Chronic Pain Waiting Times in NHSScotland
Quarter ending 31 December 2017

An Official Statistics publication for Scotland (Experimental)
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About this release
Information Services Division (ISD) publishes information quarterly on the length of time new patients waited for a first appointment at NHS chronic pain and pain psychology clinics. The information is shown by NHS Board for quarter ending 31 December 2017. These data are considered experimental and should be used with caution, as there are data quality issues and incomplete data from Pain Psychology Clinics.

ISD recently sought users views on this release and detailed findings can be found in the report. We will be implementing changes over forthcoming publications and continue to welcome your feedback on this release.

Main Points
Pain Clinics

Twelve out of fourteen NHS Boards offer pain clinics to patients and provide data to ISD on how long patients wait to attend their first appointment based on the 18 weeks referral to treatment (RTT) Standard.

- Between 1 October and 31 December 2017, there were 4,669 new patients referred to a pain clinic. This compares with 4,741 referrals in the previous quarter.
- Of the 2,616 patients who attended for their first appointment between 1 October and 31 December 2017, 1,891 (72.3%) attended within 18 weeks, an increase compared with the previous quarter (66.9%).
- Of the 4,338 patients who were still waiting for their first appointment at 31 December 2017, 670 (15.4%) have been waiting for more than 18 weeks.
- NHS Borders, NHS Fife, NHS Lanarkshire, NHS Lothian, NHS Orkney & NHS Shetland saw all their patients within 18 weeks; while NHS Forth Valley saw nine out of ten patients within 18 weeks.
- 1,138 patients were removed from a waiting list for reasons other than being seen. 406 (13.0%) patients did not attend their first appointment and did not notify the hospital.
Length of time patients waited from referral to first appointment at a Chronic Pain Clinic, Quarter ending December 2017, NHSScotland

Excludes NHS Highland and NHS Western Isles

Pain Psychology Clinics

Due to the developmental nature these data should be interpreted with caution. Ten NHS Boards provide Pain Psychology Clinics, but only six can provide data.

- There were 505 new patients referred to pain psychology clinics between 1 October and 31 December 2017.
- Of the 273 patients who attended for their first appointment in this quarter, 173 (63.4%) were seen within 18 weeks.
- Of the 432 who were still waiting for their first appointment as at 31 December 2017, 60 (13.9%) have been waiting for more than 18 weeks.
- 247 patients were removed from a waiting list for reasons other than being seen. 53 (14.5%) patients did not attend their first appointment and did not notify the hospital.

All data relating to Chronic Pain Waiting Times is available in a spreadsheet.
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 provided for pain management led by psychological therapy specialists. The data presented here has been adjusted for periods of patient unavailability. Some referrals will not be accepted as the request to a healthcare professional or to an organisation to provide healthcare to a patient may not be appropriate. Data on return patients is not available as only two NHS Boards have a process in place to capture this information on their IT Systems. Return patient data are therefore not collected by ISD.

Please see News and Updates section of our website for more details.

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Further Information
The data from this publication is available to download from our web page along with a background information and glossary, and metadata document.

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

The next release of this publication will be June 2018.

NHS Performs
A selection of information from this publication is included in NHS Performs. NHS Performs is a website that brings together a range of information on how hospitals and NHS Boards within NHSScotland are performing.

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.