

## Statistical Note: Ambulance Quality Indicators (AQI)

In England, for all four categories, the average response times in December 2023 were longer than in all earlier months of 2023-24, but shorter than in December 2021 and December 2022.

For stroke patients, the average time from hospital arrival to CT scan in August 2023 was shorter than in all the months of 2021 and 2022.

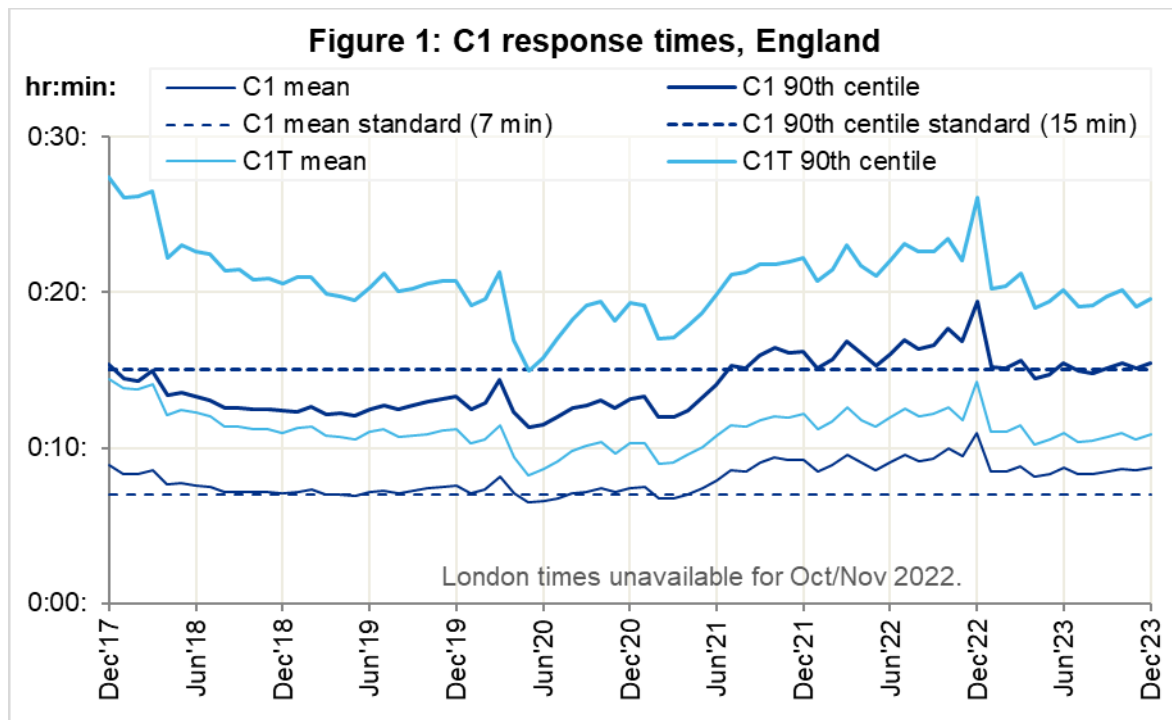
### 1. Ambulance Systems Indicators (AmbSYS)

#### 1.1 Response times

For England, the mean average response time in December 2023 for C1, the most urgent Category, was 8 minutes 44 seconds, and the 90th centile time was 15:26, each longer than the standards<sup>1</sup> of 7 and 15 minutes.

