

Statistical Note: Ambulance Quality Indicators (AQI)

As the COVID-19 pandemic continued, the number of 999 calls per day in June 2020 was the second lowest for two years; only May 2020 had fewer.

Ambulance Service response times for England as a whole were slower than in May 2020, but faster than in every other month since these measures began in 2017. This was true for all four response categories, and for both mean average and for 90th centile response times.

As announced in our 9 April Statistical Note, we are publishing no Ambulance Clinical Outcomes data this month. We aim to restart publishing these on 13 August.

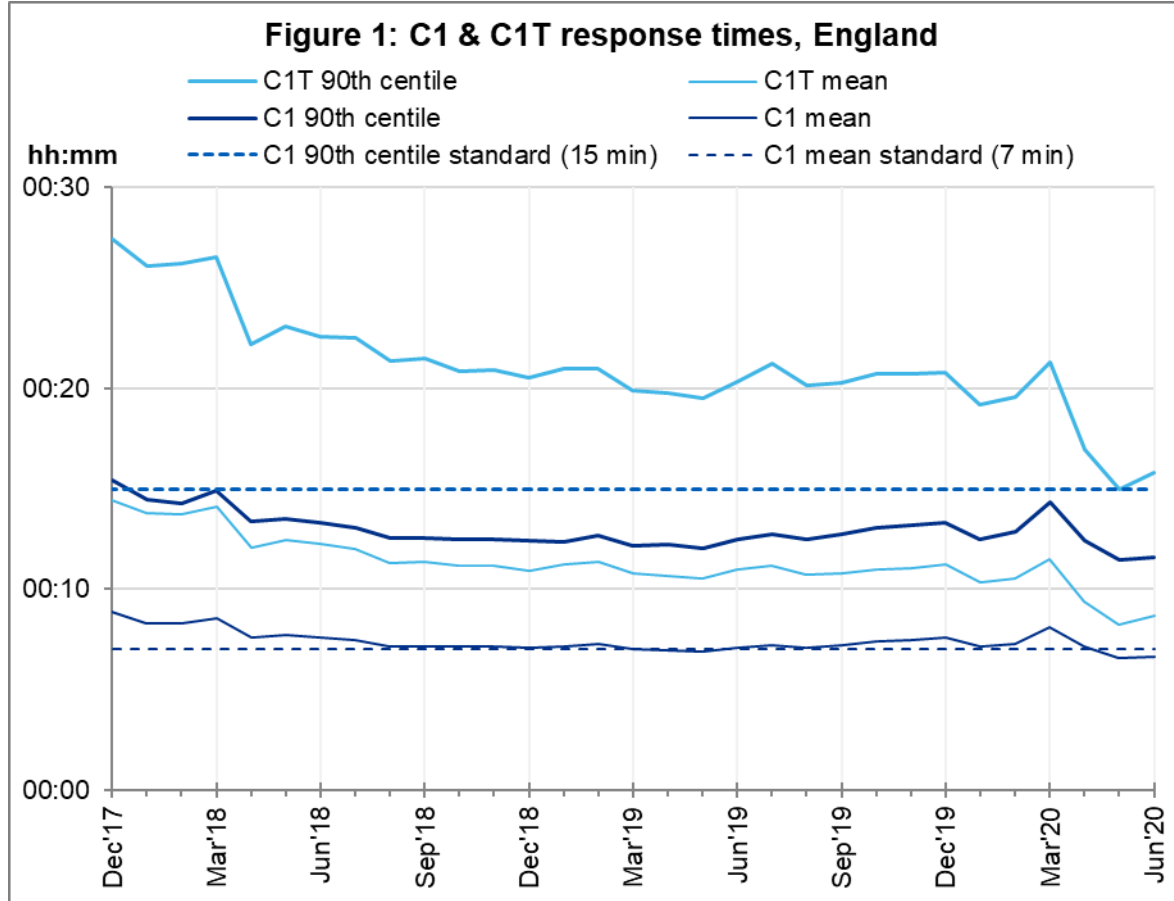
1. Systems Indicators

1.1 Response times

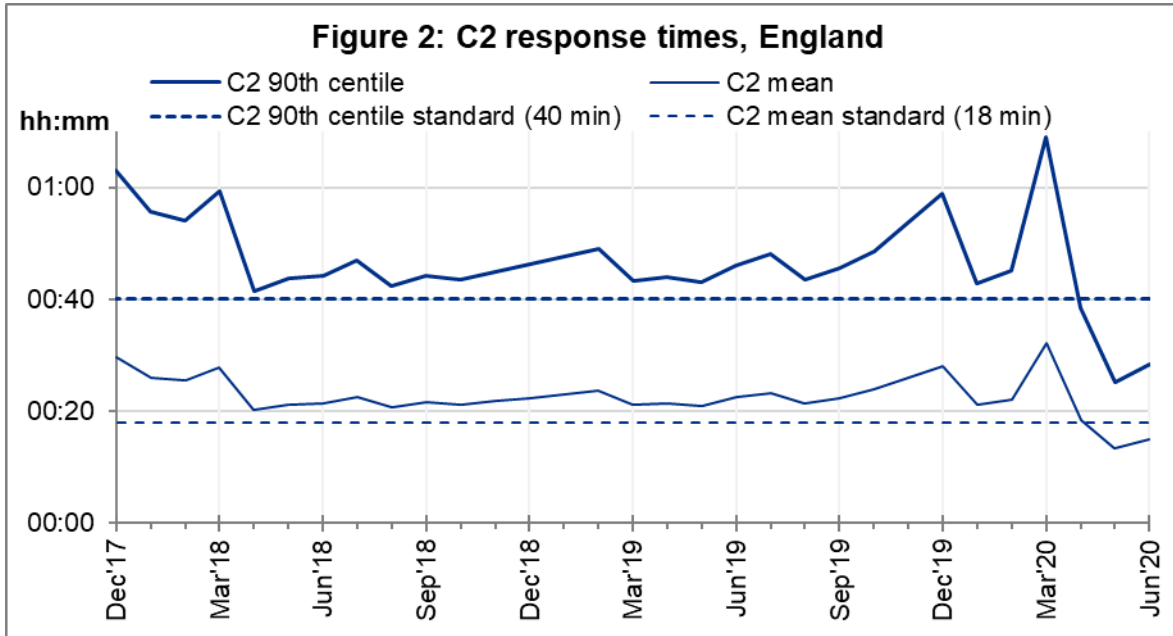
The mean average C1 response time across England was 6 minutes 38 seconds in June 2020, meeting the 7-minute response time standard.

The C1 90th centile response times averaged 11:35 across England in June, so the standard of 15 minutes was also met.

For C1T (response times for arrival of transporting vehicle, for C1 patients transported), the mean was 08:40, and the 90th centiles averaged 15:48 across England.

