

# Publication Report



## Cancer Waiting Times in Scotland

October – December 2013

Publication date – 25 March 2014

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## Introduction

In October 2008, the Scottish Government (SG) 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. Performance against these targets was achieved by December 2011, the timescale agreed by the SG. These targets have been treated as [National Standards](#) from 1st April 2012 and continue to be published quarterly.

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.

The cancer waiting times standards are applicable to adult (over 16 years of age at date of diagnosis) NHSScotland patients with a newly diagnosed primary cancer; and performance is monitored on the following cancer types:

- Breast
- Colorectal
- Head & neck
- Lung
- Lymphoma
- Ovarian
- Melanoma
- Upper Gastro-Intestinal (hepato-pancreato-biliary (HPB) and oesophago-gastric (OG))
- Urological (prostate, bladder, other)
- Cervical

The 5% tolerance level (i.e. 95% rather than 100%) is applied to these standards, as for some patients it may not be clinically appropriate for treatment to begin within the standard's time.

When making comparisons across Scotland, it should be noted that in smaller NHS Boards, particularly Island Boards, substantial quarter-on-quarter fluctuations in the percentage of patients that started treatment may represent the pathway of only one or two patients. Further, 90th percentiles have only been calculated where there are forty or more eligible patients within a population, due to the statistical aberration resulting from percentiles based on very small numbers.

Some data may not yet be finalised by NHS Boards and may be subject to change in future publications. However, this publication is considered to give a reasonable reflection of the

current position. The quality of these statistics is considered to be fit for publication, and data quality aspects are described in the publication. Previously released information can be revised to reflect ongoing work by NHS Boards to improve data quality. Overall, the revised figures for Scotland remain relatively unchanged when compared to the previous quarters published. Specific information on data quality and accuracy is listed within the Data Quality section in Appendix 2. Information on any revisions to previously published figures is provided in the Revisions relevant to this publication section of the metadata in Appendix 3.

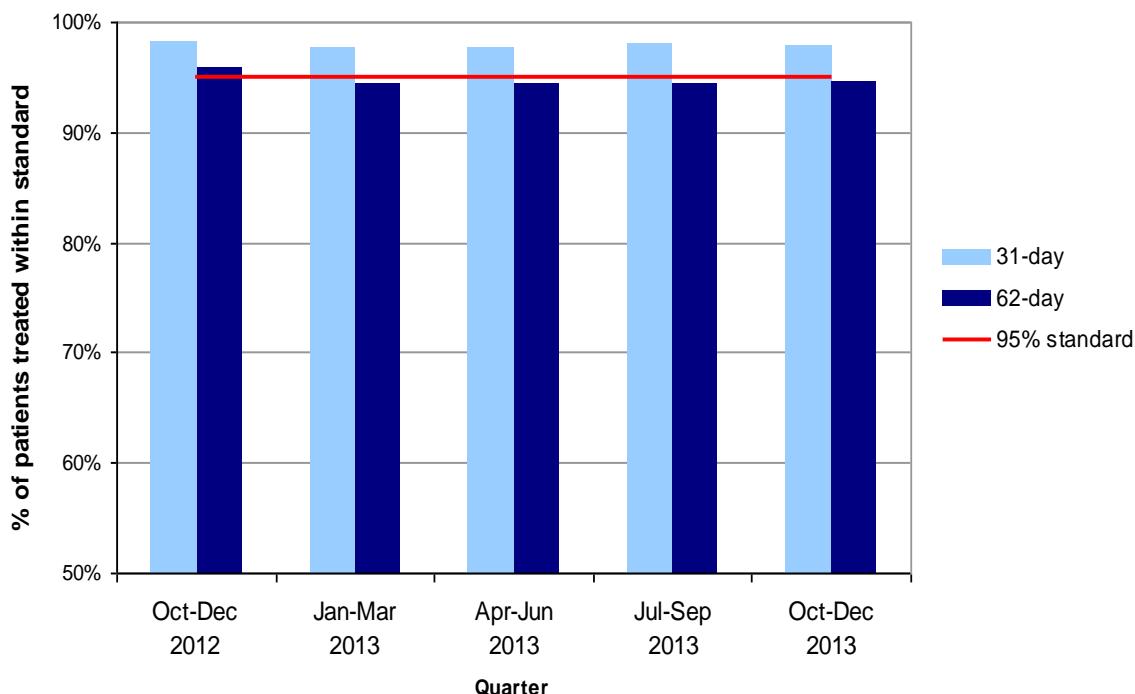
The former 31 and 62-day targets are both included as performance measures in HEAT for data up to 31st December 2011. Further information on the HEAT Performance Measures can be found on the [ISD NHSScotland Performance HEAT web pages](#) and the [Scottish Government Scotland Performs HEAT web pages](#).

## Key points

In the period October – December 2013:

- Across Scotland, 94.6% of patients started treatment within 62 days of urgent referral with suspicion of cancer. This compares to 94.5% in the period July – September 2013.
- 97.9% of patients started treatment within 31 days of decision to treat, regardless of the route of referral. This compares to 98.1% in the period July – September 2013.
- 99.5% of the patients that were urgently referred with a suspicion of cancer from the breast screening programme, 95.8% from the cervical screening programme, and 92.5% from the colorectal screening programme were seen within 62 days of referral.

### Scotland level performance against the 62-day and 31-day standards



## Results and Commentary

### Performance against the 62-day standard: Time from urgent referral with a suspicion of cancer, to first cancer treatment

The 62-day waiting time standard from referral to first cancer treatment is applied to all patients referred urgently with a suspicion of cancer and for screened-positive patients. The quarterly statistics within this publication relate to the period October – December 2013, alongside data from the four previous quarters.

During the period October – December 2013, 94.6% of eligible patients who were urgently referred with a suspicion of cancer started their first cancer treatment within 62 days of referral (Table 1a, Chart 1a), this is almost the same (94.5%) as in the period July – September 2013.

