

Revealed: the health boards where half wait too long for mental health care

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Statistics released today have shown the health boards in Scotland where more than half of those referred for mental health treatment are being made to wait too long.

The ISD Scotland data revealed two NHS boards where children were more likely to miss the 18-week referral-to-treatment standard than be seen on time.

In addition, figures from the last quarter show one health board where 56.5 per cent of adults also missed the target.

It is the latest report showing shortcomings in psychological treatment north of the border, despite the Scottish Government claiming it has a parity of esteem with physical health.

The SNP states at least 90 per cent of adults referred by a GP for treatment should begin that within 18 weeks.

However, between October and December last year, just two health boards – Lanarkshire and the Western Isles – managed this.

In NHS Forth Valley, only 43.5 per cent were seen on time, while in NHS Lothian the figure was around two-thirds.

And for under 18s the picture is similarly grim.

In NHS Grampian 55 per cent of youngsters missed the 18-week target, along with 51.7 per cent in the Lothians.

Scottish Conservative public health spokesman Miles Briggs said:

“For a Scottish Government which says mental health is a priority, this is well short of the expected performance.

“No-one’s saying this is an easy situation to address, particularly with increasing awareness of the need to raise concerns about psychological problems.

“But for some health boards to be missing the target more often than they’re

hitting it, for children and adults, that is utterly unacceptable.

“Unless these statistics are dramatically improved, no-one will believe the SNP when it says it wants to give parity of esteem to mental health.

“These figures show thousands of vulnerable people across Scotland, young and old, are being failed by a system which is supposed to help them.”

To access the full reports, which were published today by ISD Scotland, visit:

<https://www.isdscotland.org/Health-Topics/Waiting-Times/Publications/2017-03-07/2017-03-07-WT-PsychTherapies-Report.pdf>

<https://www.isdscotland.org/Health-Topics/Waiting-Times/Publications/2017-03-07/2017-03-07-CAMHS-Report.pdf>

The Scottish Conservatives published a policy paper on mental health at the end of last year:

<http://www.scottishconservatives.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Scottish-Conservative-Mental-Health-Policy.pdf>