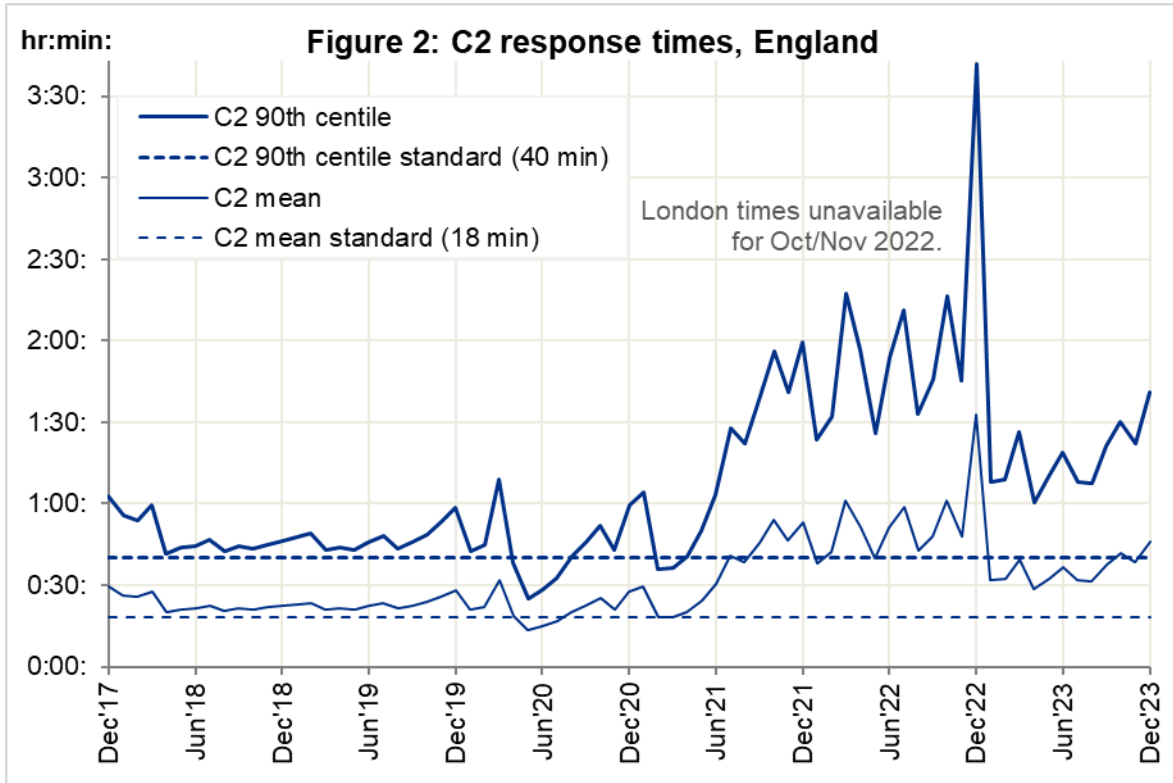
The mean average time for C1 was 3% longer than the average for 2023-24 so far, but 6% shorter than the average for 2022-23. The 90th centile time for C1 was 2% longer than the average for 2023-24 so far, but 7% shorter than the average for 2022-23 (Figure 1).

For C1T (time to the arrival of the transporting vehicle for C1 incidents), the average was 10:51, and the 90th centile was 19:36.

