Cancelled Planned Operations  
Month Ending 31 March 2020  
Official Statistics publication for Scotland  

Publication Date: 5 May 2020

About this release

This release by Public Health Scotland (PHS) provides a monthly update on the number of operations in NHSScotland that were cancelled the day before, or on the day the patient was due to be treated. Information on the reasons for cancellations are also included.

Main points

• The total number of planned operations across NHSScotland during March 2020 was 20,192, a decrease of 31.9% from 29,646 during March 2019.
• 3,019 operations (15.0% of all planned operations) were cancelled in March 2020, ranging from 7.1% to 34.0% across individual NHS Boards. This compares to 2,505 (8.4%) in March 2019.
• In March 2020, of all planned operations:
  – 4.1% were cancelled by the patient;
  – 4.4% were cancelled by the hospital based on clinical reasons;
  – 5.9% were cancelled by the hospital due to capacity or non-clinical reasons;
  – 0.6% were cancelled due to other reasons.
• The decrease in number of planned operations and increase in Non-clinical/Capacity cancellations is related to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

![Cancellation Reason for Planned Operations](chart)

- Non-clinical/Capacity reason
- Clinical Reason
- Cancelled by Patient
- Other reason

COVID-19 Pandemic
Background

These statistics are released monthly. Data for this publication are submitted from NHS Board theatre systems.

The following definitions are used for the cancellation reason groupings:

- Cancellation based on clinical reason by hospital includes patient unwell, patient not prepared for procedure correctly by hospital and patient did not follow pre op instruction.
- Cancellation based on capacity or non-clinical reason by hospital includes no beds available, staff not available, equipment not available and theatre session overran.
- Cancellation by patient includes patient decides not to go ahead with procedure, patient unable to attend, patient did not attend and patient did not attend pre-op.
- Other includes fire alarm prevents operation from taking place, weather prevented patient / staff travelling and patient transport did not arrive in time to bring patient to hospital.

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Further Information

Data from this publication is available to download from our web page and the NHSScotland Open Data platform along with a metadata document.

For more information on Cancelled Planned Operations see the Cancelled Planned Operations section of our website. For related topics, please see the Waiting Times pages.

The next release of this publication will be June 2020.

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.