**Table 1a. Performance against the 62-day standard from receipt of an urgent referral with suspicion of cancer to first cancer treatment: all cancer types\*, by NHS Board and regional Cancer network**

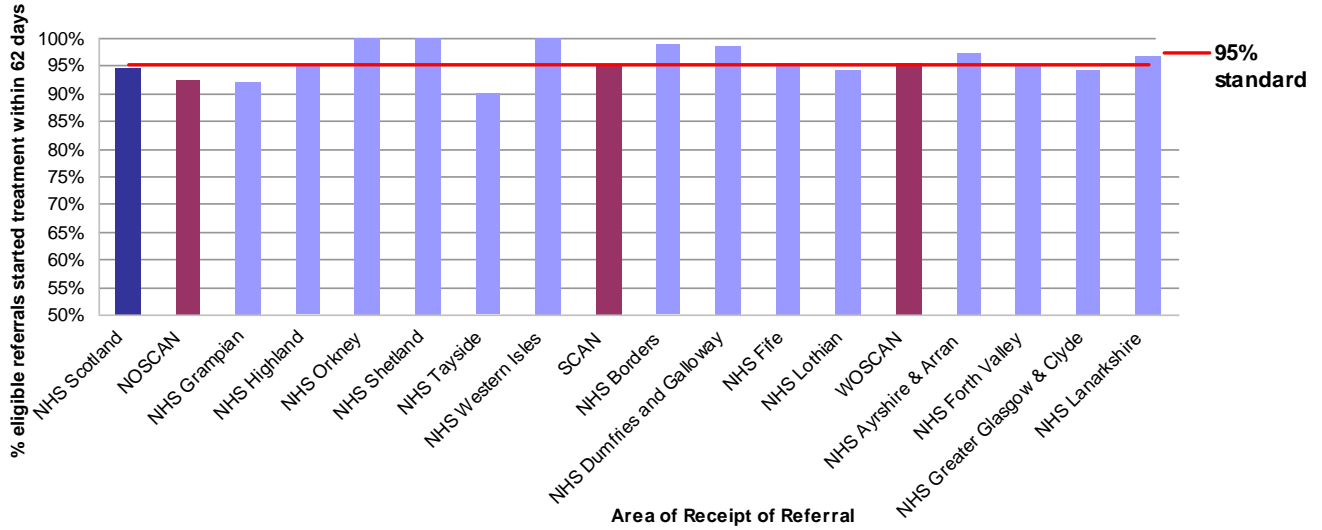
**Period of treatment: 1 October – 31 December 2013**

<b>Area of receipt of referral</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>NHSScotland</b>	<b>94.6</b>
<b>North of Scotland Cancer Network (NOSCAN) Total</b>	<b>92.4</b>
NHS Grampian	92.0
NHS Highland	94.7
NHS Orkney	100.0
NHS Shetland	100.0
NHS Tayside	90.0
NHS Western Isles	100.0
<b>South East Scotland Cancer Network (SCAN) Total</b>	<b>95.3</b>
NHS Borders	98.8
NHS Dumfries & Galloway	98.5
NHS Fife	95.4
NHS Lothian	94.3
<b>West of Scotland Cancer Network (WOSCAN) Total</b>	<b>95.3</b>
NHS Ayrshire & Arran	97.3
NHS Forth Valley	95.1
NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde	94.2
NHS Lanarkshire	96.8

\*All cancer types for which waiting times data are recorded: breast, cervical, colorectal, head and neck, lung, lymphoma, melanoma, ovarian, upper GI and urological

**Chart 1a. Performance against the 62-day standard from receipt of an urgent referral with suspicion of cancer to first cancer treatment: for all cancer types\*, by NHS Board and regional Cancer Network**

**Period of treatment: 1 October – 31 December 2013**



\* All cancer types for which waiting times data are recorded: breast, cervical, colorectal, head and neck, lung, lymphoma, melanoma, ovarian, upper GI, and urological.

In the period October - December 2013, the 62-day standard was not met for 5 NHS Boards: NHS Grampian, NHS Highland, NHS Tayside, NHS Lothian and NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde.

Variations in the percentage of patients seen within the 62-day standard results from a combination of hospital capacity and patient circumstances. The [Data Quality](#) section in Appendix 2 (page 20) of this report includes information provided by NHS Boards on reasons for large changes in numbers, unusual patterns in the data or changes in trends.

In October - December 2013, 99.5% of screened positive breast cancer patients started treatment within 62 days of urgent referral with suspicion of cancer (Table 1b, Chart 1b), compared to 99.0% in the previous quarter. 95.8% of referrals from the cervical screening programme started treatment within 62 days of referral, compared to 96.7% in the previous quarter. It should be noted though, that the 95.8% represents one referral breaching the 62-day standard. The percentage of patients referred from the colorectal screening programme was 92.5% seen within 62 days of referral compared to 90.4% in the previous quarter.

In the period October - December 2013, the 62-day standard was not met for colorectal, head & neck, lung, lymphoma, melanoma or urology cancer types (Table 1b, Chart 1b).

Information for each NHS Board split by cancer type can be found in tables 1a and 1b.



**Table 1b. Performance in NHS Scotland against the 62-day standard from receipt of an urgent referral with a suspicion of cancer to first cancer treatment, by cancer type (including screened positive patients)**