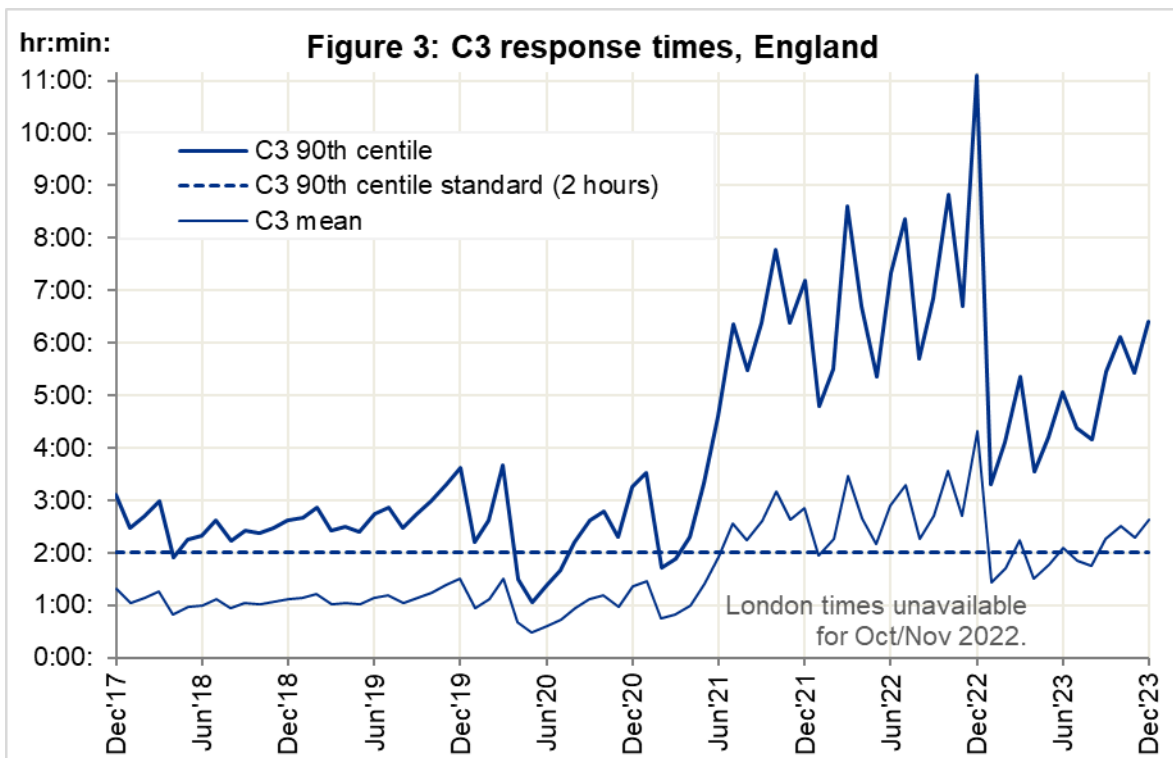


<sup>1</sup> Standards in the NHS Constitution Handbook: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/supplements-to-the-nhs-constitution-for-england/the-handbook-to-the-nhs-constitution-for-england](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supplements-to-the-nhs-constitution-for-england/the-handbook-to-the-nhs-constitution-for-england)

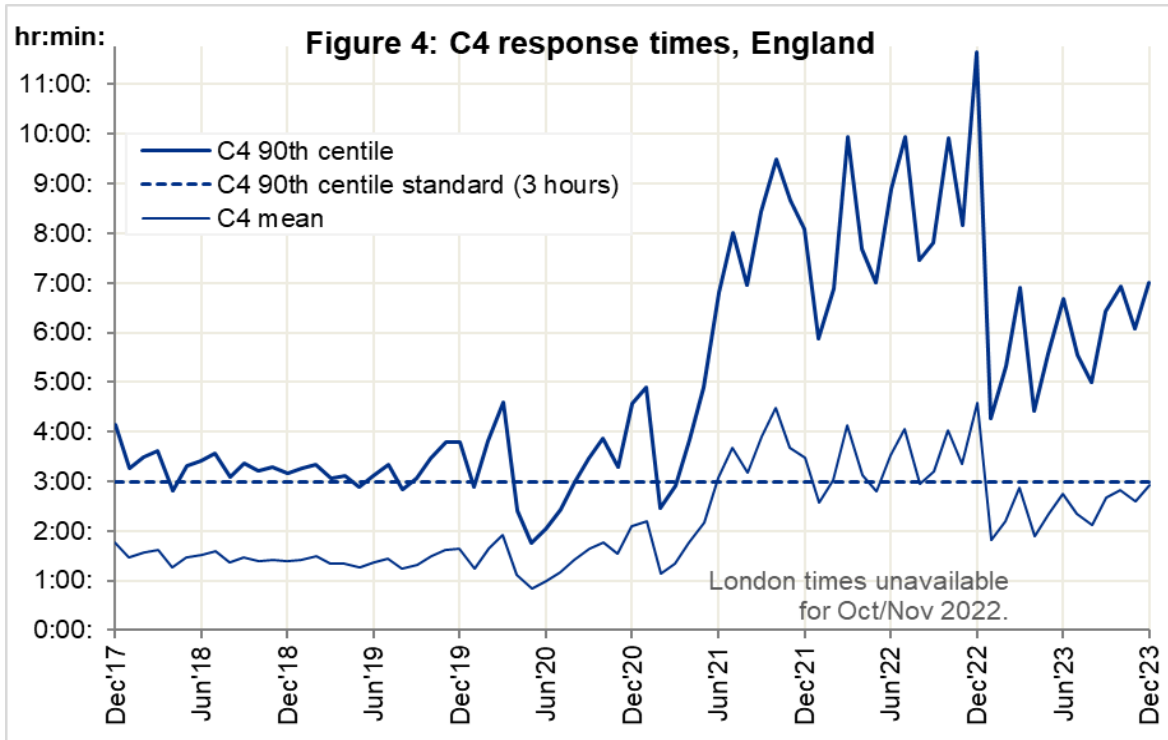
The England C2 average in December 2023 was 45:57, and the 90th centile was 1:40:58. Each was longer than in all other months of 2023, but shorter than in most months of 2022 (Figure 2).



The December 2023 C3 average was 2:37:05, which (unlike C1, C2, and C4) was longer than the average for 2022-23. The 90th centile was 6:24:23. (Figure 3)

