Cancer Waiting Times, September 2026 - Provider Based - Provisional

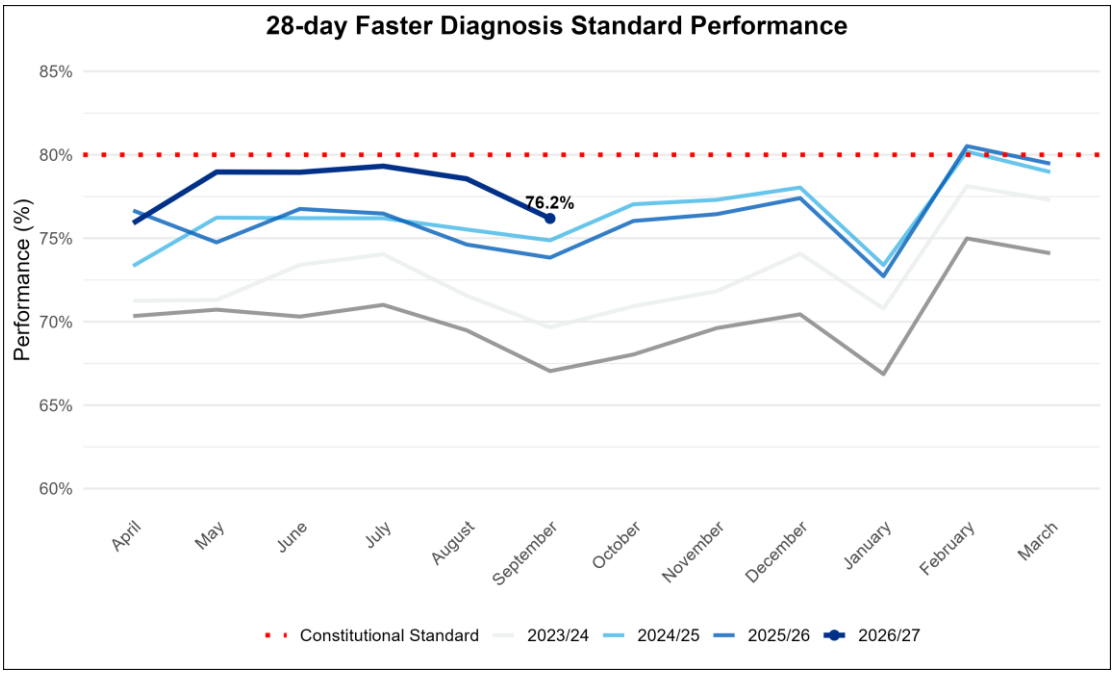
The latest monthly Official Statistics on cancer waiting times produced by NHS England were released on 12/11/2026 according to the arrangements approved by the UK Statistics Authority. The below results correspond to current standards published in 2023.

The key results for England show that:

Performance

28-day Faster Diagnosis:

- 76.2% of people were told if they had cancer, or if cancer was definitively excluded within four weeks (28-days) of an urgent referral (78.6% in August 2026).