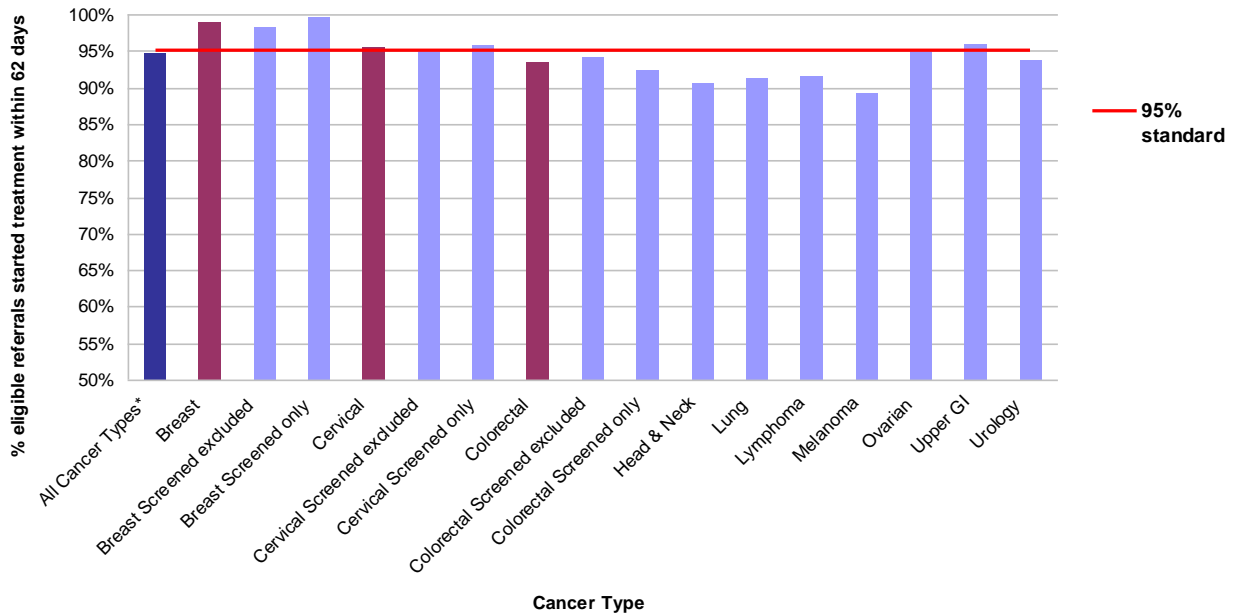
**Period of treatment: 1 October – 31 December 2013**

<b>Cancer Type</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>All Cancer types*</b>	<b>94.6</b>
Breast	98.8
Breast Screened excluded	98.2
Breast Screened only	99.5
Cervical	95.6
Cervical Screened excluded	95.2
Cervical Screened only	95.8
Colorectal	93.6
Colorectal Screened excluded	94.2
Colorectal Screened only	92.5
Head and Neck	90.7
Lung	91.3
Lymphoma	91.5
Melanoma	89.3
Ovarian	95.3
Upper GI	96.0
Urology	93.7

\*All cancer types for which waiting times data are recorded: breast, cervical, colorectal, head and neck, lung, lymphoma, melanoma, ovarian, upper GI, and urological.

**Chart 1b. Performance in NHS Scotland against the 62-day standard from receipt of an urgent referral with a suspicion of cancer to first cancer treatment, by cancer type (including screened positive patients)**

**Period of treatment: 1 October – 31 December 2013**



\* All cancer types for which waiting times data are recorded: breast, cervical, colorectal, head and neck, lung, lymphoma, melanoma, ovarian, upper GI, and urological

Across all of Scotland, the [median](#) wait was 38 days; 90% of all eligible patients were treated within 60 days of urgent referral with a suspicion of cancer. These figures are similar to previous quarters' data.

### Exclusions and Waiting Times Adjustments (62-day standard)

Of all urgent referrals with a suspicion of cancer submitted in Scotland, 120 (3.7%) were excluded from the standard performance calculations due to clinical reasons, or because the patient died before treatment or refused all treatment.

The number of exclusions has remained relatively stable over the last five quarters, therefore has had little impact on the performance against the 62-day standard for Scotland.

Waiting times adjustments are applied to take into account periods of patient unavailability and medical suspensions. During the period October - December 2013 there were 427 occurrences of patient unavailability and 596 occurrences of medical suspension. Further detail can be found in [Table 5](#).

## **Performance against the 31-day standard: Time from the date of decision to treat to first cancer treatment**

The 31-day standard applies to all eligible patients, regardless of the route of referral. The quarterly statistics within this publication relate to period October – December 2013.

97.9% of eligible patients who had a decision to treat had their first cancer treatment within 31 days of referral (Table 2a, Chart 2a), compared to 98.1% in the previous quarter.

**Table 2a. Performance against the 31-day standard for all patients with a decision to treat that then went on to start treatment within 31 days of that decision: for all cancer types\*, by NHS Board and regional cancer Network**

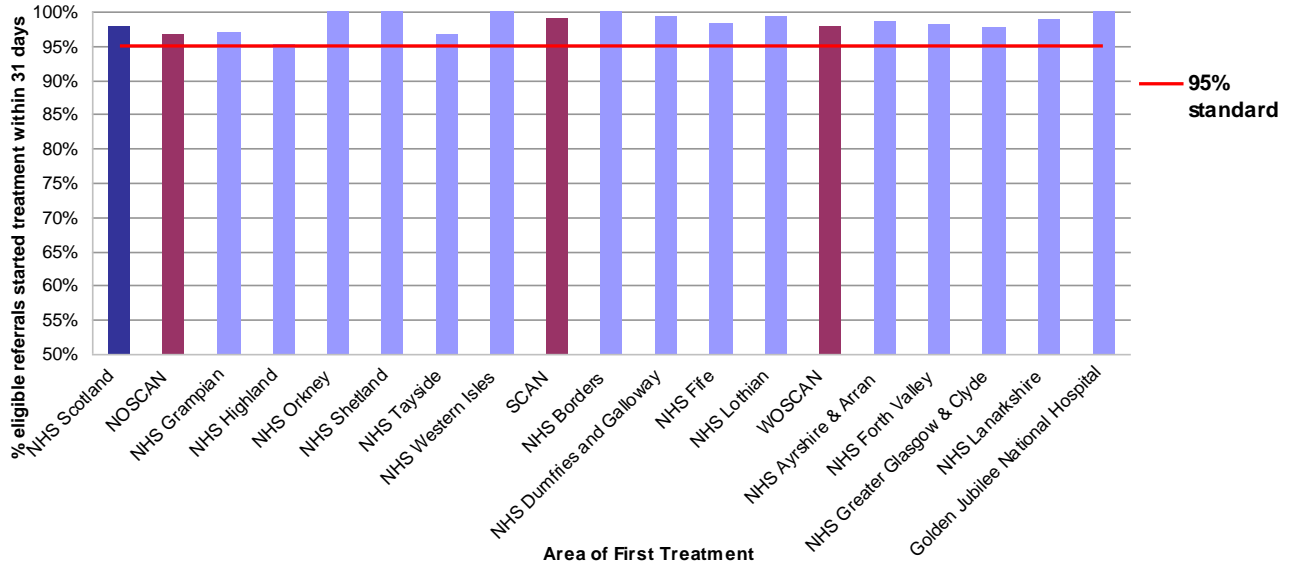
**Period of treatment: 1 October – 31 December 2013**