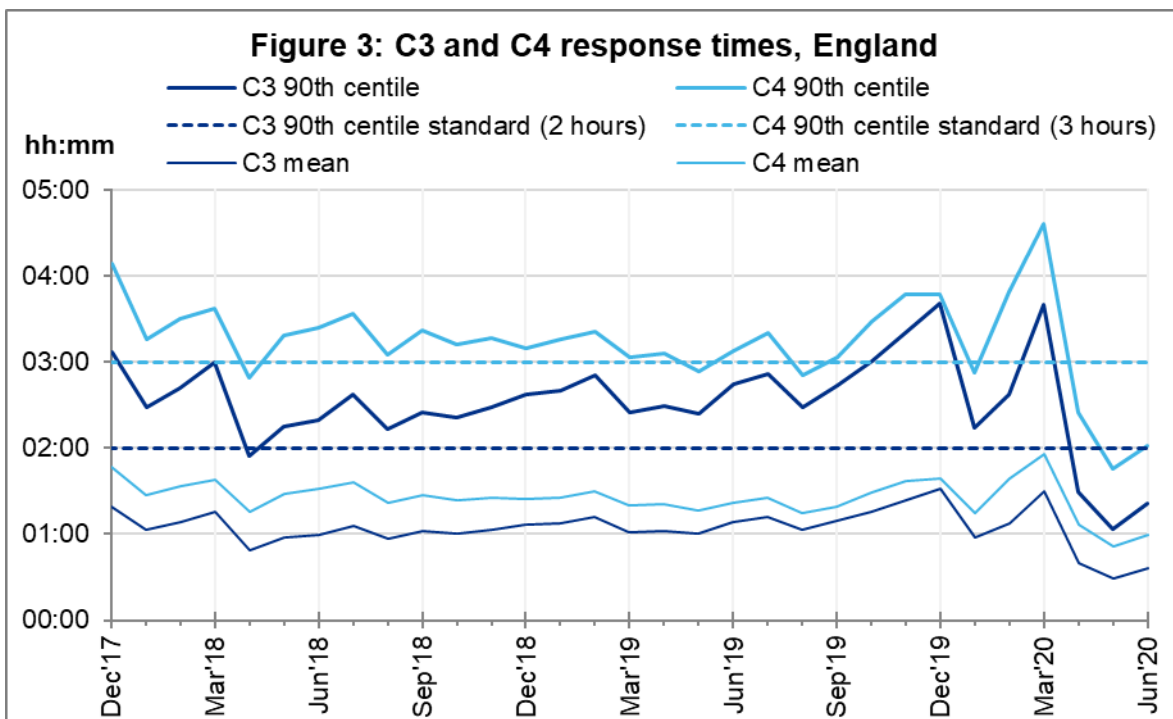


For C2 in June 2020, the mean average response time was 14:53 for England, meeting the 18-minute standard for the second time ever. The 90th centiles averaged 28:24 across England, meeting the 40-minute standard for the third consecutive month.



The England C3 mean average response time was 36:16 in June 2020, and the C3 90th centile times averaged 1:21:30, shorter than the standard of two hours for the third consecutive month (Figure 3).

The C4 mean average response time was 59:09, and the C4 90th centile times averaged 2:01:54, also shorter than the standard (three hours) for the third consecutive month.

