Chronic Pain Waiting Times in NHSScotland
Quarter ending 30 June 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 30 June 2017. These data are considered developmental and should be used with caution, as there are data quality issues and incomplete data from Pain Psychology Clinics.

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 30 June 2017, 4,724 referrals to a pain clinic were reported, an increase from the 4,640 referrals reported in the previous quarter. Out of these, 4,317 referrals were accepted.
- Just over seven in ten (72.2%) of the 2,618 patients seen attended their first appointment within 18 weeks, compared with 67.0% in the previous quarter.

Percentage of patients attending first appointment at chronic pain clinics within 18 weeks; quarter ending 30 June 2017

[Graph showing percentage of patients attending first appointment within 18 weeks for Pain Clinics and 18 weeks RTT Standard from OE Dec 2015 to OE Jun 2017]
Six of the twelve NHS Boards saw nine out of ten patients within 18 weeks, including NHS Lothian, NHS Orkney & NHS Shetland who saw all their patients within 18 weeks. The remaining six 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

Due to the developmental nature of these data should be interpreted with caution. Ten NHS Boards provide Pain Psychology Clinics, but only six can provide data. For this quarter, NHS Ayrshire & Arran were not able to provide any data, once supplied this information will be updated. Therefore, no comparisons with previous quarters are provided.

Based on data from five NHS Boards:

- Six out of ten (61.2%) of the 268 patients attending their first appointment were seen within 18 weeks.
- There were 429 referrals to a pain psychology clinic.

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.

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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 are seeking users feedback on the content and frequency of this publication. You can provide your view here.