

WELSH INFORMATION STANDARDS BOARD

DSC Notice:	DSCN 2025 / 06
Date of Issue:	11 th March 2025

<p>Welsh Health Circular/Official Letter: N/A</p> <p>Sponsor: Lesley Law, Delivery & Performance Division, Welsh Government</p> <p>Standard Type: Secondary Use</p> <p>Implementation Date: 1st April 2025</p>	<p>Subject: Diagnostic and Therapy Services (DATs) Waiting Times Return – Exclusion of Audiology services</p>
<p>DATA STANDARDS CHANGE NOTICE</p> <p>A Data Standards Change Notice (DSCN) is an information mandate for a new or revised information standard.</p> <p>This DSCN was approved by the Welsh Information Standards Board (WISB) at its meeting on Thursday 20th February 2025.</p> <p>WISB Reference: ISRN 2024/009</p>	
<p>Summary: To remove Audiology services from the Diagnostic and Therapy services (DATs) Wait Time data collection.</p>	
<p>Data sets / returns affected: N/A</p>	
<p>Please address enquiries about this Data Standards Change Notice to the Data Standards Team in Digital Health and Care Wales</p> <p>E-mail: data.standards@wales.nhs.uk</p>	
<p>The Welsh Information Standards Board is responsible for appraising information standards. Submission documents and WISB Outcomes relating to the approval of this standard can be found at:</p> <p>https://nhs.wales365.sharepoint.com/sites/DHC_DST/Lists/Information%20Standards%20Assurance%20Submission%20Log/AllItems.aspx</p>	

DATA STANDARDS CHANGE NOTICE

Introduction

Since 2011, audiology services in Wales have been included in the Diagnostic and Therapy Waiting Times (DATs) aggregate data collection, with monthly reports on adult hearing aid fitting waiting times submitted to DHCW. These figures, collected through Health Board information teams, have been used to monitor NHS performance as part of the Quadruple Aim in the NHS Performance Framework and published on Stats Wales, alongside other therapy services' 14-week measures.

However, audiology in Wales has evolved to offer services across a broader range of pathways, including reassessments for hearing aid users, tinnitus and balance assessments, children's audiology services, and diagnostic support, among others. As part of the ongoing transformation, the quality of audiology services is assessed using mandated Quality Standards, which have been in place for both adult and children's services since 2009. While these standards include waiting times as part of their criteria, they are only formally reported on a biennial basis, unlike therapy services or diagnostic pathways, which are subject to more frequent, detailed reporting.

Currently, only new adult hearing pathways and hearing aid provisions are formally reported under the 14-week waiting time target. This limited scope has led to concerns about underreporting the true extent of waits across audiology services

In light of these concerns, the Welsh Government has decided to remove Audiology from the DATs aggregate data collection and implement a new, separate patient-level data set. This data set will provide more granular insights into the true waiting times across all audiology services, enabling better performance management and ensuring that audiology services are appropriately resourced and monitored.

Description of Change

To officially retire the reporting of Audiology services from the existing Diagnostic and Therapy services (DATs) Wait Time data collection.

Data Dictionary Version

Where applicable, this DSCN reflects changes introduced by DSCN and/or DDCN since the release of version 4.23 of the NHS Wales Data Dictionary.

The changes introduced by such DSCNs will be published in version 4.25 of the NHS Wales Data Dictionary.

Actions Required

Local Health Boards:

- Ensure that local processes have been updated to comply with the standard set out within this DSCN.
- Health Boards to stop reporting Audiology services under their monthly submissions for Diagnostic and Therapy Services Waiting Times (DATs) from 1st April 2025. Therefore, the last submission of Audiology services within the Diagnostic and Therapy Services Waiting Times (DATs) data collection will be for March 2025 waits, which will be submitted in April 2025.

Appendix A: Table reflecting areas that are impacted as a result of this DSCN

The following table shows where there are changes to the scope and/or definitions of applicable data sets, data items, terms and other associated areas that are linked with the changes documented within this DSCN.

Each data definition type is listed in alphabetical order and is shown in the sequence in which it appears in this DSCN.