<b>Area of first treatment</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>NHSScotland</b>	<b>97.9</b>
<b>North of Scotland Cancer Network (NOSCAN) Total</b>	<b>96.6</b>
NHS Grampian	97.0
NHS Highland	95.3
NHS Orkney	100.0
NHS Shetland	100.0
NHS Tayside	96.7
NHS Western Isles	100.0
<b>South East Scotland Cancer Network (SCAN) Total</b>	<b>99.1</b>
NHS Borders	100.0
NHS Dumfries & Galloway	99.2
NHS Fife	98.4
NHS Lothian	99.2
<b>West of Scotland Cancer Network (WOSCAN) Total</b>	<b>97.9</b>
NHS Ayrshire & Arran	98.7
NHS Forth Valley	98.0
NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde	97.5
NHS Lanarkshire	98.7
<b>National Waiting Times Centre</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Golden Jubilee National Hospital	100.0

\* All cancer types for which waiting times data are recorded: breast, cervical, colorectal, head and neck, lung, lymphoma, melanoma, ovarian, upper GI, and urological

**Chart 2a. Performance against the 31-day standard for all patients with a decision to treat that then went on to start treatment within 31 days of that decision: for all cancer types\*, by NHS Board and regional cancer Network**

**Period of treatment: 1 October – 31 December 2013**



\* All cancer types for which waiting times data are recorded: breast, cervical, colorectal, head and neck, lung, lymphoma, melanoma, ovarian, upper GI, and urological.

In the period October – December 2013, the 31-day standard was met for all NHS Boards, and for all individual cancer types at Scotland level with the exception of Urology. (Table 2b, Chart 2b).

Information for each NHS Board split by cancer type can be found in tables 2a and 2b.

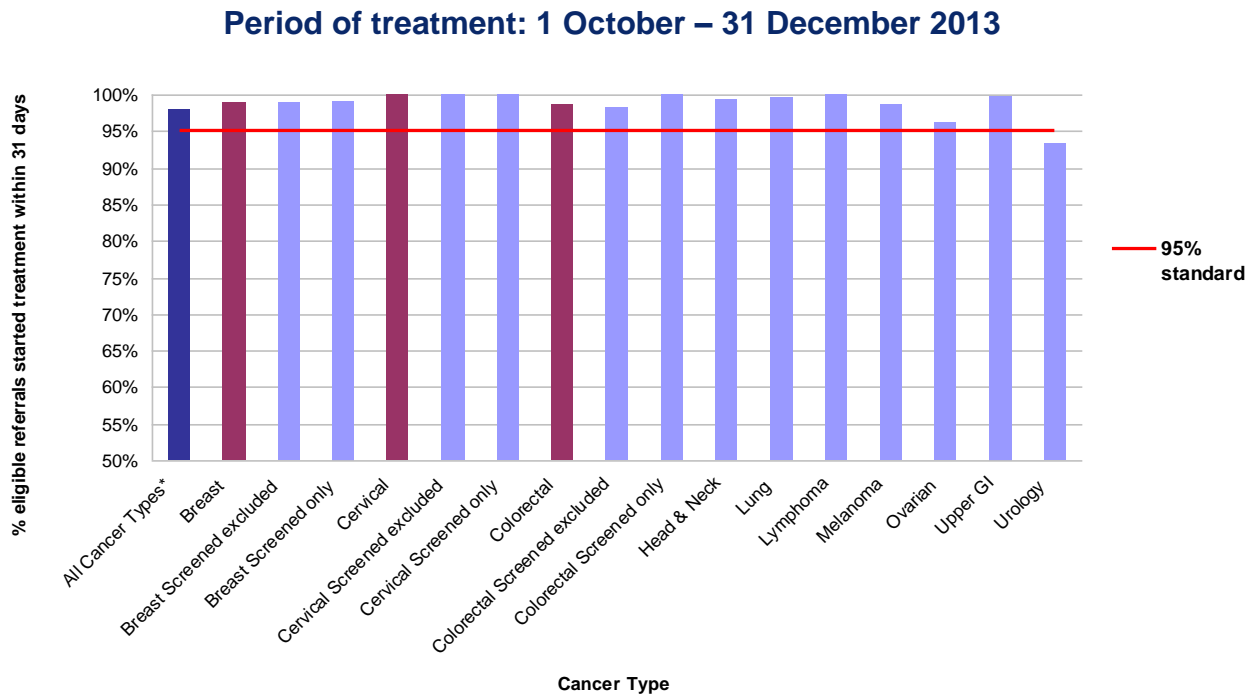
**Table 2b. Performance in NHS Scotland against the 31-day standard for all patients with a decision to treat that then went on to start treatment within 31 days of that decision, by Cancer Type (including screened positive patients)**

**Period of treatment: 1 October – 31 December 2013**

<b>Cancer Type</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>All Cancer types*</b>	<b>97.9</b>
Breast	98.9
Breast Screened excluded	98.9
Breast Screened only	99.0
Cervical	100.0
Cervical Screened excluded	100.0
Cervical Screened only	100.0
Colorectal	98.6
Colorectal Screened excluded	98.3
Colorectal Screened only	100.0
Head and Neck	99.3
Lung	99.5
Lymphoma	100.0
Melanoma	98.6
Ovarian	96.3
Upper GI	99.8
Urology	93.3

\* All cancer types for which waiting times data are recorded: breast, cervical, colorectal, head and neck, lung, lymphoma, melanoma, ovarian, upper GI, and urological.

