Cancer Waiting Times in NHSScotland
1 October to 31 December 2017
A National Statistics publication for Scotland

Publication date: 27 March 2018

About this release
This publication from Information Services Division (ISD) presents the quarterly update of Cancer Waiting Times statistics. It reports on the two waiting times standards used to measure the time patients have waited for their first cancer treatment. Data for the quarter ending December 2017 are presented by NHS Board, Regional Cancer Network and cancer type.

Main Points
The 62 Day Standard states that 95% of patients urgently referred with a suspicion of cancer will wait a maximum of 62 days from referral to first cancer treatment

- 87.1% of patients started treatment within the 62 day standard, compared to 87.2% in the previous quarter and 87.5% for quarter ending December 2016.
- The 62 day standard was met by four NHS Boards: NHS Borders, NHS Dumfries & Galloway, NHS Lanarkshire and NHS Orkney.

The 31 Day Standard states that 95% of all patients will wait no more than 31 days from decision to treat to first cancer treatment

- 94.5% of patients started treatment within the 31 day standard, which remains unchanged from the previous quarter and slightly increased from 94.1% for quarter ending December 2016.\(^1\)
- The 31 day standard was met by 11 of 15 NHS Boards.

1. Due to a submission error identified after the snapshot was taken, the % treated within 31 days reported is incorrect and should read 94.6% instead of 94.5%.

NHSScotland performance against the 62 day and 31 day standards

Please note that the vertical axis on this chart does not start at the origin (zero)
Filled points indicate quarter in which standard was met.
Background

In October 2008, the Scottish Government published Better Cancer Care – An Action Plan. The statements in the Action Plan formed the basis for the current standards for cancer waiting times where 95% of all eligible patients should wait no longer than 31 or 62 days. A 5% tolerance level was applied to these targets as, for some patients, it may not have been clinically appropriate for treatment to begin within target.

ISD works in partnership with the Scottish Government Cancer Performance Support Team and NHS Boards to measure NHS Scotland’s performance against the National Standards and to provide a wide range of users with faster access to the statistics they need.

The standards are based on the 10 main cancer types: breast, colorectal, head & neck, lung, lymphoma, ovarian, melanoma, upper gastro-intestinal (hepato-pancreato-biliary and oesophago-gastric), urological (prostate, bladder, other) and cervical.

In March 2016, the Scottish Government published Beating Cancer: Ambition and Action.

Golden Jubilee National Hospital is only able to supply data for the 31 day standard as they are not in a position to refer patients but are involved in the treatment stage.

The figures presented are based on patient based data taken at snapshot (18 Feb 2018). Golden Jubilee National Hospital advised slight changes to their data following snapshot which in turn has had a slight effect on the percentage treated within 31 days for Scotland, please see the main report for further details. Figures will be updated in the next publication (June 2018), as required.

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

Contact

Caroline Martin  
Information Analyst  
0141 282 2062  
caroline.martin3@nhs.net

Elaine Parry  
Principal Information Analyst  
0131 275 6655  
elaine.parry@nhs.net  

Further Information

Find out more in the full report which includes the metadata document in the appendices. The data from this publication is available to download from our web page. For more information on Cancer Waiting Times see the Cancer Waiting Times section of our website. The next release of this publication will be 26 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.