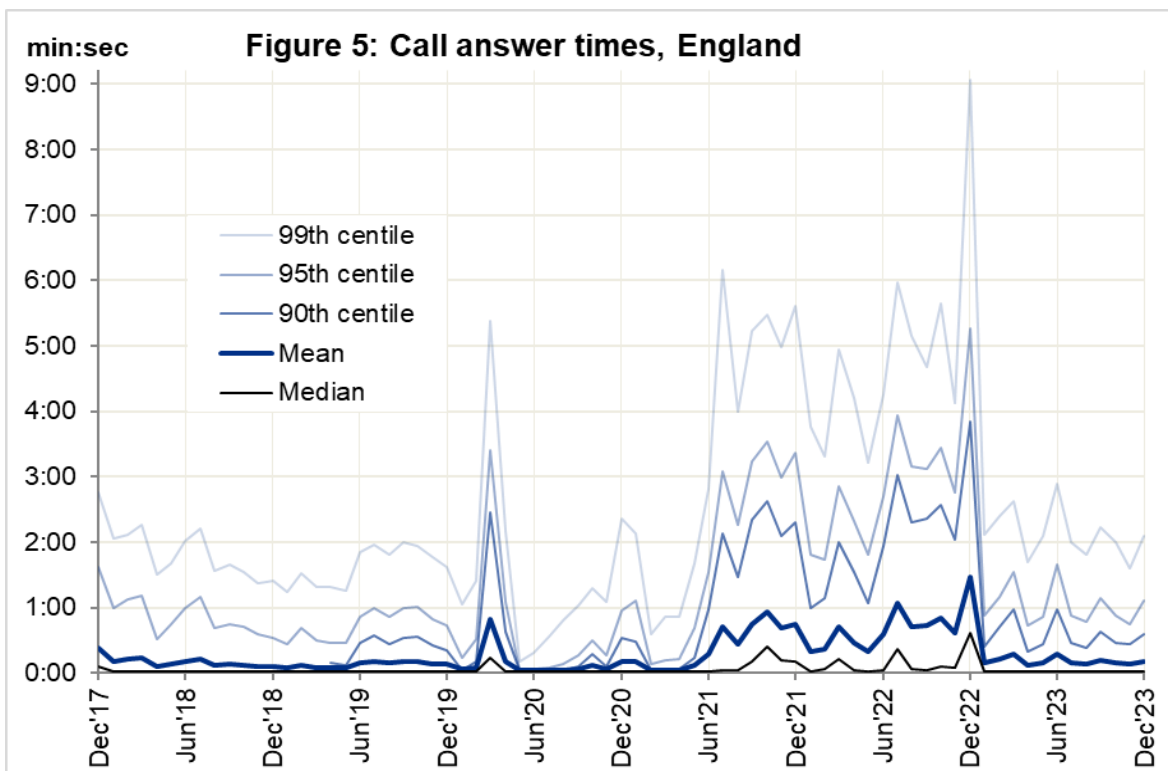


The C4 average was 2:55:44 and the 90th centile was 7:00:34 (Figure 4).



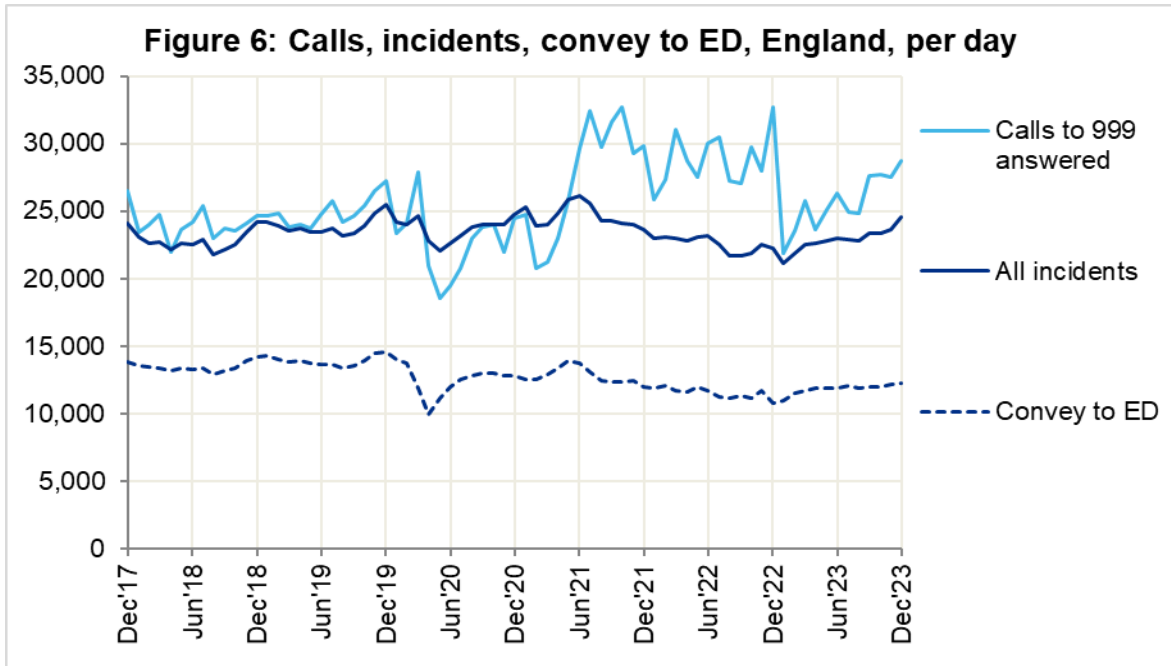
## 1.2 Other Systems Indicators

In December 2023, the average 999 call answer time was 11 seconds, slightly larger than the average of 10 seconds for 2023-24 so far, but shorter than in every month of 2022 (Figure 5).