Data Definition Type	Name	New/Retired/Changed	Page Number
Aggregate Data Collection	Diagnostic and Therapy Services Waiting Times (DATs)	Changed	6
Data Item	Service Heading	Changed	9

Appendix B: Highlighted changes to be made to the NHS Wales Data Dictionary

Changes to the NHS Wales Data Dictionary are detailed below, with new text being highlighted in **blue** and deletions are shown with a ~~strikethrough~~. The text shaded in **grey** shows existing text copied from the NHS Wales Data Dictionary.

Scope

The Diagnostic and Therapies Waiting Times Return relates to patients waiting for specific diagnostic tests and/or therapy services as described by [Service Sub-headings](#).

The submission is based on provider and not resident population.

Data Set Structure

Field Order	Format
Data Reference	2 character alpha
Return Date	ccyymmdd
Hospital Site	Max 50 character alpha numeric
Organisation Code (LHB Area of Residence)	3 character alpha numeric characters (**)
Organisation Code (Code of Provider)	3 character alpha numeric
Service Heading	alpha numeric
Sub Heading	alpha numeric
Weeks Wait	alpha numeric
Count	numeric
Age Group at Referral	2 character alpha numeric

** - It is not essential for Local Health Boards /Trusts to complete this item but is desirable if possible.

See [Services](#)

Services

There are 13 services for which data is to be submitted. Within Radiology, GP referrals are submitted separately from consultant referrals. The table below provides a complete list of services and subheadings for which data should be submitted.

Service	Service Sub Heading	Additional Information
Arts Therapies	Learning Disabilities	Waiting time from waiting list date until the census date.
	Mental Health	Patients are removed from the waiting list on the Date of Commencement of Episode Care (Diagnostic and Therapy Services.)
Audiology (Adult Hearing Aids)	Consultant	A hearing aid is described as an externally worn electrical listening device.
	GP	Waiting times from waiting list date until the census date. Patients are removed from the waiting list on the date their hearing aid is fitted.
Cardiology	Stress Test Exercise Tolerance Test	A stress test is a non-invasive procedure to record the heart's electrical activity during exercise. Waiting times from waiting list date until the census date. Patients are removed from the waiting list on the date the diagnostic test for which they have been referred is carried out.
	Echo Cardiogram	An echo cardiogram is a non-invasive ultrasound procedure used to diagnose cardiovascular disease.
	24 Hour Blood Pressure Monitoring	A non-invasive method of obtaining blood pressure readings over a 24 hour period.
	24 Hour Tape / Holter	A 24 hour tape or holter continuously records the hearts rhythms over a 24 hour period.
	Cardiac Computed Tomography (Cardiac CT)	Cardiac computed tomography is a non-invasive test that uses an x-ray machine to take clear, detailed pictures of the heart.

	<p>Cardiac Magnetic Resonance Imaging (Cardiac MRI)</p>	<p>Heart magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) is an imaging method that uses powerful magnets and radio waves to create pictures of the heart. It does not use radiation (x-rays).</p>
	<p>Doppler Stress Echocardiogram (DSE)</p>	<p>A stress echo test uses ultrasound technology to assess the flow of blood through vessels in the heart.</p>
	<p>Myocardial Perfusion Scanning</p>	<p>A myocardial perfusion scan uses a small amount of a radioactive chemical to see how well blood flows to the muscles of the heart (the myocardium)</p>
	<p>Diagnostic Angiography</p>	<p>Angiography is a medical imaging technique used to visualize the inside, or lumen, of blood vessels and organs of the body, with particular interest in the arteries, veins, and the heart chambers.</p>
	<p>Diagnostic Electrophysiology (EP Study)</p>	<p>An electrophysiology study is a minimally invasive procedure that tests the electrical conduction system of the heart to assess the electrical activity and conduction pathways of the heart.</p>
	<p>Trans Oesophageal Echocardiogram (TOE)</p>	<p>A trans oesophageal test is a type of echocardiogram test in which the ultrasound transducer, positioned on an endoscope, is guided down the patient's throat into the oesophagus.</p>
<p>Diagnostic Endoscopy</p>	<p>Gastroscopy</p> <hr/> <p>Flexible Sigmoidoscopy</p> <hr/> <p>Colonoscopy</p> <hr/> <p>Cystoscopy</p>	<p>Endoscopy is the direct visual examination of any part of the interior of the body by means of an optical viewing instrument.</p>

