National Drug and Alcohol Treatment Waiting Times

1 January – 31 March 2020

A National Statistics publication for Scotland
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About this release

This release by Public Health Scotland reports on the waiting times for people accessing drug and alcohol treatment services between January and March 2020. It contains information on the number of people seen for treatment, types of treatment accessed, and length of time waited. Additional information is included for all treatments started during the last financial year (April 2019 to March 2020).

The Scottish Government set a standard that 90% of people referred for help with their drug or alcohol problem will wait no longer than three weeks for treatment that supports their recovery.

Main Points

• 94.7% of the 9,267 people who started their first drug or alcohol treatment during the latest quarter waited 3 weeks or less, with little change in recent years.

People Starting Drug and Alcohol treatment in Scotland during January – March 2020:
Percentage waited 3 weeks or less, by NHS Board

• For the 5,113 people seeking alcohol treatment, 94.0% waited 3 weeks or less. 95.5% of the 4,154 people seeking drug treatment waited 3 weeks or less.
• For the 1,974 people who were still waiting to start drug or alcohol treatment at the end of the quarter, 9.1% had been waiting for more than 6 weeks.
• 93.7% of the 811 people in prison who started their first drug or alcohol treatment between January and March 2020 waited 3 weeks or less.
• 94.4% of the 39,889 people who started a first drug or alcohol treatment between April 2019 and March 2020 waited 3 weeks or less.
• 29.8% of the 104 people in prison still waiting to start drug or alcohol treatment at the end of the quarter had been waiting for more than 6 weeks.

Background

It should be noted that the statistics released for this reporting period are in part affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. This is notable from mid-March and in particular, from 23 March when Scotland entered a period of 'lockdown'. These measures will have affected referrals and delivery of treatment.

The data in this publication is a snapshot of a dynamic database. This means that data for previous quarters may not be the same as found in previous publications for the same time period. Updated data for the most recent quarter is provisional and may be revised in future publications.

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Further Information

Find out more in the full report. The data from this publication is available to download from our web page. Open data is available from the Scottish Health and Social Care open data portal. Other relevant ISD publications can be found on the drugs and alcohol use pages of the ISD website.

The Scottish Public Health Observatory (ScotPHO) provides information on various aspects of drug use in Scotland: ScotPHO drug misuse section.

The next release of this publication will be 29 September 2020.

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.