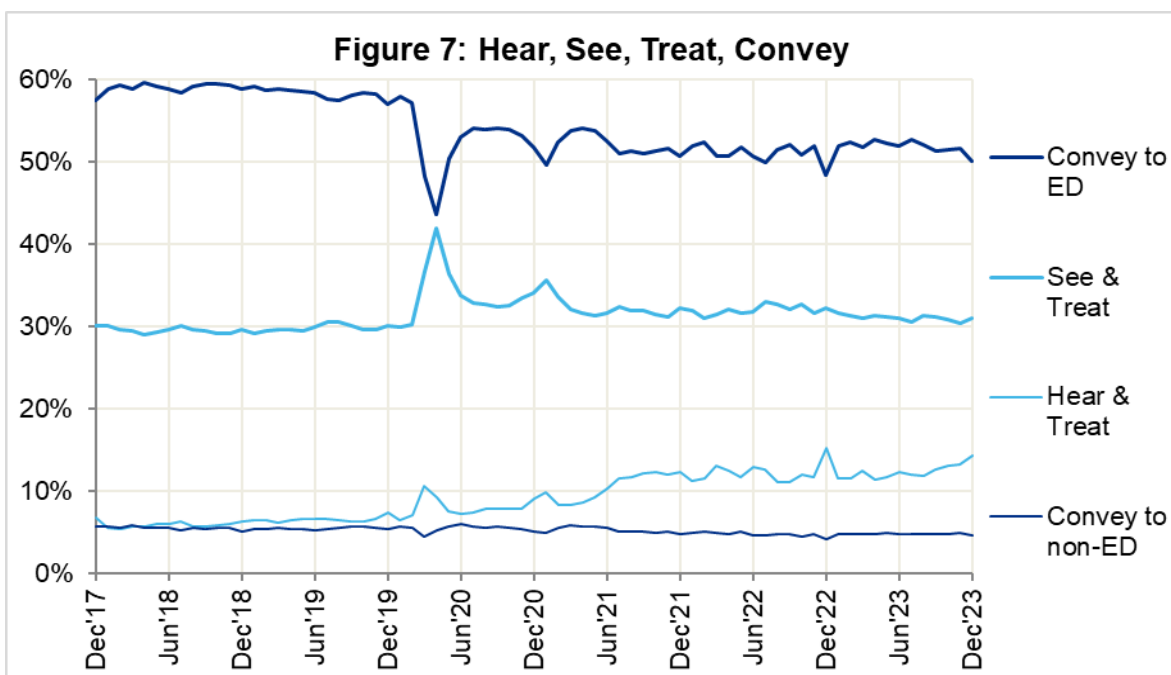


The count of 999 calls answered was 889,389 in December 2023. This was 28,690 per day, the largest since December 2022.

There were 760,589 incidents in December 2023, of which 380,793 had conveyance to ED. Per day, these are 24,535 and 12,284 respectively, with the former the largest since July 2021 and the latter the largest since November 2021 (Figure 6).



Of incidents in England in December 2023, 14.3% were resolved on the telephone (Hear & Treat); only December 2022 had a larger proportion. Other outcomes in December 2023 comprised 31.0% resolved on the scene (See & Treat), 50.1% with conveyance to an Emergency Department (ED), and 4.7% with conveyance to non-ED (Figure 7).



## 2. Ambulance Clinical Outcomes (AmbCO)

We continue to describe stroke data when we publish AmbCO data for February, May, August, or November, and data for STEMI (a type of heart attack) and cardiac arrest in each month before that.