	Bronchoscopy	Waiting time from waiting list date until census date.
Dietetics	Adults	Waiting time from waiting list date until the census date.
	Paediatrics	Patients are removed from the waiting list on the Date of Commencement of Episode Care (Diagnostic and Therapy Services.)
Imaging	Fluoroscopy	Waiting time from waiting list date until census date. Fluoroscopy is an imaging technique commonly used by physicians to obtain real-time images of the internal structures of a patient through the use of a fluoroscope.
Neurophysiology	Electromyography	Waiting time from waiting list date until census date. Electromyography (EMG) is a diagnostic procedure that measures the electrical activity of the muscle to gather information about the muscular system.
	Nerve conduction studies	Nerve Conduction Studies (NCS) measure the function of the peripheral nervous system, i.e. nerves and muscles.
Occupational Therapy	Adults	Waiting time from waiting list date until the census date.
	Paediatrics	
	Learning Disabilities	Patients are removed from the waiting list on the Date of Commencement of Episode Care (Diagnostic and Therapy Services.)
	Mental Health	
Physiological measurement	Urodynamic tests	Waiting time from waiting list date until census date. Urodynamics is an umbrella term describing physiological measurements of the bladder and urethra's ability to fulfil these functions, including pressures & flows.
	Vascular technology	Used to detect abnormalities within the vascular system, assisting a physician's diagnosis and decisions to treat surgically or otherwise.
Physiotherapy	Adults	Waiting time from waiting list date until the census date. Patients are removed from the waiting list on the Date of Commencement of Episode Care (Diagnostic and Therapy Services.)
	Paediatrics	
Podiatry	Urgent	Waiting time from waiting list date until the census date. Patients are removed from the waiting list on the Date of Commencement of Episode Care (Diagnostic and Therapy Services.)
	Routine	

Radiology – GP Referral	Barium Enema	Waiting time from waiting list date until census date. Patients are removed from the waiting list on the date the diagnostic test for which they are waiting is carried out
	Computed Tomography	
	Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)	
	Non-Obstetric Ultrasound	
	Nuclear Medicine	
Radiology – Consultant Referral	Barium Enema	Waiting time from waiting list date until census date. Patients are removed from the waiting list on the date the diagnostic test for which they are waiting is carried out
	Computed Tomography	
	Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)	
	Non-Obstetric Ultrasound	
	Nuclear Medicine	
Speech & Language	Adults	Waiting time from waiting list date until the census date. Patients are removed from the waiting list on the Date of Commencement of Episode Care (Diagnostic and Therapy Services.)
	Paediatrics	
	Learning Disabilities	
	Mental Health	

Data Items

a) New Data Items

N/A

b) Changes to existing Data Items

Service Heading

This data item is / was included in the following data sets / collections between the dates shown:

Data Set / Collection	Valid From	Valid To
APC ds99	1 st April 1999	
DT Waiting Times		

Name of specified diagnostic and therapy services included in the monthly collection of Waiting Times data.

Specified services and therapies are: -

Arts Therapies

Audiology

Cardiology

Diagnostic Endoscopy

Dietetics

Imaging

Neurophysiology

Occupational Therapy

Physiological measurement

Physiotherapy

Podiatry

Radiology – GP Referral

Radiology – Consultant Referral

Speech & Language

These are sub-divided into Service Sub Headings

Service	Service Subheading	Additional Information	Valid From	Valid To
Arts Therapies	Learning Disabilities	Waiting time from waiting list date until the census date.	1 st April 2004	
	Mental Health	Patients are removed from the waiting list on the Date of Commencement of Episode Care (Diagnostic and Therapy Services.)	1 st April 2004	
Audiology (Adult Hearing Aids)	Consultant	A hearing aid is described as an externally worn electrical listening device.	1 st April 2004	1 st April 2025
	GP	Waiting times from waiting list date until the census date. Patients are removed from the waiting list on the date their hearing aid is fitted.	1 st April 2004	1 st April 2025
Cardiology	Stress Test / Exercise Tolerance Test	A stress test is a non-invasive procedure to record the heart's electrical activity during exercise. Waiting times from waiting list date until the census date. Patients are removed from the waiting list on the date the diagnostic test for which they have been referred is carried out.	1 st April 2004	