**Chart 2b. Performance in NHS Scotland against the 31-day standard for all patients with a decision to treat that then went on to start treatment within 31 days of that decision, by Cancer Type (including screened positive patients)**



\* All cancer types for which waiting times data are recorded: breast, cervical, colorectal, head and neck, lung, lymphoma, melanoma, ovarian, upper GI, and urological.

During the period October –December 2013, the [median](#) wait between the date of decision to treat and the first cancer treatment was 6 days; 90% of patients waited 26 days or less. These figures are similar to previous quarters' data.

### Exclusions and Waiting Times Adjustments (31-day standard)

121 (2.1%) patients were excluded from the 31-day standard performance calculations due to clinical reasons, or because the patient either died before treatment or refused all treatment.

The number of exclusions has remained relatively stable over the last five quarters, therefore has had little impact on the performance against the 31-day standard for Scotland.

Waiting times adjustments are applied to take into account periods of patient unavailability and medical suspensions. In the period October – December 2013 there were 208 occurrences of patient unavailability and 283 occurrences of medical suspension. Further detail can be found in [Table 6](#).

## Glossary

**Eligible referral (62-day)** – urgent referral submitted with a suspicion of cancer by a GP or GDP, or direct referral to hospital (self, GP or NHS 24 referral to A&E or other), or referral from a National Cancer Screening Programme; excluding patients who had a clinically complex pathway, who died before treatment or refused treatment.

**Eligible referral (31-day)** - all referrals (urgent and non-urgent) submitted from all sources (regardless of route of referral), excluding patients who had a clinically complex pathway, who died before treatment or refused treatment.

**Exclusion** – patients who had a particularly complex clinical pathway, died before treatment or who refused treatment.

**Median wait** – the middle value of (referral to treatment days for 62-day standard or date decision to treat to treatment days for 31-day standard), with half of patients waiting less than that time, and half waiting more than that time. Medians are only calculated where there are three or more eligible patients.

**Non-urgent referrals** – referrals submitted where the source of referral is GP/GDP referral other or Other.

**NOSCAN** – North of Scotland CAncer Network.

**Percentile** – the value of a variable below which a certain percent of observations fall. For example, the 90th percentile is the value (referral to treatment days) below which 90 percent of the waits may be found. The 50th percentile is also known as the median. 90th percentiles have only been calculated where there are forty or more eligible patients.

**Referral** – a request to a care professional, team, service or organisation to provide appropriate care to a patient/client. A referral may be made by a person, team, service or organisation on behalf of a patient/client, or a patient/client may refer him/herself.

**SCAN** – South East Scotland CAncer Network.

**Total referrals submitted** – all referrals (urgent and non-urgent) submitted from all sources i.e. regardless of the route of referral.

**Upper GI** – Upper Gastrointestinal.

**Urgent referral** – referral submitted with a suspicion of cancer by a GP or GDP, or direct referral to hospital (self, GP or NHS 24 referral to A&E or other), or referral from a National Cancer Screening Programme.

**Waiting times adjustment** – an adjustment (in days) applied to take into account periods of patient unavailability (e.g. because the patient did not attend an appointment) and/or medical suspension (e.g. the patient had another condition requiring treatment before cancer treatment could be started). Waiting Times adjustments are not made when delays are caused by hospital operational circumstances.

**WOSCAN** – West of Scotland CAncer Network.

Further information on Cancer Waiting Times Data & Definitions can be found on the [Guidance](#) section of the website.

In addition, further details are also available in the ISD Data Dictionary of the Data [Definitions and References](#) section of the ISD website.



## List of Tables

Table No.	Name	Time period	File & size
1a	<a href="#">Performance against the 62-day standard from receipt of an urgent referral with a suspicion of cancer to first cancer treatment by NHS Board and regional Cancer Network</a>	Quarterly information from 1 October 2012 - 31 December 2013	Excel [806kb]
1b	<a href="#">Performance against the 62-day standard from receipt of an urgent referral with a suspicion of cancer to first cancer treatment by Cancer Type</a>	Quarterly information from 1 October 2012 - 31 December 2013	Excel [831kb]
Fig. 1	<a href="#">Distribution of waits against the 62-day standard from receipt of an urgent referral with a suspicion of cancer to first cancer treatment</a>	Quarterly information from 1 October 2012 - 31 December 2013	Excel [545kb]
1c	<a href="#">Trend performance against the 62-day standard from receipt of an urgent referral with suspicion of cancer to first cancer treatment by NHS Board and regional Cancer Network</a>	Quarterly information from 1 October 2012 - 31 December 2013	Excel [851kb]
1d	<a href="#">Trend performance against the 62-day standard from receipt of an urgent referral with suspicion of cancer to first cancer treatment by indicator type</a>	Quarterly information from 1 October 2012 - 31 December 2013	Excel [839kb]
2a	<a href="#">Performance against the 31-day standard from date decision to treat to first cancer treatment by NHS Board and regional Cancer Network</a>	Quarterly information from 1 October 2012 - 31 December 2013	Excel [720kb]
2b	<a href="#">Performance against the 31-day standard from date decision to treat to first cancer treatment by Cancer Type</a>	Quarterly information from 1 October 2012 - 31 December 2013	Excel [725kb]
Fig.2	<a href="#">Distribution of waits against the 31-day standard from date decision to treat to first cancer treatment</a>	Quarterly information from 1 October 2012 - 31 December 2013	Excel [542kb]
2c	<a href="#">Trend performance against the 31-day standard from date decision to treat to first cancer treatment by NHS Board and regional Cancer Network</a>	Quarterly information from 1 October 2012 - 31 December 2013	Excel [744kb]
2d	<a href="#">Trend performance against the 31-day standard from date decision to treat to first cancer treatment by indicator type</a>	Quarterly information from 1 October 2012 - 31 December 2013	Excel [700kb]
3	<a href="#">Distribution of waits against the 62-day standard from receipt of an urgent referral</a>	Quarterly information from 1	Excel