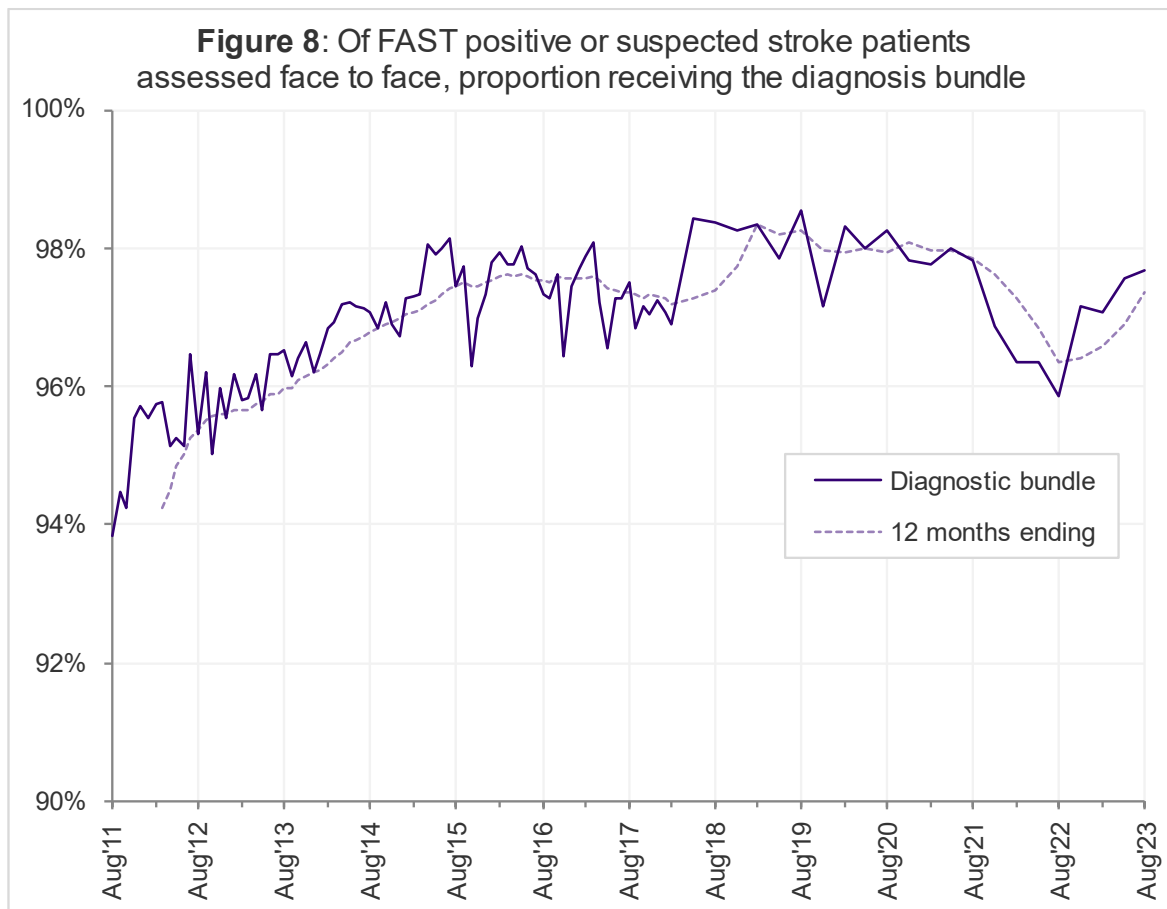
### 2.1 Stroke diagnosis bundle

The FAST procedure helps assess whether someone has suffered a stroke:

- Facial weakness: can the person smile? Has their mouth or eye drooped?
- Arm weakness: can the person raise both arms?
- Speech problems: can the person speak clearly and understand what you say?
- Time to call 999 for an ambulance if you spot any one of these signs.

Stroke patients in England receiving an ambulance should receive a diagnosis bundle; a FAST assessment, blood glucose, and two blood pressures should all be recorded.

