this publication does give a good indication of waiting times in most areas of Scotland.

Key Points

- Waiting times information for Psychological Therapies is still at an early stage of development. NHS Boards are working with ISD and the Scottish Government to improve the consistency and completeness of the information. The target is due for delivery from December 2014.
- To report on Psychological Therapies waiting times, NHS Boards have had to develop, for the first time, systems to report on Psychological Therapies waiting times.
- During the quarter ending December 2013, just over 8,000 people started treatment for psychological therapies in Scotland (this excludes NHS Ayrshire and Arran).
- The initial estimates from data at an early stage of development indicate that around 82% of people were seen within 18 weeks.

Background

The Scottish Government has set a target for the NHS in Scotland to deliver a maximum 18 week waiting time from a patient's referral to treatment for Psychological Therapies from December 2014. Following the conclusion of previously planned work on a tolerance level for Psychological Therapies waiting times and engagement with NHS Boards and other stakeholders, the Scottish Government has determined that the Psychological Therapies target should be delivered for at least 90% of patients.

Psychological therapies refer to a range of interventions, based on psychological concepts and theory, which are designed to help people understand and make changes to their thinking, behaviour and relationships in order to relieve distress and to improve functioning. The target applies specifically to psychological therapies for treatment of a mental illness or disorder.

The Scottish Government is committed to delivering faster access to psychological therapies for those with mental illness or disorder. Patients and clinicians have identified access to therapies as a key service improvement to better meet their needs and expectations. Psychological therapies have an important role in helping people with mental health problems, who should have access to effective treatment, both physical and psychological. It is generally accepted that these therapies can have demonstrable benefit in reducing distress, symptoms, risk of harm to self or others, health related quality of life and return to work. The Scottish Government recognises that delivering faster access is a significant and complex challenge, and sees the target as an opportunity to drive local service redesign informed by evidence.

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