

FROM THE MINISTER OF HEALTH



Department of
Health

An Roinn Sláinte

Mánnystrie O Poustie

www.health-ni.gov.uk

Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate
Belfast BT4 3SQ
Telephone: 028 9052 0638
email: private.office@health-ni.gov.uk

Ms Jo-Anne Dobson MLA
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw, Stormont
Belfast, BT4 3XX

Our Ref: SUB/1490/2016

Date: 15th December 2016

Jo-Annne, a chara

I refer to your written Assembly Question (AQW 4566/16-21) in which you asked me to detail the patient waiting times for an appointment with a consultant at the gastroenterology department at the Belfast City Hospital for (i) urgent cases; and (ii) non-urgent appointments.

The original response provided detailed the number of patients waiting as at 6th October 2016 for urgent and routine first consultant led outpatient appointments in the gastroenterology specialty at Belfast City Hospital. Whilst the figures provided in the table were correct for urgent appointments, the figure in the >52 weeks waiting timeband for routine appointments (>5) was incorrect. The correct figure is <5.

I wish to advise you of an amendment to the original reply to correct this error. The revised response is attached at **Appendix 1**.

I trust this information is helpful, and I apologise for any inconvenience this may have caused. I have copied this letter to the Assembly Library Services for their information.

Is mise le meas

MICHELLE O'NEILL MLA
Minister of Health



Appendix 1

Information on the number of patients waiting as at 6th October 2016 for urgent and routine first consultant led outpatient appointments in the gastroenterology specialty at Belfast City Hospital is shown in the table below.

	Weeks waiting						
	0-6	>6-9	>9-12	>12-15	>15-18	>18-52	>52
Urgent	69	33	26	39	39	7	0
Routine	36	24	26	34	27	186	<5

Source: Belfast HSC Trust

I am firmly of the view that the current waiting lists are unacceptably long. However, unless we tackle the root causes this will remain the case, as we have a 20th century model delivering services for a 21st century population. This is having an increasingly negative impact on the quality and experience of care. The long term solution is the transformation of our health and social care system as outlined in Delivering Together.

It is only in transforming the health and social care system and by implementing new models of care that we will be able to alleviate the pressures on our health and social care services, sustain improvements in waiting times and deliver better outcomes for patients.

That said, I would pay tribute to the staff across the Health & social care sector. Notwithstanding the structural issues, they continue to work incredibly hard and on average deliver 9,000 outpatient appointments, 2,600 inpatient/day case procedures and 31,000 diagnostic tests per week.