	Echo Cardiogram	<p>An echo cardiogram is a non-invasive ultrasound procedure used to diagnose cardiovascular disease.</p> <p>Waiting times from waiting list date until the census date.</p> <p>Patients are removed from the waiting list on the date the diagnostic test for which they have been referred is carried out.</p>	1 st April 2004	
	24 Hour Blood Pressure Monitoring	<p>A non-invasive method of obtaining blood pressure readings over a 24 hour period.</p> <p>Waiting times from waiting list date until the census date.</p> <p>Patients are removed from the waiting list on the date the diagnostic test for which they have been referred is carried out.</p>	1 st February 2015*	31 st July 2015*
			1 st April 2017**	31 st March 2018**
	Blood Pressure Monitoring	<p>A recording over 24 hours or more of patient's blood pressure readings by the fitting of a monitor.</p> <p>Waiting times from waiting list date until the census date.</p> <p>Patients are removed from the waiting list on the date the diagnostic test for which they have been referred is carried out.</p>	1 st April 2018	
	24 Hour Tape / Holter	<p>A 24 hour tape or holter continuously records the hearts rhythms over a 24 hour period.</p> <p>Waiting times from waiting list date until the census date.</p> <p>Patients are removed from the waiting list on the date the diagnostic test for which they have been referred is carried out.</p>	1 st February 2015*	31 st July 2015*
			1 st April 2017**	31 st March 2018**

	Heart Rhythm Recording	<p>Any recording of heart rhythm made over a period of 24 hours or more requiring a patient to be fitted or implanted with a recorder and a period of analysis and reporting to be undertaken.</p> <p>Waiting times from waiting list date until the census date.</p> <p>Patients are removed from the waiting list on the date the diagnostic test for which they have been referred is carried out.</p>	1 st April 2018	
	Cardiac Computed Tomography (Cardiac CT)	<p>Cardiac computed tomography is a non-invasive test that uses an x-ray machine to take clear, detailed pictures of the heart.</p> <p>Waiting times from waiting list date until the census date.</p> <p>Patients are removed from the waiting list on the date the diagnostic test for which they have been referred is carried out.</p>	1 st February 2015*	31 st July 2015*
			1 st April 2017**	31 st March 2018**
		<p>Cardiac computed tomography is an investigation undertaken using a high resolution fast acquisition ECG gated CT scanner to image the heart especially the coronary arteries</p> <p>Waiting times from waiting list date until the census date.</p> <p>Patients are removed from the waiting list on the date the diagnostic test for which they have been referred is carried out.</p>	1 st April 2018	

	Cardiac Magnetic Resonance Imaging (Cardiac MRI)	<p>Heart magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) is an imaging method that uses powerful magnets and radio waves to create pictures of the heart. It does not use radiation (x-rays).</p> <p>Waiting times from waiting list date until the census date.</p> <p>Patients are removed from the waiting list on the date the diagnostic test for which they have been referred is carried out.</p>	1 st February 2015*	31 st July 2015*
			1 st April 2017**	31 st March 2018**
			1 st April 2018	
	Doppler Stress Echocardiogram (DSE)	<p>A stress echo test uses ultrasound technology to assess the flow of blood through vessels in the heart.</p> <p>Waiting times from waiting list date until the census date.</p> <p>Patients are removed from the waiting list on the date the diagnostic test for which they have been referred is carried out.</p>	1 st February 2015	31 st July 2015
			1 st April 2017**	31 st March 2018**
	Dobutamine Stress Echocardiogram (DSE)	<p>A dobutamine stress echo is an ultrasound imaging technique used to assess the heart when myocardial oxygen demand is increased using either physical or pharmacological stress.</p>	1 st April 2018	

		<p>Waiting times from waiting list date until the census date.</p> <p>Patients are removed from the waiting list on the date the diagnostic test for which they have been referred is carried out.</p>		
	Myocardial Perfusion Scanning	<p>A <i>myocardial perfusion scan</i> uses a small amount of a radioactive chemical to see how well blood flows to the muscles of the heart (the <i>myocardium</i>)</p> <p>Waiting times from waiting list date until the census date.</p> <p>Patients are removed from the waiting list on the date the diagnostic test for which they have been referred is carried out.</p>	1 st February 2015*	31 st July 2015*
			1 st April 2017**	31 st March 2018**
		<p>A myocardial perfusion scan uses a gamma camera to image the heart using a small amount of radioactive isotope to assess how well blood flows to the muscle of the heart (the <i>myocardium</i>)</p> <p>Waiting times from waiting list date until the census date.</p> <p>Patients are removed from the waiting list on the date the diagnostic test for which they have been referred is carried out.</p>	1 st April 2018	
	Diagnostic Angiography	<p>Angiography is a medical imaging technique used to visualize the inside, or lumen, of blood vessels and organs of the body, with particular interest in the arteries, veins, and the heart chambers.</p>	1 st February 2015*	31 st July 2015*

