



Cancer Waiting Times in NHS Scotland

1 January to 31 March 2022

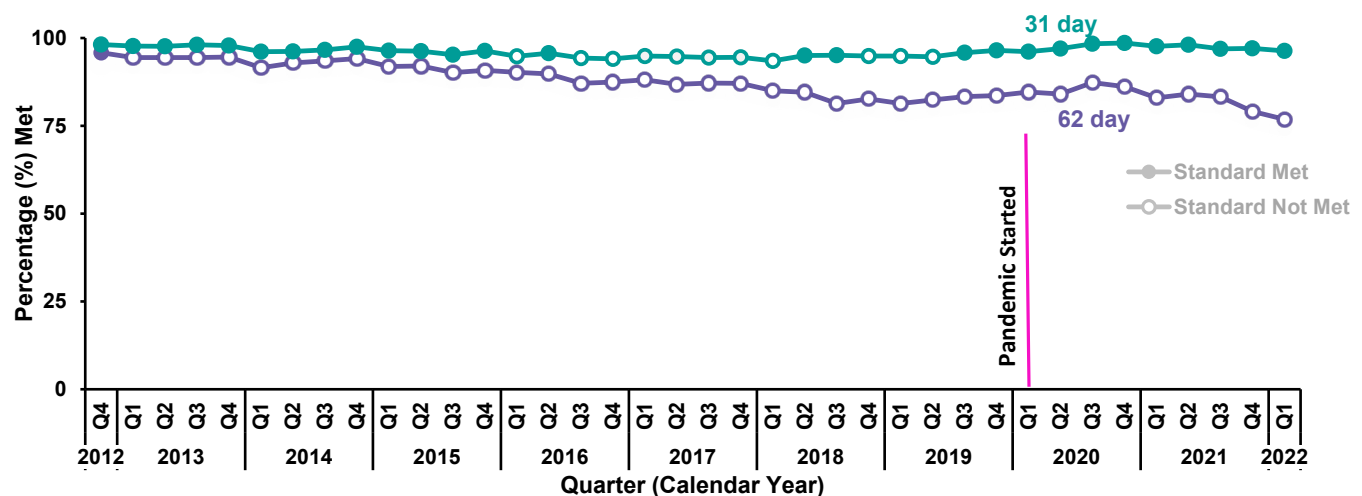
A National Statistics release for Scotland

Publication date: 28 June 2022

About this release

This release by Public Health Scotland (PHS) presents the quarterly update of Cancer Waiting Times statistics, reporting two National Standards on how long patients waited for their first cancer treatment. This release covers patients who started their first treatment by quarter ending 31 March 2022.

NHS Scotland performance against the 62 and 31-day standards



Main points

The 62-day standard states that 95% of eligible patients should wait a maximum of 62 days from urgent suspicion of cancer referral to first cancer treatment.

- There were 3,861 eligible referrals for the 62-day standard, a decrease of 6.8% from the previous quarter, but a 7.6% increase compared with quarter ending 31 March 2021.
- 76.9% of patients started treatment within the 62-day standard, compared with 79.1% in the previous quarter and 83.0% for quarter ending 31 March 2021.

The 62-day standard was only met by NHS Borders.

The 31-day standard states that 95% of all patients should wait no more than 31 days from decision to treat to first cancer treatment.

- There were 5,996 eligible referrals within the 31-day standard, a decrease of 6.2% from the previous quarter, but 3.5% increase compared with quarter ending 31 March 2021.
- 96.3% of patients started treatment within the 31-day standard, compared with 97.1% in the previous quarter and 97.7% for quarter ending 31 March 2021.

The 31-day standard was not met by NHS Grampian, NHS Highland and NHS Lanarkshire.

Background

Current standards for cancer waiting times are that 95% of all eligible patients should wait no longer than 31 or 62 days (**Action Plan**), with 5% tolerance level due to clinical appropriateness.

The 62-day standard applies to patients urgently referred with a suspicion of cancer by a primary care clinician, general dental physician, patients referred by one of the national cancer screening programmes, and direct referrals to hospital where the signs and symptoms are consistent with the cancer diagnosed, as per the Scottish Referral Guidelines e.g., self-referral to A&E.

The 31-day standard applies to all patients, regardless of the route of referral.

The Covid-19 pandemic has impacted the results, some Boards have highlighted that staffing and capacity issues continue to impact on performance in the latest quarter.

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Further information

Data from this publication are available from the **publication page** on our website.

Open data from this publication is available from the **Scottish Health and Social Care Open Data platform**.

The next release of this publication will be 27 September 2022.

Other formats of this publication are available on request by calling 0131 314 5300 or emailing psh.otherformats@psh.scot.

NHS Performs

A selection of information from this publication is included in **NHS Performs**. NHS Performs is a website that brings together a range of information on how hospitals and NHS Boards within NHSScotland are performing.

PHS and Official Statistics

Public Health Scotland (PHS) is the principal and authoritative source of statistics on health and care services in Scotland. PHS is designated by legislation as a producer of 'Official Statistics'. Our official statistics publications are produced to a high professional standard and comply with the Code of Practice for Statistics. **Further information about our statistics**.