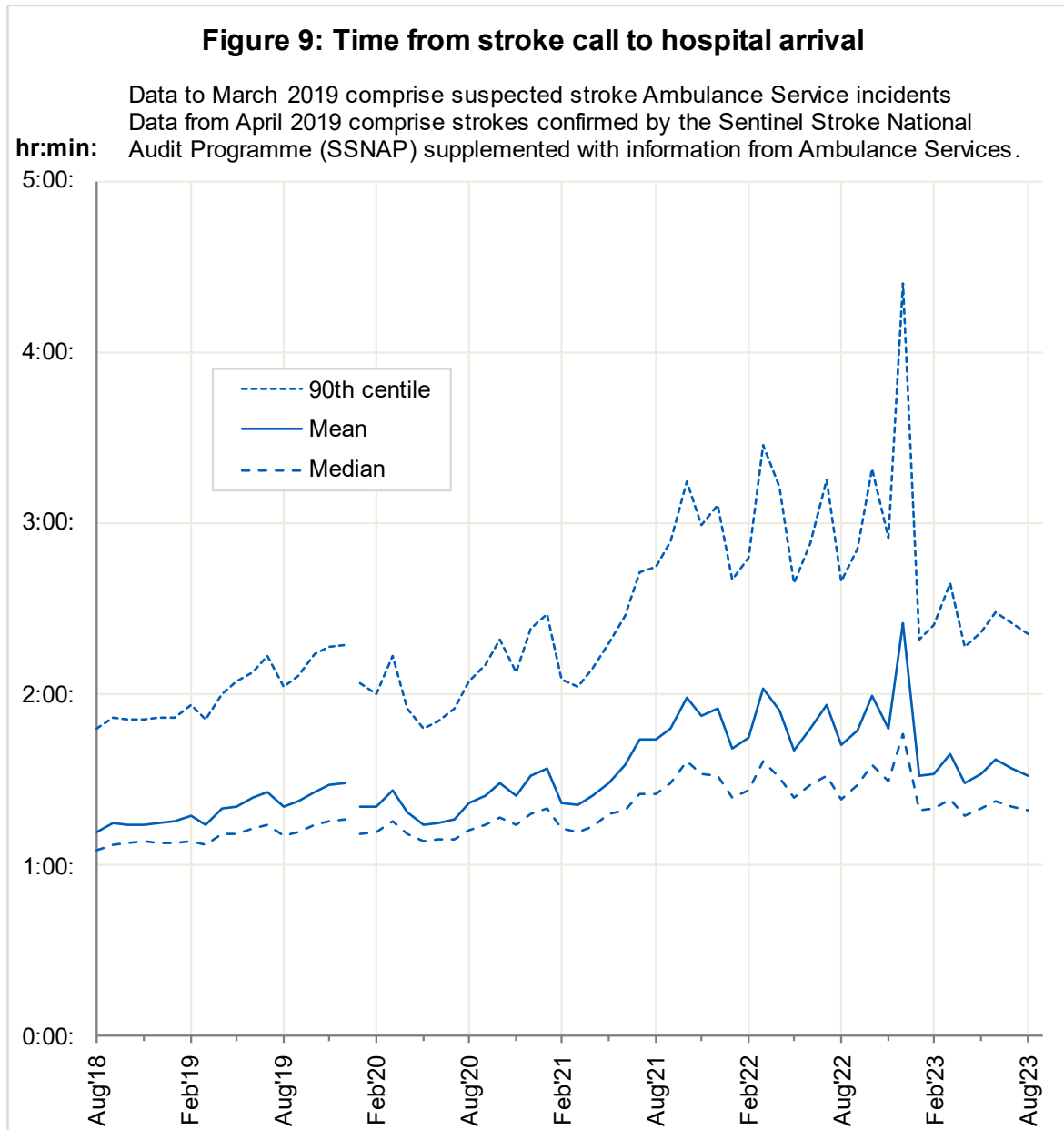
In August 2023, of 8,505 such patients in England, 8,309 (97.7%) received that bundle (Figure 8), a small but significant<sup>2</sup> increase on the 2022-23 average of 96.6% and the largest since August 2021.



<sup>2</sup> Calculated using Student's t-test with 95% significance.

