About this release
This release by Information Services Division gives a quarterly update on how long patients wait for Musculoskeletal (MSK) services that are delivered by Allied Health Professionals (AHP) in Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, Chiropody/Podiatry and Orthotics. These data are considered developmental and progress continues to be made with all NHS Boards who are developing their IT systems in order to provide data for all indicators. The figures for referrals and patients seen include Musculoskeletal Advice and Triage Service (MATS) operated by NHS 24 for patients referred to self management. These are at ‘All AHP MSK Specialties’ level only.

Main Points
- 50.5% of the 83,787 patients who had a first clinical outpatient appointment with an AHP MSK service were seen within 4 weeks of referral for quarter ending 31 March 2019. (National Target: the maximum wait for AHP MSK Services from referral to first clinical outpatient appointment is 4 weeks for 90% of patients).

Note: AHP MSK Orthotics service is not provided by NHS Western Isles. AHP MSK Occupational Therapy is provided within the overall Occupational Therapy Service in seven of the 14 NHS Boards and it is not possible to separately identify only the MSK cases.
- There were 118,069 referrals to AHP MSK services in this quarter.
- At 31 March 2019, 41.3% of the 72,079 patients waiting for a first clinical appointment with an AHP MSK service had been waiting 4 weeks or less.

**Background**

MSK problems include a diversity of complaints and diseases localised in joints, bones, cartilage, ligaments, tendons, tendon sheaths, bursa and muscles. MSK problems also include outpatient pre or post orthopaedic surgery, peripheral nerve lesions (e.g. carpal tunnel, sciatica) or complication of fracture/dislocation/trauma.

The Scottish Government has determined that at least 90% of AHP MSK patients should wait no longer than 4 weeks from receipt of referral from a patient or health or social care professional. See [NHSScotland Waiting Times Guidance](#) for more information. The guidance target should be met by each profession individually within each NHS Board.

AHP MSK Occupational Therapy is provided within the overall Occupational Therapy Service in seven of the 14 NHS Boards and it is not possible to separately identify only the MSK cases.

12 Boards provided information for this quarter through the national system. NHS Fife provided both national system information and local figures. NHS Tayside provided local figures only to inform this release. [Further information](#) regarding NHS boards submitting data is available.

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](#). The data from this publication is available to download [from our web page](#) along with a [metadata](#) document.

For more information on AHP MSK see the [waiting times section of our website](#). For related topics, please see the [waiting times information](#) page.

ISD have developed a [video](#), with further explanations of how waiting times are calculated.

The next release of this publication will be 17 September 2019.

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**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](#).