

# Children face longest ever wait for ear, nose and throat appointments

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Children in Scotland are waiting longer now for ear, nose and throat (ENT) appointments than ever before, new figures have shown.

The median wait for first specialist appointments for conditions like tonsillitis, nosebleeds and hearing problems was 71 days last year.

That's the highest since records began in 1999, and compares to 66 days in 2015, and as little as 44 days in 2011.

In some health boards, under 16s wait far longer.

The longest median wait was in Grampian (133 days), followed by Ayrshire and Arran (131 days) and Shetland (120 days).

The best-performing board for ENT waits was Dumfries and Galloway, where youngsters waited on average for just 43 days.

The statistics emerged following a parliamentary question from Scottish Conservative public health spokesman Miles Briggs.

Across Scotland, more than 10,000 children are admitted to hospital for ENT problems each year, mostly on an elective basis.

Conditions which come under ENT range from mouth cancers and glandular fever, to issues with snoring and vertigo.

**Scottish Conservative public health spokesman Miles Briggs said:**

“Ear, nose and throat problems can range from the mildly irritating to the very severe.

“But that's no excuse for the Scottish Government to preside over a system which is now recording the longest waits in two decades.

“Each year thousands of children are admitted with ENT problems, so it is not a minority area of care.

“When a child is referred for hospital treatment, it is unacceptable that – in some health board areas – it is almost five months before they are seen

to.

“The trend is getting worse, and the SNP has to act.

“It’s in sole charge of the health service, and has no-one to blame for this slip in performance but itself.”

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**The full text of the parliamentary question from Miles Briggs is below:**

**7 March 2017** (Holding Reply Issued 1 March 2017)

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**Miles Briggs (Lothian) (Scottish Conservatives and Unionist Party):** To ask the Scottish Government what the average waiting time has been for (a) children and (b) adults to see an Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) specialist in each year since 1999, broken down by NHS board.

S5W-06782

**Shona Robison:**

The information requested is provided in the following tables. It should be noted that data prior to the introduction of New Ways of Defining and Measuring Waiting Times in 2008 is from Scottish Morbidity Records (SMR00) and are not directly comparable.

**MEDIAN WAITS (DAYS) FOR A FIRST OUTPATIENT CONSULTATION IN ENT FOR PATIENTS UNDER 16 YEARS BY NHS BOARD FOR THE YEARS 1999 TO 2007**

Board	Median Waits (Days) : Patients Age Under 16 Years								
	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Ayrshire and Arran	30	25	45	43	46	49	70	76	47
Borders	85	107	121	59	45	84	90	84	92
Dumfries and Galloway	39	44	65	70	44	33	21	41	44
Fife	84	61	64	79	82	90	70	70	46
Forth Valley	57	49	58	70	75	63	77	82	45
Grampian	70	71	76	73	82	59	65	93	48
Greater Glasgow and Clyde	69	61	70	68	111	40	52	86	53
Highland	46	46	58	57	55	47	59	85	100
Lanarkshire	73	72	93	104	117	75	67	92	95
Lothian	16	18	18	30	40	54	50	28	87
Orkney	24	31	33	49	42	53	50	69	76
Shetland	36	41	41	58	71	62	47	68	63
Tayside	49	54	66	55	50	52	43	44	43
Western Isles	78	45	49	52	72	121	124	105	95
NHSScotland	53	52	63	63	68	50	56	68	58

Source : ISD SMR00

MEDIAN WAITS (DAYS) FOR A FIRST OUTPATIENT CONSULTATION IN ENT FOR PATIENTS 16 YEARS AND OVER BY NHS BOARD FOR THE YEARS 1999 TO 2007

Board	Median Waits (Days): Patients Age 16 Years and Over									
	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	
Ayrshire and Arran	49	49	73	50	56	107	85	70	40	
Borders	67	72	53	35	35	48	46	49	76	
Dumfries and Galloway	41	42	66	66	45	36	19	39	35	
Fife	80	45	53	76	79	83	64	52	41	
Forth Valley	54	49	54	62	63	68	73	62	42	
Grampian	84	92	99	121	111	106	119	105	106	
Greater Glasgow and Clyde	48	54	60	58	63	49	52	44	41	
Highland	44	46	54	48	41	41	50	60	69	
Lanarkshire	70	69	86	94	104	109	105	78	70	
Lothian	69	63	61	65	55	57	63	66	84	
Orkney	24	38	35	40	47	58	63	65	70	
Shetland	40	40	42	47	52	62	36	46	60	
Tayside	53	74	76	83	53	59	56	46	56	
Western Isles	62	41	45	43	69	85	93	99	77	
NHSScotland	56	56	63	66	64	61	62	56	53	

Source : ISD SMR00

MEDIAN WAITS (DAYS) FOR A FIRST OUTPATIENT CONSULTATION IN ENT FOR PATIENTS UNDER 16 YEARS BY NHS BOARD FOR THE YEARS 2008 TO 2016

Board	Median Waits (Days) : Patients Aged Under 16 Years									
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	
Ayrshire and Arran	57	54	54	44	62	74	82	110	131	
Borders	66	50	50	63	73	76	84	73	88	
Dumfries and Galloway	38	42	44	21	38	44	40	40	43	
Fife	42	40	44	36	37	42	41	42	47	
Forth Valley	52	49	36	58	68	99	45	63	78	
Grampian	66	55	72	81	74	63	60	108	133	
Greater Glasgow and Clyde	45	48	53	40	42	50	55	60	69	
Highland	81	61	52	56	62	80	87	118	88	
Lanarkshire	48	24	44	76	80	77	75	70	81	
Lothian	76	69	64	42	67	75	83	126	96	
Orkney	59	57	44	41	30	54	57	67	51	
Shetland	81	50	68	58	62	58	75	72	120	
Tayside	36	37	52	49	46	50	56	60	68	
Western Isles	77	45	57	59	49	85	66	39	63	
NHSScotland	51	49	55	44	52	58	61	66	71	

Source: ISD Waiting Times Warehouse

**MEDIAN WAITS (DAYS) FOR A FIRST OUTPATIENT CONSULTATION IN ENT FOR PATIENTS 16 YEARS AND OVER BY NHS BOARD FOR THE YEARS 2008 TO 2016**

Board	Median Waits (Days) : Patients Aged 16 years And Over								
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Ayrshire and Arran	53	47	56	65	78	73	82	78	57
Borders	53	38	36	43	55	61	74	62	46
Dumfries and Galloway	32	34	35	14	29	24	28	38	41
Fife	34	34	33	28	27	28	26	26	30
Forth Valley	51	42	31	44	58	83	40	55	66
Grampian	79	68	40	27	31	38	35	39	55
Greater Glasgow and Clyde	35	36	37	40	43	48	55	59	55
Highland	46	34	31	35	41	50	59	78	76
Lanarkshire	45	40	47	49	58	73	75	70	59
Lothian	48	45	54	35	51	70	49	52	42
Orkney	57	45	41	32	32	51	63	69	50
Shetland	71	44	60	54	58	45	74	62	84
Tayside	25	38	43	43	42	48	44	45	36
Western Isles	56	35	51	56	46	62	47	32	48
NHSScotland	43	41	41	37	43	49	49	51	49

Source: ISD Waiting Times Warehouse

**In 2015/16, there were 10,052 admissions of under 18s in Scotland for ENT issues:**

<http://www.isdscotland.org/Health-Topics/Hospital-Care/Inpatient-and-Day-Case-Activity/>

**A list of ENT conditions are set out here:**

<http://patient.info/health/ear-nose-throat-mouth-1246>