## 2.2 Stroke time to hospital and intervention

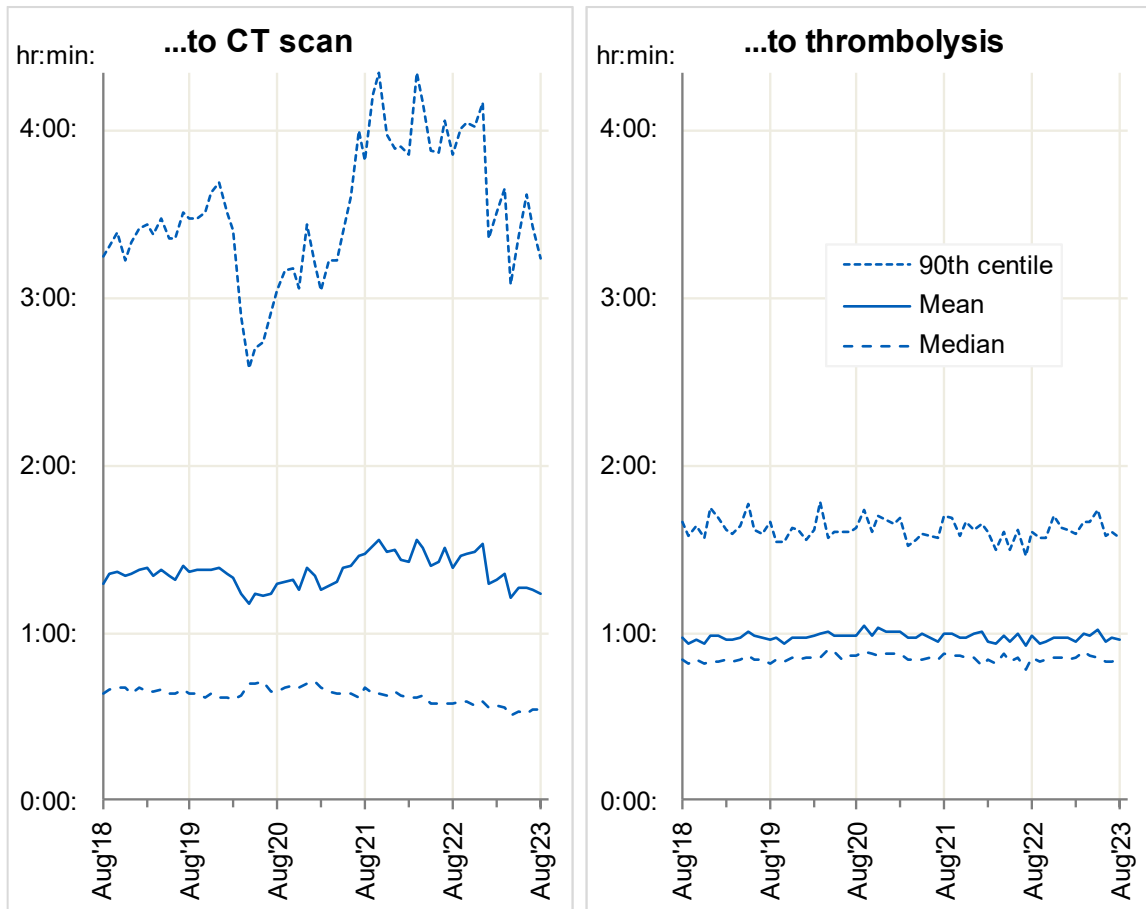
The average time from 999 call until arrival at hospital for ambulance patients in England who had a stroke was 1 hour 31 minutes in August 2023 (Figure 9, middle line). This was shorter than the average for 2022-23 (1:48) and the average for 2023-24 so far (1:32), but longer than April 2023 (1:28), which was the shortest since April 2021.



The average time from hospital arrival to CT scan in August 2023 was 1:14. This was shorter than the average for 2022-23 (1:25) and the same as the average for 2023-24 so far (1:14) but longer than April 2023 (1:12), which was the shortest since April 2020 (Figure 10).

The time from hospital arrival to thrombolysis in August 2023 was 57 minutes. This is the same as the average for 2022-23.

**Figure 10: Time from hospital arrival for stroke...**



### 3. Further information on AQI

#### 3.1 The AQI landing page and Quality Statement

[www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/ambulance-quality-indicators](http://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 3.5 below).

Publication dates are also at

[www.gov.uk/government/statistics/announcements?keywords=ambulance](http://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.

### 3.2 Related statistics

NHS England publishes ambulance handover delays at hospital during winter 2012-13 to 2014-15 and winter 2017-18 to 2023-24 at

[www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/uec-sitrep](http://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/uec-sitrep).

The Quality Statement described in section 3.1 includes information on:

- the “Ambulance Services” publications by what became 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://easc.nhs.wales/asi>

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

Northern Ireland: [www.health-ni.gov.uk/articles/emergency-care-and-ambulance-statistics](http://www.health-ni.gov.uk/articles/emergency-care-and-ambulance-statistics)

### 3.3 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 in section 3.1, incidents resulting from a call to NHS 111 are included in all AmbSYS indicators, except the counts of 999 calls (indicators A1, A124, and A125) and answer times (A2 to A6 and A114).

### 3.4 Centiles

The centile data for England in this document, also published in spreadsheets alongside this document, are not precise centiles calculated from national record-level data. Instead, they are the centiles calculated from each individual trust’s record-level data, weighted by their incident count, and averaged across England. So, if England only had two trusts, with centiles of 7:10 and 7:40, and the former had twice as many incidents as the latter, the England centile would be 7:20.

### 3.5 Contact information

Media: NHS England Media team, [nhsengland.media@nhs.net](mailto:nhsengland.media@nhs.net), 0113 825 0958.

The person responsible for producing this publication is Ian Kay, Operational Insights, Transformation Directorate, NHS England, 0113 825 4606, [england.nhsdata@nhs.net](mailto:england.nhsdata@nhs.net).

### 3.6 Accredited official statistics

These accredited official statistics were independently reviewed by the Office for Statistics Regulation in May 2015. They comply with the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the Code of Practice for Statistics and should be labelled “accredited official statistics”.