



Cancer Waiting Times, May 2023 - Provider Based - Final

The latest monthly Official Statistics on waiting times for suspected and diagnosed cancer patients accessing NHS services, produced by NHS England and NHS Improvement, were released on 11/01/2024 according to the arrangements approved by the UK Statistics Authority.

Waiting Times for Cancer Services - May 2023

The key results for outpatient services and first definitive treatments show that, in England, during the period May 2023:

Two week Wait:

- 80.8% of people were seen by a specialist within two weeks of an urgent referral for suspected cancer (77.7% in April 2023)
- 75.2% of people urgently referred for breast symptoms (where cancer was not initially suspected) were seen within two weeks of referral (72.3% in April 2023)

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

- 90.4% of people treated began first definitive treatment within 31 days of receiving their diagnosis, all cancers (90.6% in April 2023)
- 89.4% of people treated for breast cancer began first definitive treatment within 31 days of receiving their diagnosis (88.9% in April 2023)
- 90.9% of people treated for lung cancers began first definitive treatment within 31 days of receiving their diagnosis (91.7% in April 2023)
- 87.8% of people treated for lower gastrointestinal cancers began first definitive treatment within 31 days of receiving their diagnosis (88.3% in April 2023)
- 90.3% of people treated for urological cancers began first definitive treatment within 31 days of receiving their diagnosis (90.7% in April 2023)
- 88.74% of people treated for skin cancers began first definitive treatment within 31 days of receiving their diagnosis (88.66% in April 2023)

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

- 59.0% of people treated began first definitive treatment within 62 days of being urgently referred for suspected cancer, all cancers (61.4% in April 2023)
- 68.6% of people treated for breast cancers received first definitive treatment within 62 days of being urgently referred for suspected cancer (71.7% in April 2023)

- 46.0% of people treated for lung cancers received first definitive treatment within 62 days of being urgently referred for suspected cancer (50.0% in April 2023)
- 38.4% of people treated for lower gastrointestinal cancers received first definitive treatment within 62 days of being urgently referred for suspected cancer (44.4% in April 2023)
- 49.6% of people treated for urological cancers (excluding testicular cancer) received first definitive treatment within 62 days of being urgently referred for suspected cancer (50.7% in April 2023)
- 85.4% of people treated for skin cancers received first definitive treatment within 62 days of being urgently referred for suspected cancer (85.3% in April 2023)

62-day wait extensions

- 73.4% of patients began first definitive treatment within 62 days of a consultant's decision to upgrade their priority, all cancers (74.7% in April 2023)
- 61.9% of people began first definitive treatment for cancer within 62 days of referral from an NHS cancer screening service, all cancers (67.8% in April 2023)

The key results for waiting times for second or subsequent treatment show that, in England, during the period May 2023:

31-day wait for subsequent treatment

- 76.5% of people began treatment within 31 days where the subsequent treatment was surgery (77.0% in April 2023)
- 97.3% of people began treatment within 31 days where the subsequent treatment was an anti-cancer drug regimen (97.4% in April 2023)
- 85.3% of people began treatment within 31 days where the subsequent treatment was a course of radiotherapy (86.3% in April 2023)

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 of May 2023:

28-day Faster Diagnosis (All Routes):

- 71.30% 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 (71.25% in April 2023)

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/>

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