	<a href="#">with a suspicion of cancer to first cancer treatment by Cancer Type</a>	October 2012 - 31 December 2013	[852kb]
4	<a href="#">Distribution of waits against the 31-day standard from date decision to treat to first cancer treatment by Cancer Type</a>	Quarterly information from 1 October 2012 - 31 December 2013	Excel [730kb]
5	<a href="#">Exclusions and waiting times adjustments against the 62-day standard from receipt of an urgent referral with a suspicion of cancer to first cancer treatment by NHS Board and regional Cancer Network</a>	Quarterly information from 1 October 2012 - 31 December 2013	Excel [660kb]
6	<a href="#">Exclusions and waiting times adjustments against the 31-day standard from date decision to treat to first cancer treatment by NHS Board and Regional Cancer Network</a>	Quarterly information from 1 October 2012 - 31 December 2013	Excel [497kb]

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## Further Information

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

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## Appendix

### A1 – Background Information

#### Data Collection and guidance

Cancer Waiting Times data are collected by cancer trackers and administrative staff (including medical secretaries) across NHSScotland, which are then recorded onto the NHS Boards' cancer tracking systems.

Each NHS Board submits a monthly file which contains episode level records for each newly diagnosed primary cancer referral which began treatment in the previous calendar month for which they were the Board of receipt of referral. Each record contains demographic information about the patient; key time points in the pathway (date of receipt of referral, date of decision to treat and date of first treatment); information on diagnosis and treatment; main reason for any adjustments to the waiting time; and, main reason for any breaches of the 62 and 31-day standard.

The adjusted waiting time in days and the total of any waiting times adjustments in days is calculated by NHS Boards for each record. Each record also contains a flag whether it meets any of the exclusion criteria (complex clinical pathway, died before treatment or who refused treatment).

Each quarter NHS Boards can resubmit monthly data to allow the most up to date information to be used for publication. This information is then validated and loaded onto the Cancer Waiting Times database to allow data interrogation and reporting.

Performance against the targets set out in [Better Cancer Care – An Action Plan](#) was achieved by December 2011; the timescale agreed by the Scottish Government. These targets are treated as [National Standards](#) from 1st April 2012 and continue to be monitored on a monthly and quarterly basis.

The Cancer Waiting Times Data and Definitions Manual is currently being reviewed to identify comparability with other sets of access definitions. This may result in future changes to the publication.

## **A2 – Data Quality**

This section provides information on the quality of data supplied by NHS Boards to ISD. ISD routinely seeks clarification from NHS Boards amongst other things where there may be large changes in numbers, unusual patterns in the data or changes in trends. These changes may be influenced by a variety of factors including service changes/reconfiguration or data recording changes. The information below highlights where NHS Boards have provided comments on their data quality to ISD for this publication at the quality assurance stage.

It should be noted that in some cases where the 62 or 31-day standards have not been met for some cancer types this is partially due to small number of cases within individual Boards.

### **NHS Ayrshire & Arran**

#### **Accuracy Issues**

Figures give a complete and accurate account of data submitted for the publication.

#### **General/Service Issues**

No comments were provided.

### **NHS Borders**

#### **Accuracy Issues**

Figures give a complete and accurate account of data submitted for the publication.

#### **General/Service Issues**

The single breach seen was as a result of multiple small delays in the patient pathway rather than a single event. Increased capacity and a review of booking processes in colonoscopy improved performance compared to the previous quarter.

### **NHS Dumfries and Galloway**

#### **Accuracy Issues**

Figures give a complete and accurate account of data submitted for the publication.

#### **General/Service Issues**

No comments were provided.

### **NHS Fife**

#### **Accuracy Issues**

Since submission for this report one of the lung cancer breaches has been subsequently identified as having an adjustment that would result in it not breaching. This would increase the % of eligible NHS Fife Lung cancer patients who starting treatment within 62 days from 93% to 95.3% in Q4 2013. This would also increase the % starting treatment within 62 days from 95.4 to 96.0% for NHS Fife as a whole.

### **General/Service Issues**

The main reasons for breaches of the 62-day standard were outpatient and theatre capacity issues for urology patients and oncology staff unavailability for lung patients. Breaches of the 31-day standard were due to theatre capacity issues for urology patients.

### **NHS Forth Valley**

#### **Accuracy Issues**

Figures give a complete and accurate account of data submitted for the publication.

#### **General/Service Issues**

Demand issues with endoscopy, photo triage clinics and in theatres led to the breaches seen for colorectal, melanoma and urology cancer referrals in the 62-day cohort. NHS Forth Valley are reviewing arrangements to increase efficiency. Extra clinics have been arranged to manage melanoma demand.

Breaches in the 31-day cohort were mostly due to clinic or theatre capacity issues.

### **NHS Golden Jubilee Hospital**

#### **Accuracy Issues**

Figures give a complete and accurate account of data submitted for the publication.

#### **General/Service Issues**

No comments required.

### **NHS Grampian**

#### **Accuracy Issues**

Figures give a complete and accurate account of data submitted for the publication.

#### **General/Service Issues**

Breaches against the 62-day standard are mainly due to staffing vacancies, some of which have now been filled. Additional theatres are due for completion in April 2014 which may alleviate capacity issues in some specialties.

### **NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde**

#### **Accuracy Issues**

Since submission for this report one of the 31-day breast cancer breaches has been subsequently identified as having an adjustment that would result in it not breaching. This increases the % of eligible NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde Breast cancer patients starting treatment within 31 days from 98.9% to 99.2% in Q4 2013. This also reduces the maximum wait for breast cancers at NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde from 69 days to 47 days for the 31-day standard. The maximum wait for any cancer type reduces from 69 days to 66 days for the 31-day standard.

#### **General/Service Issues**

Breaches tended to be for patients with multiple step pathways with more complex cases or multiple investigations needing to be carried out.

## **NHS Highland**

### **Accuracy Issues**

Figures give a complete and accurate account of data submitted for the publication.

