Inpatient and Day Case Waiting Times Long Term Trends
1 April 1997 to 30 September 2018
An Official Statistics publication for Scotland
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About this release
This release by Information Services Division (ISD) provides long term trends on the number of patients who waited over 12 weeks for Inpatient and Day Case treatment in NHSScotland. The Scottish Government introduced the Treatment Time Guarantee from October 2012, where no patient should wait longer than 12 weeks from the date the decision to treat is made, to the date the patient is treated as an inpatient or day case.

ISD announced in the Inpatient, Day Case and New Outpatient Stage of Treatment publication which was released 26 February 2019, that these waiting times long term trends would be included from May 2019.

This release bring forward the publication of these statistics to enable their use in public debate.

Waiting times long term trends - data source (SMR01)
As Scottish Government waiting times policy has evolved over the past 20+ years, data sources have also developed to ensure statistics accurately reflect waiting times performance and provide openness and transparency. From 1997 to 2007, inpatient and day case waiting times statistics were sourced from different data collections. These older data collections were discontinued and since 2008, the main data source has been the National Waiting Times Database (NWTD) which collects data specifically for waiting times measurement.

The NWTD was created to capture the changes which were brought in as part of New Ways of Defining and Measuring Waiting Lists, which was implemented on 31 December 2007. ‘New Ways’ introduced, amongst other things, collecting data on non-attendance and patient unavailability to ensure accurate measurement of waiting times.

The statistics presented in this release are sourced from the Inpatient and Day Case activity record (SMR01). SMR01 does not collect the additional waiting times data contained within New Ways and cannot be used to monitor performance, but can provide evidence to demonstrate long term trend waiting times.

Main Points
- The 21 year long term trend shows variation in the total number of patients who have been admitted as an inpatient or day case for planned treatment.
- Developments in clinical practice over the years will mean that patients who were previously admitted to hospital may now be treated as an outpatient. These patients would no longer be included in these inpatient and day case long term trends.
The chart below shows the long term trend for the percentage of patients treated within 12 weeks as an inpatient or day case. Further information can be found in the excel workbook.

Future Release of trend statistics
From May 2019, ISD will update these trends as part of the routine quarterly national statistical release of waiting times Inpatient, Day Case and New Outpatient Stage of Treatment. We would welcome your feedback and comments on the content and format of this addition.

Background
ISD’s archive waiting times website can be accessed here. This provides statistics on waiting times from 2008.

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

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Further Information
Further information can be found on the Waiting Times pages of the ISD website.
ISD have developed an animation, with further explanations of how waiting times are calculated.

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.