

STATISTICAL PRESS NOTICE
MONTHLY CRITICAL CARE BEDS AND CANCELLED URGENT OPERATIONS
(MSitRep) DATA, ENGLAND March 2019

Main Findings – March 2019:

Critical Care Beds

- There were 4,119 **adult critical care beds** available and 3,323 occupied, giving an occupancy rate of 80.7%. This is lower than the occupancy rate observed last month, which was 81.5%, and lower than in March 2018 (82.6%).
- There were 326 **paediatric intensive care beds** available and 252 occupied, giving an occupancy rate of 77.3%¹. This is lower than the occupancy rate observed last month, which was 77.4% and lower than in March 2018 (78.7%).
- There were 1,422 **neo-natal critical care beds** available and 1,012 occupied, giving an occupancy rate of 71.2%. This is higher than the occupancy rate observed last month, which was 70.1% and lower than in March 2018 (72.3%).

Table 1 shows information on critical care bed occupancy from March 2017 to March 2019.

Cancelled Urgent Operations

- The number of urgent operations cancelled was 347 in March 2019, which compares to 312 in February 2019, and 400 in March 2018.
- The number of urgent operations cancelled for the second or subsequent time was 16 in March 2019.

Table 2 shows information on urgent operations cancelled from March 2017 to March 2019.

Details of critical care data and cancelled urgent operations data for individual organisations are available at:

<http://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/critical-care-capacity/>

In addition, data on cancelled elective operations can be found at:

<http://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/cancelled-elective-operations/>

¹ In November 2018, NHS England published refreshed [guidance](#) for MSitRep which provided clarification on the definition for Paediatric Intensive Care (PIC) bed availability and occupancy. This update was made to ensure definitions reflected the latest terminology and PICS standards, to improve data quality and address overcounting of PICs beds (including possible inclusion of some high dependency unit (HDU, level 2) beds). Therefore, PIC bed availability data from November 2018 shows a step change, with the 339 reported beds in November 2018 being approximately 130 – 140 lower than previously in 2018-19 (around 460-470 available beds).

Table 1 – Critical Care Bed Occupancy Rates – March 2017 to March 2019

Month	Adult Critical Care			Paediatric Intensive Care ³			Neonatal Critical Care		
	Open	Occupied	%	Open	Occupied	%	Open	Occupied	%
Mar-17	4,066	3,312	81.5%	460	373	81.1%	1,436	1,001	69.7%
Apr-17	4,064	3,351	82.5%	455	359	78.9%	1,430	1,011	70.7%
May-17	4,063	3,279	80.7%	454	362	79.7%	1,460	1,075	73.6%
Jun-17	4,079	3,281	80.4%	458	334	72.9%	1,437	1,058	73.6%
Jul-17	4,060	3,161	77.9%	452	354	78.3%	1,442	1,046	72.5%
Aug-17	4,041	3,228	79.9%	460	309	67.2%	1,440	1,016	70.6%
Sep-17	4,056	3,327	82.0%	460	372	80.9%	1,432	1,041	72.7%
Oct-17	4,071	3,296	81.0%	453	342	75.5%	1,434	1,004	70.0%
Nov-17	4,070	3,445	84.6%	474	393	82.9%	1,440	1,066	74.0%
Dec-17	4,060	3,336	82.2%	483	386	79.9%	1,438	1,020	70.9%
Jan-18	4,085	3,537	86.6%	457	353	77.2%	1,441	1,031	71.5%
Feb-18	4,074	3,478	85.4%	459	364	79.3%	1,421	990	69.7%
Mar-18	4,064	3,355	82.6%	455	358	78.7%	1,420	1,026	72.3%
Apr-18	4,057	3,322	81.9%	469	346	73.8%	1,422	1,027	72.2%
May-18	4,050	3,235	79.9%	468	343	73.3%	1,430	1,043	72.9%
Jun-18	4,082	3,251	79.6%	467	352	75.4%	1,424	1,057	74.2%
Jul-18	4,077	3,192	78.3%	471	341	72.4%	1,417	989	69.8%
Aug-18	4,063	3,187	78.4%	467	309	66.2%	1,421	996	70.1%
Sept-18	4,085	3,268	80.0%	468	356	76.1%	1,422	985	69.3%
Oct-18	4,075	3,293	80.8%	470	363	77.2%	1,422	1,050	73.8%
Nov-18	4,110	3,400	82.7%	339	297	87.6%	1,417	1,028	72.5%
Dec-18	4,082	3,079	75.4%	321	238	74.1%	1,413	953	67.4%
Jan-19	4,140	3,532	85.3%	323	256	79.3%	1,428	1,001	70.1%
Feb-19	4,157	3,388	81.5%	328	254	77.4%	1,426	1,000	70.1%
Mar-19	4,119	3,323	80.7%	326	252	77.3%	1,422	1,012	71.2%

