

## WAITING TIMES REPORT – FEBRUARY 2006

### 1. Introduction

The purpose of the report is to update the NHS Board on the waiting time position for those services for which there is a national waiting time guarantee.

### 2. Inpatient, Day Case and Outpatients

In February 2006, NHS Lanarkshire maintained the national waiting time guarantee that no patient wait over twenty-six weeks for an inpatient, day case or outpatient appointment. In addition, no patient is waiting longer than eight and eighteen weeks for angiography and angioplasty respectively.

The capacity plan has been updated to identify the additional activity and capacity required to deliver the improved waiting time guarantees. Progress to date has informed completion of the trajectory for each specialty and is reflected in the draft delivery plan for 2006/07. The projections indicate that NHS Lanarkshire will deliver the national waiting time guarantees for inpatients and day cases prior to the end of calendar year 2007. A financial plan to underpin delivery of all waiting time guarantees represents work in progress. Orthopaedics remains a particular pressure and the pace of implementation will be influenced by service redesign and availability of capacity. The trajectory for delivery of outpatient and ASC guarantees remains end of calendar year 2007.

Discussions are continuing with the Scottish Executive around future refinement of trajectories to reflect changing circumstances and for further information and clarification around definitions of some waiting time guarantees. Progress on those discussions will be reported to the NHS Board.

### 3. Cancer

The Scottish Executive recently released information on cancer waiting times for period 1 July to 30 September 2005. The information for Lanarkshire in terms of compliance with the national waiting time guarantee for main tumour types was:

- Breast 93.5%
- Lung 74.6%
- Colorectal 48.5%
- Ovarian 85.7%

There is work in progress to improve performance across the main tumour types. A significant issue has been the availability of relevant patient data to inform identification of pressure areas and issues around capacity to improve the patient journey. This has been addressed through appointment of patient trackers and the use of software to electronically track patients through the patient journey. February will represent the first full month of patient information captured in this manner and will be used as a basis for discussion with clinical and non clinical colleagues. The outcome of those discussions will be reported to the next meeting of the NHS Board.

#### **4. Diagnostics**

In February 2006, the maximum wait for access to diagnostic services did not exceed twenty-six weeks. This was in line with the current waiting time guarantee. On the basis of current information, a trajectory for each diagnostic type was prepared and is reflected in the draft delivery plan. A discussion with the National Waiting Times Unit has since prompted a revision of the trajectory for each diagnostic type. This follows clarification by the NWTU that by 31 December 2007 the eighteen-week maximum wait should include the nine-week maximum wait for diagnostics. It is therefore necessary to accelerate delivery of the nine-week maximum wait for diagnostics to March 2007 to deliver the eighteen-week guarantee by end of calendar year 2007.

NHS Lanarkshire proposes to establish a Diagnostic Collaborative to take forward service redesign of diagnostic services in Lanarkshire. An application for funding to support establishment of the Collaborative has been submitted to the Centre for Change and Innovation and a response is awaited.

#### **5. Unscheduled Care**

The guarantee to be achieved by 31 December 2007 will require NHS Lanarkshire to ensure patients wait a maximum of no more than four hours from arrival to discharge or transfer for accident and emergency treatment. The position at the end of February 2006 indicated 82% compliance with the guarantee. A trajectory to deliver the guarantee through to end of calendar year 2007 has been prepared and is captured in the draft delivery plan.

**Ian A Ross**  
**Chief Executive**  
**Acute Operating Division**