



Cancer Waiting Times, April to June 2021 - Provider Based - Final

The latest quarterly National Statistics on waiting times for suspected and diagnosed cancer patients accessing NHS services, produced by NHS England and NHS Improvement, were released on 13th October 2022 according to the arrangements approved by the UK Statistics Authority.

In 2010, the United Kingdom Statistics Authority assessed and designated these statistics as National Statistics¹, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics².

The 28-Day Faster Diagnosis Standard are published from April 2021 data in June 2021. Systems will be expected to meet the new Faster Diagnosis Standard (for all routes urgent suspected cancer, urgent breast symptomatic, and urgent screening referrals in aggregate) from Q3 2021/22, to be introduced initially at a level of 75%. The Faster Diagnosis Standard statistics are designated official statistics, not National Statistics, until the Office for Statistics Regulation have performed a check of the new data for compliance with the Code of Practice. We would like to receive feedback on these new statistics – please email feedback to england.cancerwaitsdata@nhs.net

Waiting Times for Cancer Services - Quarter One 2021

The key results for outpatient services and first definitive treatments show that, in England, during the period April to June 2021:

Two week Wait:

- 85.9% of people were seen by a specialist within two weeks of an urgent referral for suspected cancer (88.6% in Q4 2020-21)
- 66.0% of people urgently referred for breast symptoms (where cancer was not initially suspected) were seen within two weeks of referral (70.9% in Q4 2020-21)

One month (31-day) wait from diagnosis to first definitive treatment:

¹ <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment/assessment-reports/confirmation-of-designation-letters/letter-of-confirmation-as-national-statistics---assessment-report-43.pdf>

² <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice>

- 94.7% of people treated began first definitive treatment within 31 days of receiving their diagnosis, all cancers (94.5% in Q4 2020-21)
- 94.4% of people treated for breast cancer began first definitive treatment within 31 days of receiving their diagnosis (94.5% in Q4 2020-21)
- 96.7% of people treated for lung cancers began first definitive treatment within 31 days of receiving their diagnosis (95.6% in Q4 2020-21)
- 92.1% of people treated for lower gastrointestinal cancers began first definitive treatment within 31 days of receiving their diagnosis (90.8% in Q4 2020-21)
- 92.8% of people treated for urological cancers began first definitive treatment within 31 days of receiving their diagnosis (94.0% in Q4 2020-21)
- 95.2% of people treated for skin cancers began first definitive treatment within 31 days of receiving their diagnosis (94.4% in Q4 2020-21)

Two month (62-day) wait from urgent referral to first definitive treatment:

- 74.0% of people treated began first definitive treatment within 62 days of being urgently referred for suspected cancer, all cancers (71.9% in Q4 2020-21)
- 81.7% of people treated for breast cancers received first definitive treatment within 62 days of being urgently referred for suspected cancer (80.1% in Q4 2020-21)
- 69.0% of people treated for lung cancers received first definitive treatment within 62 days of being urgently referred for suspected cancer (64.9% in Q4 2020-21)
- 53.6% of people treated for lower gastrointestinal cancers received first definitive treatment within 62 days of being urgently referred for suspected cancer (47.8% in Q4 2020-21)
- 69.9% of people treated for urological cancers (excluding testicular cancer) received first definitive treatment within 62 days of being urgently referred for suspected cancer (68.5% in Q4 2020-21)
- 93.5% of people treated for skin cancers received first definitive treatment within 62 days of being urgently referred for suspected cancer (91.8% in Q4 2020-21)

62-day wait extensions

- 83.2% of patients began first definitive treatment within 62 days of a consultant's decision to upgrade their priority, all cancers (80.9% in Q4 2020-21)
- 74.0% of people began first definitive treatment for cancer within 62 days of referral from an NHS cancer screening service, all cancers (75.7% in Q4 2020-21)

The key results for waiting times for second or subsequent treatment show that, in England, during the period April to June 2021:

31-day wait for subsequent treatment

- 86.9% of people began treatment within 31 days where the subsequent treatment was surgery (86.8% in Q4 2020-21)
- 99.1% of people began treatment within 31 days where the subsequent treatment was an anti-cancer drug regimen (98.7% in Q4 2020-21)
- 97.0% of people began treatment within 31 days where the subsequent treatment was a course of radiotherapy (97.5% in Q4 2020-21)

The key results for waiting times for urgent referral to a patient being told they have cancer, or that cancer is definitively excluded show that, in England, during the period April to June 2021:

28-day Faster Diagnosis (All Routes):

The Faster Diagnosis Standard statistics are designated official statistics, not National Statistics.

- 73.4% of people were told by a specialist if they had cancer, or if cancer was definitively excluded within four weeks (28-days) of an urgent referral

More analyses are published as part of this statistical release on the NHS website.

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/cancer-waiting-times/>

Contact address and email

You can obtain further details about the statistics published in this section or comment on the section by contacting the following address:

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