

STATISTICAL PRESS NOTICE

NHS DIAGNOSTICS WAITING TIMES QUARTERLY CENSUS SEPTEMBER 2017

Diagnostic Census – SEPTEMBER 2017

Data are published from this latest quarterly diagnostic census of all diagnostic tests, for period ending September 2017. The key points are:

- There were 13,100 waits of 6 weeks or over for tests not captured in the September monthly return. This is an increase of 1,100 since the June 2017 census.
- Of the over 6 week waits identified in the census the major areas are Pathology (3,400), Cardiology (3,000) and Imaging (2,200).
- Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust & Mid Essex Hospital Services NHS Trust failed to submit data for the census this quarter.
- Bradford Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust submitted a partial return that excluded Endoscopy data.
- Tables 1 and 2 shows latest figures for quarter ending September 2017.

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 September 2017

Diagnostic Area	6<13 Weeks	13+ Weeks	Total 6+ Weeks
Audiology	1,546	276	1,822
Cardiology	4,392	1,275	5,667
Endoscopy	5,723	1,851	7,574
GI Physiology	336	499	835
Imaging	7,927	1,051	8,978
Neurophysiology	878	279	1,157
Ophthalmic Science	317	167	484
Pathology	2,664	755	3,419
Respiratory Physiology	741	320	1,061
Urodynamics	259	84	343
Vascular Technology	156	178	334
Total Area	24,939	6,735	31,674

Note: Figures include data from the September 2017 monthly diagnostic return (DM01)

Table 2 – Diagnostic waits of 6 weeks or longer not captured in September 2017 monthly diagnostic return (DM01)

Diagnostic Area	6<13 Weeks	13+ Weeks	Total 6+ Weeks
Cardiology	2,248	799	3,047
Endoscopy	776	498	1,274
GI Physiology	336	499	835
Imaging	1,731	495	2,226
Neurophysiology	448	251	699
Ophthalmic Science	317	167	484
Pathology	2,664	755	3,419
Respiratory Physiology	473	259	732
Vascular Technology	156	178	334
All Areas	9,149	3,901	13,050

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, but diagnostics waiting times now form part of the NHS Constitution. This gives patients the legal right to treatment within 18 weeks of referral (18 week RTT) and as part of this, pledges that patients should not be required to wait 6 weeks or longer for a diagnostic test.

NHS England's planning guidance states that there is a threshold of 99% for this pledge. The financial penalty for non-delivery of the standard is set out in the NHS Standard Contract 2017/18.

2. Interpretation of waiting times data

Care should be taken when making month on month and quarter on quarter 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

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 0113 825 0958 or 0113 825 0959. Email enquiries should be directed to nhsengland.media@nhs.net

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