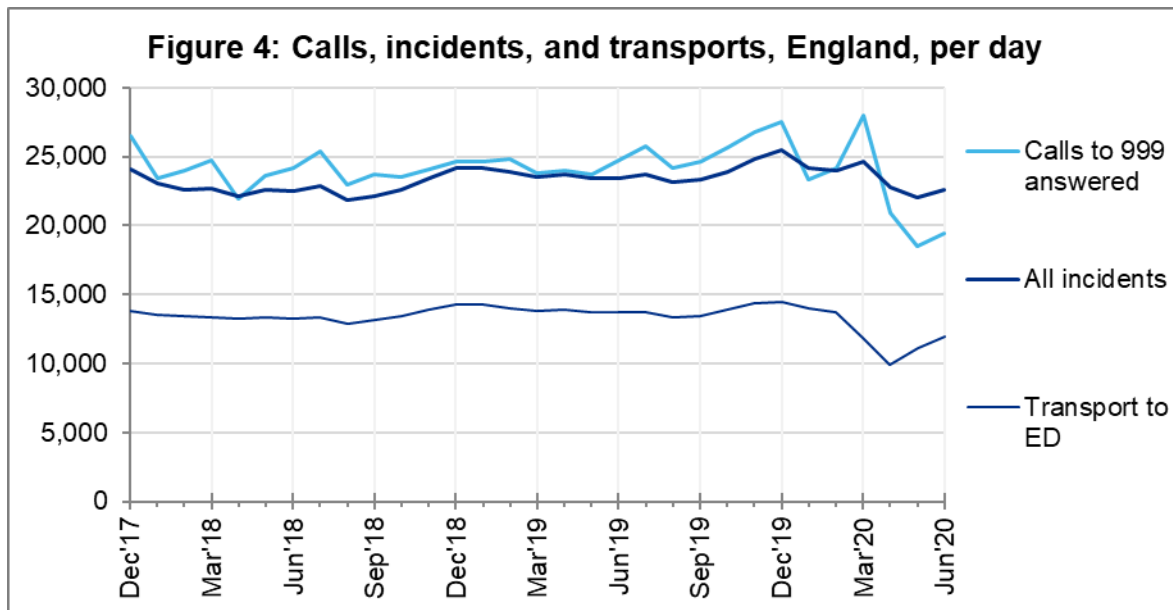


1.2 Other Systems Indicators

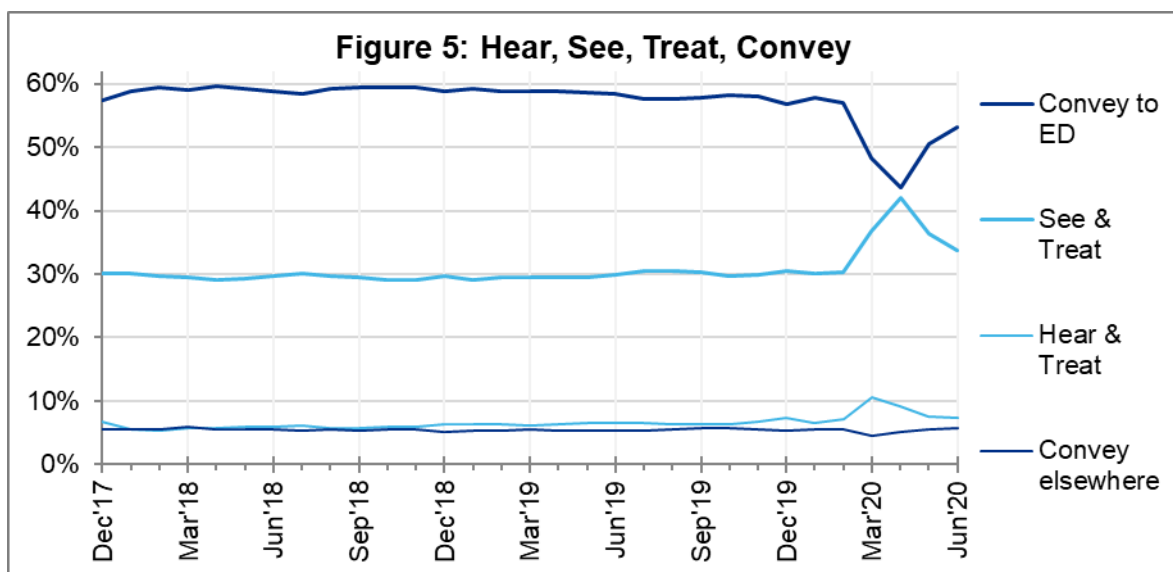
The 99th centile call answer times averaged 18 seconds across England in June 2020, the second lowest in the time series after May 2020.

In June 2020, per day, there were (Figure 4):

- 19.4 thousand calls to 999 answered, 5.1% more than in May;
- 22.6 thousand incidents that received a response (whether on the telephone or on the scene) from an ambulance service, 2.6% more than in May;
- 12.0 thousand incidents where a patient was transported to an Emergency Department (ED), 7.7% more than in May.



Incidents resolved on the telephone (Hear & Treat) comprised 7.3% in June 2020, and a further 34% were closed at the scene (See & Treat), both fewer than last month. Conversely, a patient was transported to an Emergency Department (ED) in 53% of incidents, and to somewhere other than ED in the other 5.8%, both more than in the previous two months. (Figure 5)



2. Further information on AQI

2.1 The AQI landing page and Quality Statement

www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/ambulance-quality-indicators, or <http://bit.ly/NHSAQI>, is the AQI landing page, and it holds:

- a Quality Statement for these statistics, which includes information on relevance, accuracy, timeliness, coherence, and user engagement;
- the specification guidance documents for those who supply the data;
- timetables for data collection and publication;
- time series spreadsheets and csv files from April 2011 up to the latest month;
- links to individual web pages for each financial year;
- contact details for the responsible statistician (also in section 2.4 below).

Publication dates are also at

www.gov.uk/government/statistics/announcements?keywords=ambulance.

The web pages for each financial year hold:

- separate spreadsheets of each month's data;
- this Statistical Note, and equivalent versions from previous months;