### **General/Service Issues**

No comments were provided.

## **NHS Lanarkshire**

### **Accuracy Issues**

Figures give a complete and accurate account of data submitted for the publication.

### **General/Service Issues**

No comments were provided

## **NHS Lothian**

### **Accuracy Issues**

NHS Lothian have advised that one lung cancer patient was incorrectly recorded as breaching the 62 day standard. This would change the % of eligible NHS Lothian Lung cancer patients who started treatment within 62 days from 78.4% to 79.7% in Q4 2013.

### **General/Service Issues**

Some services were experiencing delays relating to diagnostic tests or clinic and theatre capacity issues at points of peak demand or reduced staff availability. The services are working to improve or protect capacity where there are recurring delays.

## **NHS Orkney**

### **Accuracy Issues**

Figures give a complete and accurate account of data submitted for the publication.

### **General/Service Issues**

No comments required.

## **NHS Shetland**

### **Accuracy Issues**

Figures give a complete and accurate account of data submitted for the publication.

### **General/Service Issues**

No comments required.

## **NHS Tayside**

### **Accuracy Issues**

Figures give a complete and accurate account of data submitted for the publication.

**General/Service Issues**

Some services were experiencing capacity issues during the quarter which impacted on waiting times. The services are working to improve capacity to reduce the likelihood of future breaches.

**NHS Western Isles**

**Accuracy Issues**

Figures give a complete and accurate account of data submitted for the publication.

**General/Service Issues**

No comments required.



### A3 – Publication Metadata (including revisions details)

Metadata Indicator	Description
Publication title	Cancer Waiting Times in Scotland: October - December 2013.
Description	Quarterly update of Cancer Waiting Times statistics for the 62-day standard for patients urgently referred with a suspicion of cancer to first cancer treatment; and for the 31-day standard for patients regardless of the route of referral from date decision to treat to first cancer treatment. Includes data presented by NHS Board, Cancer Network and Cancer Type to 31 December 2013.
Theme	Health and Social Care
Topic	Service Access
Format	Excel workbooks and PDF
Data source(s)	Cancer Waiting Times (CWT) data are collected by cancer trackers and administrative staff (including medical secretaries) across NHSScotland, and are based on locally available information drawn from sources such as patient administrative systems, laboratory systems, and medical records across the country; which are then recorded onto the NHS Boards' Tracking systems. Data are submitted to ISD on a monthly and quarterly basis, and are validated and loaded onto the Cancer Waiting Times database to allow data interrogation and reporting. Further information can be found on the <a href="#">Background</a> and <a href="#">Data Quality</a> pages of the CWT website.
Date that data are acquired	Deadline for data submission is around the 20th of each month. Submissions can be made at any time up to the publication submission deadline. Please see the <a href="#">submission timetable</a> on the <a href="#">Guidance</a> page of the CWT website for more information.
Release date	25 March 2014
Frequency	Quarterly
Timeframe of data and timeliness	Data from 1st January 2010 to date. There have been no delays in reporting. Information on old cancer waiting times is available on the <a href="#">Scottish Government website</a> from October 2004 until March 2009, and on the <a href="#">ISD website</a> for the period April 2009 until December 2009.
Continuity of data	To remain relevant to the changing set of targets (as published in <a href="#">Better Cancer Care - An Action Plan</a> ), the cancer waiting times statistics published previously by ISD were replaced with a new series of figures. The first set of these new figures relating to these targets were first published in June 2010. The table below* provides information on the various target cohorts and their date of first publication.  Performance against these targets was achieved by December

	<p>2011; the timescale agreed by the Scottish Government. These targets are considered as National Standards from 1st April 2012 and continue to be published on a quarterly basis.</p> <p>When making comparisons across Scotland, it should be noted that some areas reported on contain small numbers. For example, in Island NHS Boards there may be a substantial quarter-on-quarter fluctuation in the percentage of patients that started treatment within 62/31 days, which may represent the pathway of only one or two patients. Due to the effects of small numbers, 90th percentiles have only been calculated where there are forty or more eligible patients within a population.</p>
<p>Revisions statement</p>	<p>Figures contained within each publication may also be subject to change in future publications. See <a href="#">ISD Statistical Revisions Policy</a>.</p>
<p>Revisions relevant to this publication</p>	<p>If NHS Boards discover that data submitted for publication is incorrect, or that data is missing, further re-submissions can be made up until the publication submission deadline date. Any revised figures will then be reflected within the current publication. Figures contained within each publication may also be subject to change in future publications as submissions may be updated to reflect a more accurate and complete set of data submissions.</p> <p>Detail of revisions to this publications:</p> <p>Some boards have revised previously published figures but the number of cases involved are relatively small and the changes have had no major impact on performance.</p> <p>Two boards identified adjustments to certain patient pathways that reduced the number of breaches reported. These changes were too late for inclusion in the tables but are detailed in the table footnotes. A third board also identified previously unreported adjustments that reduce the number of breaches reported. This is only detailed in Appendix A2 and not in individual tables.</p>
<p>Concepts and definitions</p>	<p>Performance against the targets set out in Better Cancer Care – An Action Plan was achieved by December 2011; the timescale agreed by the Scottish Government. These targets are considered as National Standards from 1st April 2012 and continue to be published on a quarterly basis. The cancer waiting times standards are applicable to adult (over 16 at date of diagnosis) NHSScotland patients with a newly diagnosed primary cancer. To be included, the cancer type must fit into one of the listed cancer types in the Cancer Waiting Times Data and Definitions Manual. This manual, and further information, is available within the <a href="#">Guidance</a> section of the website.</p>
<p>Relevance and key uses of the statistics</p>	<p>The CWT team, within ISD, works in partnership with the SG Cancer Performance Support Team and NHS Boards to measure NHSScotland’s performance against current Cancer Waiting Times Standards. Other uses of the data include</p>

