

Publication Summary



Allied Health Professionals – Musculoskeletal Waiting Times in NHSScotland

Quarter ending 30 September 2015

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About this Release

This first publication by Information Services Division (ISD) presents information on how long patients wait for Musculoskeletal (MSK) services that are delivered by Allied Health Professionals (AHP). The Scottish Government have set a target that by 1 April 2016 at least 90% of patients will receive their initial outpatient appointment within 4 weeks of referral. This publication includes waiting times information for six NHS Boards and the profession of Physiotherapy only. These data are considered developmental and NHS Boards are developing information systems to collect this information on a routine and consistent basis.

Key Points

In the quarter ending September 2015 for Physiotherapy MSK services in the six NHS Boards:

- 30,322 patients had a first clinical appointment with a Physiotherapy MSK service and just under half (48%) were seen within 4 weeks.
- Nine out of ten patients were seen within 17 weeks.
- Based on these activity levels, it is estimated there would have been approximately 57,000 patients seen by Physiotherapy MSK services across Scotland.

Background

The term musculoskeletal (MSK) problems includes a diversity of complaints and diseases localised in joints, bones, cartilage, ligaments, tendons, tendon sheaths, bursa and muscles. MSK problems also include outpatient pre or post orthopaedic surgery, peripheral nerve lesions (e.g. carpal tunnel, sciatica) or complication of fracture/dislocation/trauma.

The six NHS Boards providing AHP Physiotherapy MSK data are; NHS Ayrshire & Arran, NHS Borders, NHS Dumfries & Galloway, NHS Forth Valley, NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde and NHS Lanarkshire. Once all NHS Boards IT systems have been fully developed the data that will be reported will include additional AHP professions and data for the remaining 8 NHS Boards. A minimum dataset has been developed to support MSK redesign and transformation. Collection of an MSK information dataset identifies 4 week achievement and audit performance against the MSK Minimum Standards. It also facilitates the monitoring of MSK services and improvement requirements. Further information on the inclusions, recording rules and the dataset can be found in the [definitions paper](#).

The target that 90% of eligible patients will receive a first clinical out-patient appointment within 4 weeks by 1 April 2016 is measured by the percentage of patients who attended first clinical out-patient appointment for an AHP MSK service within 4 weeks of receipt of referral from a patient or health or social care professional. In line with the [NHSScotland Waiting Times Guidance](#) adjustments and clock resets are only made up to the target point of 4 weeks.

The Scottish Government has determined that the AHP MSK waiting times target should be delivered for at least 90% of patients, as for some patients it may not be clinically appropriate for treatment to begin within the 4 week target time.

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Further Information

Further information can be found on the [AHP MSK Waiting Times pages of the ISD website](#)

ISD and Official Statistics

Information Services Division (ISD) is the principal and authoritative source of statistics on health and care services in Scotland. Further information [about our statistics](#).