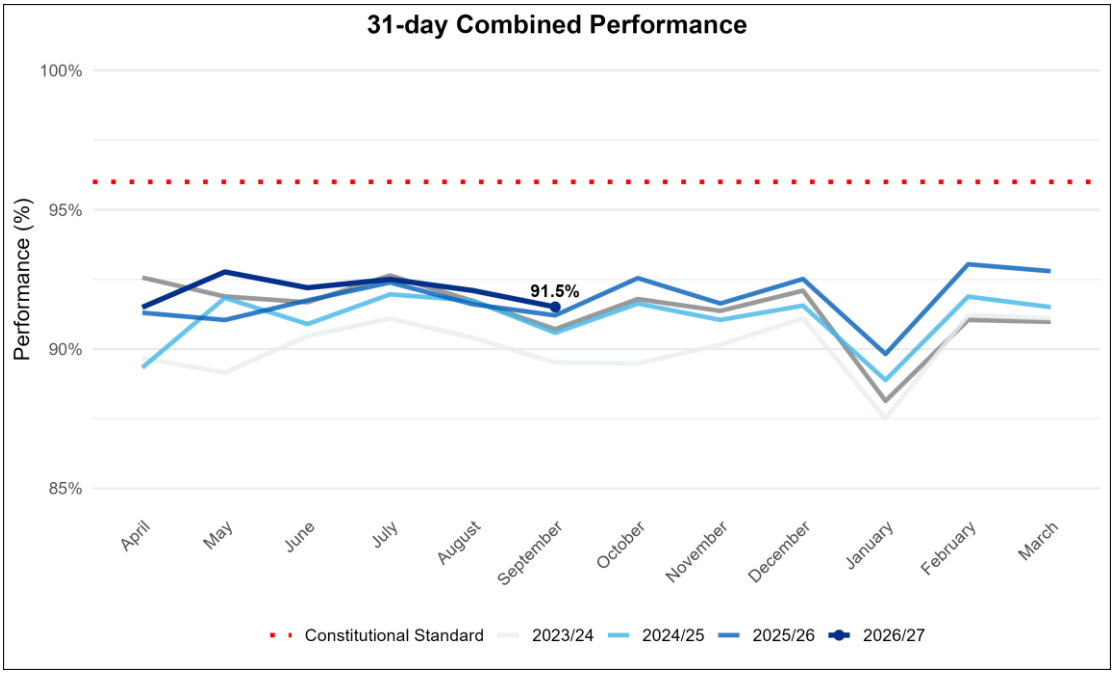


Performance time series for FDS

- Over the last 12 months, performance has averaged 77.5% (October 2025 to September 2026), this is an increase from 76.5% (October 2024 to September 2025).

31-day Combined:

- 91.5% of people treated began first or subsequent treatment of cancer within 31 days of receiving a decision to treat/earliest clinically appropriate date (92.1% in August 2026).