	<p>support of NHS Boards, researchers, charities, media, and public, and to fulfil Freedom of Information requests and Parliamentary Questions.</p>
<p>Accuracy</p>	<p>The quality of these statistics is considered fit for publication; data quality aspects are described within each publication. Fitness for publication exercises have been carried out by ISD for the 62-day performance and have shown that completeness of the 62-day cohort is within an acceptable range and is fit for publication. Details of all FFP exercises <a href="#">can be found here</a>. Case ascertainment is assessed each quarter for the 31-day standard. The latest figures can be found within Tables 2a and 2b in the list of tables above.</p> <p>ISD regularly carries out data quality exercises to ensure that data is recorded in an accurate and consistent manner across NHS Scotland. Information on these exercises can be found on the <a href="#">Data Quality</a> section of the website. In early 2012 ISD Cancer Waiting Times undertook a data quality project to assure that data submitted for Bowel Screening patients is recorded accurately and consistently. A paper highlighting the outcome of this project <a href="#">can be found here</a>.</p> <p>Responsibility for collating and submitting the data to ISD lies with the NHS Board that received the patient's initial referral to secondary care. Information on data quality, service issues and accuracy specific to this publication can be found in Appendix 2.</p> <p>The Data Quality Assurance team within ISD are currently carrying out a data quality exercise on cancer waiting times data. A report of the results from this exercise will be made available on the ISD website.</p>
<p>Completeness</p>	<p>A patient will be excluded from reporting against the Cancer Waiting Times standards for the following reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The patient chooses to have any part of their pathway outwith NHSScotland. If this is before the decision to treat they will be excluded from the 62-day standard and if after the decision to treat they will be excluded from both standards.</li> <li>2. The patient died before treatment</li> <li>3. The patient refused all treatment</li> <li>4. The patient was deemed a clinically complex case by the lead cancer clinician of the responsible NHS Board</li> </ol>
<p>Comparability</p>	<p>Links to Cancer waiting time information published in England, Wales and Northern Ireland can be found below. There will be differences in the measures used and collection methods of cancer waiting times statistics, as well as differences in service structures between the administrations. Users need to carefully read the publications when making comparisons. Each of the four countries have measures for 62 and 31 days however the inclusion criteria, start/stop dates and cancer types included is</p>

	<p>not consistent across all 4 countries.</p> <p>England:  <a href="http://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/category/statistics/provider-waiting-cancer/">http://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/category/statistics/provider-waiting-cancer/</a></p> <p>Northern Ireland  <a href="http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats_research/hospital-stats/waiting_times_main/waiting_times-cancer.htm">http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats_research/hospital-stats/waiting_times_main/waiting_times-cancer.htm</a></p> <p>Wales  <a href="http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/headlines/health2013/nhs-cancer-waiting-times-quarter-june-2013/?lang=en">http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/headlines/health2013/nhs-cancer-waiting-times-quarter-june-2013/?lang=en</a></p>
<p>Accessibility</p>	<p>It is the policy of ISD Scotland to make its web sites and products accessible according to <a href="#">published guidelines</a>.</p>
<p>Coherence and clarity</p>	<p>Statistics are presented within Excel spreadsheets and PDF. Performance data are reported on a national, NHS Board and Regional Cancer Network level, broken down by cancer type and quarter. Distribution of waits data are reported on a National level by cancer type and quarter. Exclusions and Adjustments are reported for All Cancer Types at national, NHS Board and Regional Cancer Network level, broken down by quarter.</p> <p>Further features to aid clarity:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Performance data, Distribution of Waits, and Exclusions and Adjustments are available in separate tables to enable users to select a single measure for analysis.</li> <li>2. All tables are printer friendly.</li> <li>3. All Scotland and All Cancer Types data for the latest quarter are presented first, with the option to view spreadsheets down to Board, Cancer Type level by quarter.</li> <li>4. Key data presented graphically.</li> <li>5. Tables use drop down menus to display data by a single Board, Regional Cancer Network, Quarter and Cancer Type.</li> </ol>
<p>Value type and unit of measurement</p>	<p>Distribution of waits (%) for NHS Scotland and all Cancer Types combined. Distribution of waits (%) for NHS Scotland by Cancer Type. Number of eligible referrals, number and percentage of eligible referrals that started treatment within 62/31 days, Maximum Wait (Days), Median Wait (Days), 90th Percentile (Days) for NHS Scotland, NHS Board and Regional Cancer Network. Trends in performance for all Cancer Types combined at NHS Scotland, NHS Board and Regional Cancer Network level. Total number of referrals submitted, number and % of exclusions, number of patient and medical delays, median waiting time adjustment (days) for patient and medical delays; at NHS Scotland, NHS Board and Regional Cancer Network level for all cancer types combined.</p>

Disclosure	The <a href="#">ISD protocol on Statistical Disclosure Protocol</a> is followed.
Official Statistics designation	These statistics are classed as official statistics.
UK Statistics Authority Assessment	Awaiting assessment by the UK Statistics Authority.
Last published	17 <sup>th</sup> December 2013
Next published	24 <sup>th</sup> June 2014
Date of first publication	25 <sup>th</sup> June 2010
Help email	<a href="mailto:nss.isdcancerwaitsnew@nhs.net">nss.isdcancerwaitsnew@nhs.net</a>
Date form completed	

\*

<b>Target Cohort</b>	New 62-day excluding screening and cervical patients	New 31-day excluding screening and cervical patients	New 31- and 62-day including screening but excluding non screened cervical patients	New 31- and 62-day including screening and all cervical patients
<b>First Publication</b>	Quarter 1 (January - March 2010) on 29 <sup>th</sup> June 2010	Quarter 2 (April - June 2010 ) on 28 <sup>th</sup> September 2010	Quarter 3 (July - September 2010) on 21 <sup>st</sup> December 2010	Quarter 4 (October - December 2010) on 29 <sup>th</sup> March 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)

## A5 – ISD and Official Statistics

### 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 (ie assessed by the UK Statistics Authority as complying with the Code of Practice)
- National Statistics (ie legacy, still to be assessed by the UK Statistics Authority)
- Official Statistics (ie 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](#).