

**STATISTICAL PRESS NOTICE**  
**NHS DIAGNOSTICS WAITING TIMES QUARTERLY CENSUS DECEMBER 2013**

**Diagnostic Census – December 2013**

Data are published from this latest quarterly diagnostic census of all diagnostic tests, for period ending December 2013. The key points are:

- There were 6,700 waits of 6 weeks or over for tests not captured in the December monthly return. This is an increase of 1,900 since the September 2013 census.
- Of the over 6 week waits identified in the census the major areas are Pathology (2,500), Cardiology (1,300) and Endoscopy (900).
- Tables 1 and 2 shows latest figures for quarter ending December 2013.

Detailed tables by provider can be found via the following link:

<http://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/diagnostics-waiting-times-and-activity/diagnostics-census-data/>

## Annex A – Detailed Tables

**Table 1 – Diagnostic waits of 6 weeks or longer by area – Quarter ending December 2013**

<b>Diagnostic Area</b>	<b>6&lt;13 Weeks</b>	<b>13+ Weeks</b>	<b>Total 6+ Weeks</b>
Audiology	365	141	506
Cardiology	1,863	178	2041
Endoscopy	3,720	849	4569
GI Physiology	411	169	580
Imaging	5,221	396	5617
Neurophysiology	510	139	649
Ophthalmic Science	89	25	114
Pathology	1,981	493	2474
Respiratory Physiology	308	44	352
Urodynamics	212	74	286
Vascular Technology	194	45	239
<b>Total Area</b>	<b>14,874</b>	<b>2,553</b>	<b>17,427</b>

**Table 2 – Diagnostic waits of 6 weeks or longer not included in December 2013 DM01**

<b>Diagnostic Area</b>	<b>6&lt;13 Weeks</b>	<b>13+ Weeks</b>	<b>Total 6+ Weeks</b>
Cardiology	1,161	167	1,328
Endoscopy	647	218	865
GI Physiology	411	169	580
Imaging	472	42	514
Neurophysiology	287	134	421
Ophthalmic Science	89	25	114
Pathology	1,981	493	2,474
Respiratory Physiology	174	18	192
Vascular Technology	194	45	239
<b>All Areas</b>	<b>5,416</b>	<b>1,311</b>	<b>6,727</b>

## **Statistical Notes**

### **1. Diagnostic waiting times**

Diagnostics data is collected from NHS providers (NHS Trusts and other providers).

The data measures the number of patients waiting 6 weeks or longer at the end of the quarter. This information is split by number of waiting between 6 and 12 weeks, those waiting 13 weeks or longer, and by test.

The waiting times reported are for those patients who have been referred for a test, but whose test had not taken place by the end of the reporting period.

Data was first published in March 2007, and is available for each quarter from August 2006 to date.

The six week diagnostic wait was initially introduced as a 'milestone' from March 2008 towards achieving the standard Referral to Treatment wait of 18 weeks by December 2008.

The NHS Operating Framework 2012/2013 introduced an expectation that less than 1 per cent of patients should wait six weeks or longer for a diagnostic test.

The NHS Commissioning Board's planning guidance for 2013/14 reflects the consulted position, setting out that assessments of organisational delivery will include a threshold that 99% of patients should have been waiting less than 6 weeks for a diagnostic test. The financial penalty for non-delivery of the standard is set out in the draft NHS Standard Contract 2013/14.

### **2. Interpretation of waiting times data**

Care should be taken when making month on month comparisons of these figures. Measures of waiting time performance are subject to seasonality. For example, the presence of bank holidays, or the number of weekends, in a calendar month affect the number of working days. Similarly, adverse weather may result in emergency pressure and impacts upon the health service's ability to preserve elective capacity. These factors can affect waiting times and should be considered when making comparisons across time.

### **3. Feedback welcomed**

We welcome feedback on the content and presentation of statistics within this Statistical Press Notice and those published on the NHS England website. If anyone has any comments on this, or any other issues regarding these statistics, then please email [unify2@dh.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:unify2@dh.gsi.gov.uk)

## **Additional Information**

Full details of diagnostics data for individual organisations is available at:

<http://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/diagnostics-waiting-times-and-activity/>

For press enquiries please contact the NHS England media team on 07768 901293

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