- the list of people with pre-release access to the data.

2.2 AQI Scope

The AQI include calls made by dialling either the usual UK-wide number 999 or its international equivalent 112. As described in the specification guidance mentioned in section 2.1, incidents resulting from a call to NHS 111 are included in all Systems Indicators the except call data items, A1 to A6 and A114.

2.3 Related statistics

Ambulance handover delays of over 30 minutes at each Emergency Department are published by NHSEI during winter 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15, 2017-18, 2018-19, and 2019-20, at www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/winter-daily-sitreps.

The Quality Statement described in section 2.1 includes information on:

- the “Ambulance Services” publications by NHS Digital <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/ambulance-services>, with data from before 2000, to 2014-15;
- a dashboard with an alternative layout for AQI data up to April 2016;
- the comparability of data for other countries of the UK:

Wales: <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Health-and-Social-Care/NHS-Performance/Ambulance-Services>

Scotland: See Quality Improvement Indicators (QII) documents at www.scottishambulance.com/TheService/BoardPapers.aspx

Northern Ireland: www.health-ni.gov.uk/articles/emergency-care-and-ambulance-statistics



2.4 Contact information

Media: NHSEI Media team, nhsengland.media@nhs.net, 0113 825 0958.

The person responsible for producing this publication is Ian Kay; Performance Analysis Team; Finance, Performance and Planning Directorate; NHS England and NHS Improvement; england.nhsdata@nhs.net; 0113 825 4606.

2.5 National Statistics

The UK Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs;
- are well explained and readily accessible;
- are produced according to sound methods; and
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.