Cancer Waiting Times in NHSScotland
1 July to 30 September 2018

A National Statistics publication for Scotland
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About this release
This release by 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 September 2018 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
- 81.4% of patients started treatment within the 62 day standard at Scotland level, which is a decrease from 84.6% in the previous quarter and from 87.2% for quarter ending September 2017.
- The 62 day standard was met by two NHS Boards: NHS Borders and NHS Lanarkshire. This standard has not been met at Scotland level since 2012.
- The number of eligible referrals increased by 11.5% (388) compared to the same quarter last year.

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
- 95.1% of patients started treatment within the 31 day standard at Scotland level, which is an increase from 95.0% in the previous quarter and from 94.5% for quarter ending September 2017.
- The 31 day standard was met by nine NHS Boards: Golden Jubilee National Hospital, NHS Ayrshire & Arran, NHS Borders, NHS Fife, NHS Forth Valley, NHS Lanarkshire, NHS Orkney, NHS Shetland and NHS Western Isles.
- The number of eligible referrals increased by 6.6% (390) compared to the same quarter last year.

NHSScotland performance against the 62 day and 31 day standards

Note: The y-axis has been restricted.
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. In March 2016, the Scottish Government published *Beating Cancer: Ambition and Action*.

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.

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 (11 November 2018). NHS Fife, NHS Forth Valley & NHS Golden Jubilee National Hospital advised slight changes to their data following data snapshot. Please see Appendix 2 in the main report for further details. Figures will be updated in the next publication (March 2019) as required.

Please see [News and Updates section](#) of our website for more details.

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**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 as well as from the [Open Data website](#). 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 March 2019. In May 2018, the Scottish Government published a [Clinical Review of Cancer Waiting Times Standards in Scotland](#).

**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.