Notes:

1. Data relating to the number of available and occupied critical care beds is a monthly snapshot taken at midnight on the last Thursday of each month and can fluctuate from month to month.
2. Before February 2011, data on Critical Care beds were published bi-annually in a separate collection. Therefore, Critical Care data published until January 2011 should be treated with a degree of caution.
3. In November 2018, NHS England published refreshed [guidance](#) for MSitRep which provided clarification on the definition for Paediatric Intensive Care (PIC) bed availability and occupancy. This update was made to ensure definitions reflected the latest terminology and PICS standards, to improve data quality and address overcounting of PICs beds (including possible inclusion of some high dependency unit (HDU, level 2) beds). Therefore, PIC bed availability data from November 2018 shows a step change, with the 339 reported beds in November 2018 being approximately 130 – 140 lower than previously in 2018-19 (around 460-470 available beds).

Table 2 – Cancelled Operations – March 2017 to March 2019

Month	Urgent Operations Cancelled	Urgent Operations Cancelled for the 2nd or more time
Mar-17	380	11
Apr-17	255	25
May-17	300	12
Jun-17	303	9
Jul-17	321	7
Aug-17	323	16
Sep-17	302	5
Oct-17	287	11
Nov-17	290	9
Dec-17	342	15
Jan-18	343	11
Feb-18	374	14
Mar-18	400	20
Apr-18	242	16
May-18	328	9
Jun-18	279	8
Jul-18	344	14
Aug-18	329	14
Sep-18	318	16
Oct-18	405	12
Nov-18	314	12
Dec-18	341	10
Jan-19	366	11
Feb-19	312	12
Mar-19	347	16

Statistical Notes to Editors

1. Critical Care data

The figures on Adult Critical Care, Paediatric Intensive Care and Neonatal Intensive Care bed occupancy are “snapshot” figures taken at midnight on the last Thursday of each month. Therefore, they will not reflect varying levels of bed occupancy through the day, week and month.

In November 2018, NHS England published refreshed [guidance](#) for MSitRep which provided clarification on the definition for Paediatric Intensive Care (PIC) bed availability and occupancy. This update was made to ensure definitions reflected the latest terminology and PICS standards, to improve data quality and address overcounting of PICs beds (including possible inclusion of some high dependency unit (HDU, level 2) beds).

As a result of the refreshed guidance, MSitRep data shows a step change in PIC bed availability. From November 2018, PIC availability data was reported by the 21 Trusts commissioned to provide level 3 PIC. Prior to this, around 20 additional Trusts had also been submitting PIC data, these are now no longer reporting PIC data. Data from the 21 Trusts, may also be impacted if they had inadvertently included level 2 HDU beds previously. In November 2018, 339 available PIC beds were reported, approximately 130 – 140 lower than reported previously in 2018-19 (around 460-470 available beds).

NHS England and NHS Improvement commission paediatric critical care nationally; further information is available via the Paediatric Intensive Care Audit Network

2. Data Quality

Monthly SitRep data has been collected and published since August 2010. Prior to August 2010, data was collected weekly and was un-validated management information.

Critical care data published until January 2011 should be treated with a degree of caution as data on Critical Care beds was published bi-annually in a separate collection until January 2011. Since February 2011, there has been a significant improvement in the coverage and accuracy of this data.

3. Data Availability

Monthly SitRep data is published to a monthly timetable with data being published around 6 to 7 weeks after the end of the reference period². The next release of data for this collection will be 13th June 2019 (relating to April 2019). The full set of publication dates is described in the [12 months statistics calendar](#).

² From June 2018, NHS England aligned the publication of the MSitRep collection with the monthly NHS England publication of the Combined Performance Statistics to improve data coherence.

4. Revisions

Revisions to previous month's data are made in line with NHS England and NHS Improvement revisions protocol for performance monitoring data. Future revisions will be made on a six-monthly cycle. The revisions protocol can be found on the NHS England website at:

<http://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/code-compliance/>

Revisions were last published in November 2018 covering January 2018 to August 2018 (inclusive).

5. Feedback Welcomed

We welcome feedback on the content and presentation of Critical Care and Cancelled Operations within this Statistical Press Notice and those published on NHS England's website. Please email any comments on this, or any other issues regarding the MSitRep data and statistics, to: england.nhsdata@nhs.net

Additional Information

For press enquiries please contact the NHS England and NHS Improvement media team on 0113 825 0958 or 0113 825 0959

The Government Statistical Service (GSS) statistician responsible for producing these data is:

Katie Tither
Operational Information for Commissioning (Central)
NHS England and NHS Improvement
Room 5E15, Quarry House, Quarry Hill, Leeds LS2 7UE
For data queries, email: england.nhsdata@nhs.net