Chronic Pain Waiting Times in NHSScotland
Quarter ending 31 March 2017
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A Non-Official Statistics Publication for Scotland

About this release
Information Services Division publishes information quarterly on the length of time people waited for a first appointment at chronic pain and pain psychology clinics provided by NHSScotland. The information is shown by NHS Board for quarter ending 31 March 2017. These data are considered developmental.

Main Points
Pain Clinics
- Twelve out of fourteen NHS Boards provide pain clinics and submit data for patients attending their first appointment based on the 18 weeks referral to treatment (RTT) Standard.
- During quarter ending 31 March 2017, there were 4,640 referrals to a pain clinic, a decrease from 4,771 referrals in the previous quarter. Out of these, 4,016 referrals were accepted.

Percentage of patients attending first appointment at chronic pain clinics and pain psychology clinics within 18 weeks; quarters ending 31 December 2015 to 31 March 2017
Overall, the percentage of patients attending their first appointment at a chronic pain clinic within 18 weeks of referral has decreased over the last year.

Five of the twelve NHS Boards saw over nine out of ten patients within 18 weeks. NHS Lothian, NHS Orkney & NHS Shetland saw all their patients within 18 weeks. The remaining seven NHS Boards did not meet the standard.

12.5% of patients did not attend their appointment and did not notify the hospital.

Pain Psychology Clinics
Ten NHS Boards provide this service.

- Among the six Boards which can submit data for patients attending pain psychology clinics, 85.7% of the 273 patients attending their first appointment this quarter were seen within 18 weeks.
- Due to the developmental nature of these data the figures for pain psychology clinics should be interpreted with caution.

Background
Waiting times for chronic pain services are monitored as part of the 18 weeks RTT standard. Pain services are part of a centralised service (usually with consultant led outpatient appointments) to which an individual is referred to a clinic for chronic pain assessment and management. The pain psychology service is a service provided for pain management led by psychological therapy specialists. The data presented here has been adjusted for periods of patient unavailability. This information is considered developmental as the 14 NHS Boards are working with ISD and the Scottish Government to improve the consistency and completeness of the information collected.

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Further Information
The data from this publication is available to download from our web page. A metadata document has been produced for this publication.

For more information see the Waiting Times section of our website.

ISD and 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. Further information about our statistics.