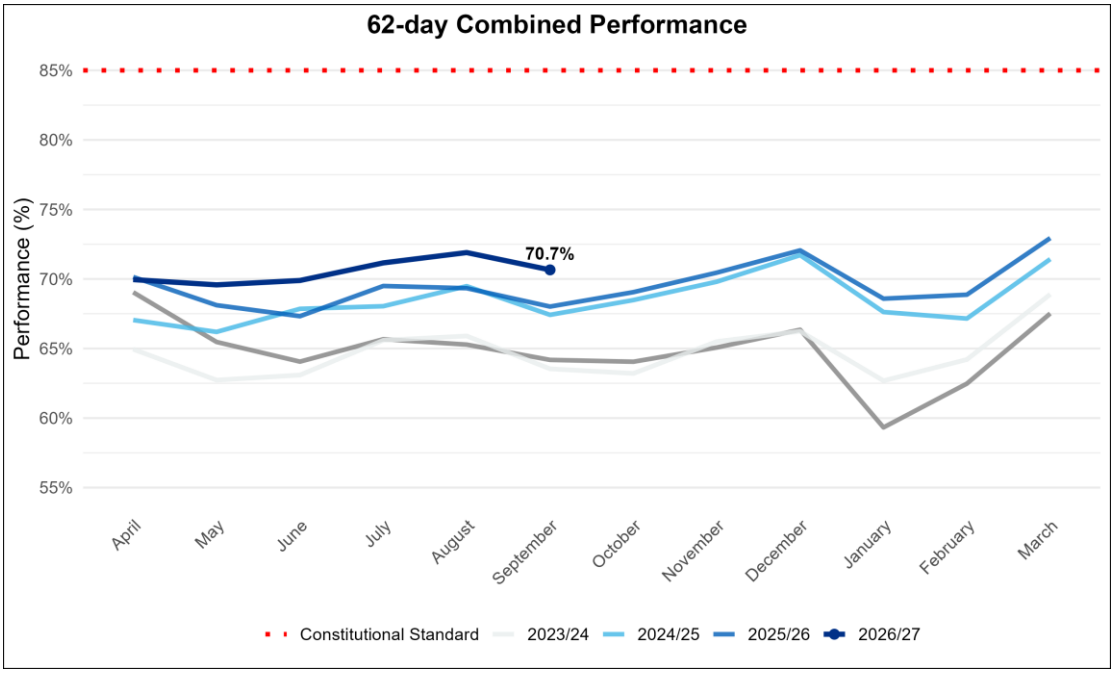


Performance time series for the 31-day Combined standard

- Over the last 12 months, performance has averaged 92.1% (October 2025 to September 2026), this is an increase from 91.3% (October 2024 to September 2025).

<u>62-day Combined:</u>

- 70.7% of people treated began first definitive treatment of cancer within 62 days of an urgent suspected cancer referral, breast symptomatic referral, urgent screening referral or a consultant upgrade (71.9% in August 2026).



Performance time series for the 62-day Combined standard

- Over the last 12 months, performance has averaged 70.4% (October 2025 to September 2026), this is an increase from 69.0% (October 2024 to September 2025).

Activity

28-day Faster Diagnosis:

- 300,367 referrals on the Faster Diagnosis Standard (FDS) were seen in September 2026, this is an increase from 273,664 seen in August 2026.

- Over the last 12 months, the average number of monthly FDS referrals has increased to 282,286 per month (October 2025 to September 2026) from 277,780 per month (October 2024 to September 2025).

31-day Combined:

- 60,544 referrals on the 31D combined standard (31D) were seen in September 2026, this is an increase from the 55,049 seen in August 2026.

- Over the last 12 months, the average number of monthly 31D referrals has increased, to 58,980 per month (October 2025 to September 2026) from 57,616 per month (October 2024 to September 2025).

62-day Combined:

- 30,522 referrals on the 62D combined standard (62D) were seen in September 2026, this is an increase from the 27,909 seen in August 2026.

- Over the last 12 months, the average number of monthly 62D referrals has increased to 29,341 per month (October 2025 to September 2026) from 28,446 per month (October 2024 to September 2025).

Data Notes

Full data tables are published as part of this statistical release on the NHS England website: https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/cancer-waiting-times/

For further information about our data quality and methods, and risk disclosure methodology, please see the links below:

- Data Quality and Methods
- Risk of Disclosure

Whilst Cancer Waiting Times focus on the performance of NHS organisations against the Operational Standards, the National Disease Registration Service (NDRS) publish a wide range of figures on cancer incidence, mortality, survival and early diagnosis by cancer site,geographic and demographic

variables which can be found in their data hub here: Cancer data interactive dashboards - NDRS

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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Annex A: Missing and Partial Returns

University Hospitals Plymouth NHS Trust (RK9) did not make a submission of CWT Data for Urgent Breast Symptomatic Referrals Seen at a First Hospital Assessment.

The cancer waiting times system excludes records from the 62 day standards which do not contain a first seen provider. For the Two Month Wait from a urgent suspected cancer or breast symptomatic referral, or urgent screening referral, or consultant upgrade to a First Treatment for Cancer, Mid And South Essex NHS Foundation Trust (RAJ) have submitted some records without this information.

Estimated impact:

The estimated shortfall of these missing and partial submissions on national activity volumes is given in the table below. The estimated impact on the national performance standards is very small (on average it was 0.02 percentage points). We are working with the providers concerned to resolve the issues and we will publish revisions as outlined in the 12 month statistics calendar (https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/12-months-statistics-calendar/).

