

Scottish A&E waiting times 'show improvement'



The Scottish Government say that A&E waiting times figures released today show an improvement, but truth be told it is a marginal improvement of less than 1% over last month's figures. The statistics are now released monthly since the week ending 22 February, and they show that for both the month of February and the week ending 29 March, there is improvement being made despite what are viewed as 'the challenges of winter'.

In February, 86.2 per cent of patients were seen within four hours at core A&E sites across Scotland. This is up from 85.4 per cent in January 2015.

Figures for all sites – which includes minor injury units as well as 24 hour consultant led core sites – show that 87.9 per cent of patients were seen within four hours during February, up from 87.1 per cent in January.

During the week ending March 29, core A&E sites saw 91.3 per cent of people within four hours.

The government explains that this is a five percentage point increase since weekly A&E performance figures were first published for the week ending February 22, despite attendances having increased by four per cent, over the same period.

Attendances for the year from March 1 2014 to February 28 2015 were higher than the two previous years, with 1,644,341 people turning up at Scotland's A&E departments.

Long waits have reduced significantly during March. Over the four weeks ending 29th March 2015, there was a reduction of

71.1 per cent in patients waiting over eight hours compared to the month of February.

What is your experience? Have you had occasion to visit the A&E department recently? How long did you wait?

Health Secretary Shona Robison said:

“As the weekly figures for February have already shown us, this year’s winter was a very challenging one for our A&E departments. However, we are seeing signs of improvement with waits reducing in February when compared to January, and further improvement throughout March.

“Attendances at A&E over the last year have also risen when compared to the two previous years, however, it is encouraging to see that long waits have dropped significantly since the start of the year, with figures for week ending 29 March showing that 0.8 per cent of patients waited for more than eight hours.

“I would like to thank our NHS staff for their hard work and patience throughout the winter months and for treating people as quickly as possible.

“Of course more still needs to be done, and health boards must now focus on sustaining the reduced waiting times we have recently seen and moving towards meeting our world leading targets.”