Standard	Estimated shortfall in activity
Four Week (28-days) Wait from Urgent Referral to Patient Told they have Cancer, or Cancer is Definitively Excluded	**0.00%**
One Month (31-days) Wait from a Decision to Treat/Earliest Clinically Appropriate Date to First or Subsequent Treatment of Cancer	**0.00%**
Two Month (62-days) Wait from an Urgent Suspected Cancer or Breast Symptomatic Referral, or Urgent Screening Referral, or Consultant Upgrade to a First Definitive Treatment for Cancer	**0.41%**

Annex B: Production of the official statistics

Background

Cancer Waiting Times are part of the NHS Constitution, which sets out the principles and values of the NHS in England. It also defines the rights and pledges for patients and staff, as well as the responsibilities required to help the NHS function effectively. The current operational standards for Cancer Waiting Times are that:

- 80% of people told if they had cancer, or if cancer was definitively excluded within four weeks (28-days) of an urgent referral.
- 96% of people treated beginning first or subsequent treatment of cancer within 31 days of receiving a decision to treat/earliest clinically appropriate date.
- 85% of people treated began first definitive treatment of cancer within 62 days of an urgent suspected cancer referral, breast symptomatic referral, urgent screening referral or a consultant upgrade.

Methodology

NHS England compiles Cancer Waiting Times statistics on the 3 operational standards, and additional data on urgent referrals seen through a central monthly return, applicable to NHS services which includes:

- All NHS providers delivering cancer outpatient, cancer screening or cancer treatment services
- Contracted independent sector providers.

Data are collected and submitted to NHS England on the Strategic Data Collection System (SDCS).

SDCS is a secure data collection system used by health and social care organisations to submit data. The collection is opened on the first working day of the following month, and closed at the end of the second working day. These submissions are quality checked by NHS England against the previous six submissions by the provider, and followed up should they be considered outside of their normal variation. Explanations are then requested from providers who then may agree to a data quality note prior to collating the publication files. At this time, we also remind them of the opportunity to submit revised data when the window opens. This highlights where we think there is an issue with the data, so expect that any issues will be corrected in time for the deadline for the final data.
Once final data have been submitted, the provider is confirming that all the data are correct as there is no further opportunity to change beyond this point.

The CWT guidance provides detailed information on how/when and where patients should be counted, and who should be included or excluded. The

latest applicable guidance is available below, and previous versions exist on the national archives.

https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/national-cancer-waiting-times-monitoring-dataset-guidance/

Data availability

Cancer Waiting Times data are published to a pre-announced timetable, available here: https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/12-months-statistics-calendar/. Data are usually published on every second Thursday of the month. The data is published on the NHS England website here: https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/cancer-waiting-times/

Data comparability

Data has been published monthly at a provider level since October 2009. Prior to October 2009, data was published quarterly from 2001/02. Users should note that data before 31 December 2008 are not comparable due to a methodology change in January 2009.

The Cancer Waiting Times statistics between October 2009 and September 2023 measure standards (see here: https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2024/01/Cancer-Waiting-Times-National-Time-Series-Oct-2009-Sep-2023-with-Revisions.xlsx) that are different from those from October 2023 when the Clinical Review of Standards (CRS) was published. Data on CRS standard performance from July 2022 onwards was also made available to enable comparisons over time.

In March 2022, NHS England published the recommendations for consultation on changes to the cancer waiting times standards. The consultation paper set out the proposed new standards, the rationale for the changes, and the evidence collected in support of those proposals. Annex B of the consultation paper showed the expected impact of the changes to performance standards.

In August 2023, NHS England published a consultation response report. Government then approved the implementation of the changes to the standards from 1 October 2023.

Annex C: Changes to the Cancer Waiting Time Constitutional Standards

In addition to the clinical review of standards changes from 1st October 2023, there have been changes since to the constitutional standards by which performance is measured to. The constitutional standard and applicable dates has been listed below.

Cancer Waiting Times Standard	Dates Applicable	Constitutional Standard
Faster Diagnosis Standard (FDS)	01/10/2023 to 31/03/2026	75%
Faster Diagnosis Standard (FDS)	01/04/2026 onwards	80%
31-day Combined Standard (31D)	01/10/2023 onwards	96%
62-day Combined Standard (62D)	01/10/2023 onwards	85%