		<p>Waiting times from waiting list date until the census date.</p> <p>Patients are removed from the waiting list on the date the diagnostic test for which they have been referred is carried out.</p>	1 st April 2017**	31 st March 2018**
		<p>Angiography is an x-ray guided medical imaging technique used to visualize the inside, or lumen, of blood vessels and organs of the body, with particular interest in the arteries, veins, and the heart chambers.</p> <p>Waiting times from waiting list date until the census date.</p> <p>Patients are removed from the waiting list on the date the diagnostic test for which they have been referred is carried out.</p>	1 st April 2018	
	Diagnostic Electrophysiology (EP Study)	<p>An electrophysiology study is a minimally invasive procedure that tests the electrical conduction system of the heart to assess the electrical activity and conduction pathways of the heart.</p> <p>Waiting times from waiting list date until the census date.</p> <p>Patients are removed from the waiting list on the date the diagnostic test for which they have been referred is carried out.</p>	1 st February 2015*	31 st July 2015*
		<p>An electrophysiology study is an x-ray guided procedure that investigates the electrical conduction system of the heart to assess the electrical activity and conduction pathways.</p>	1 st April 2017**	31 st March 2018**
		<p>An electrophysiology study is an x-ray guided procedure that investigates the electrical conduction system of the heart to assess the electrical activity and conduction pathways.</p>	1 st April 2018	

		<p>Waiting times from waiting list date until the census date.</p> <p>Patients are removed from the waiting list on the date the diagnostic test for which they have been referred is carried out.</p>		
	Trans Oesophageal Echocardiogram (TOE)	<p>A <i>trans oesophageal</i> test is a type of echocardiogram test in which the ultrasound transducer, positioned on an endoscope, is guided down the patient's throat into the oesophagus.</p> <p>Waiting times from waiting list date until the census date.</p> <p>Patients are removed from the waiting list on the date the diagnostic test for which they have been referred is carried out.</p>	1 st February 2015*	31 st July 2015*
		<p>Waiting times from waiting list date until the census date.</p> <p>Patients are removed from the waiting list on the date the diagnostic test for which they have been referred is carried out.</p>	1 st April 2017**	31 st March 2018**
		<p>A trans oesophageal echocardiogram is a type of echocardiogram in which the ultrasound transducer, is guided down the patient's throat into the oesophagus and stomach to allow for clearer imaging of certain cardiac and surrounding structures.</p> <p>Waiting times from waiting list date until the census date.</p> <p>Patients are removed from the waiting list on the date the diagnostic test for which they have been referred is carried out.</p>	1 st April 2018	
Diagnostic Endoscopy	Gastroscopy	Endoscopy is the direct visual examination of any part of the interior of the body by means of an optical viewing instrument.	1 st September 2007	
	Flexible Sigmoidoscopy		1 st September 2007	
	Colonoscopy		1 st September 2007	
	Cystoscopy		1 st September 2007	
	Bronchoscopy	Waiting time from waiting list date until census date.	1 st September 2007	

Dietetics	Adults	Waiting time from waiting list date until the census date.	1 st April 2004	
	Paediatrics	Patients are removed from the waiting list on the Date of Commencement of Episode Care (Diagnostic and Therapy Services.)	1 st April 2004	
Imaging	Fluoroscopy	Waiting time from waiting list date until census date. Fluoroscopy is an imaging technique commonly used by physicians to obtain real-time images of the internal structures of a patient through the use of a fluoroscope.	1 st April 2007	
Neurophysiology	Electromyography	Electromyography (EMG) is a diagnostic procedure that measures the electrical activity of the muscle to gather information about the muscular system. Waiting time from waiting list date until census date.	1 st April 2007	
	Nerve conduction studies	Nerve Conduction Studies (NCS) measure the function of the peripheral nervous system, i.e. nerves and muscles. Waiting time from waiting list date until census date.	1 st April 2007	
Occupational Therapy	Adults	Waiting time from waiting list date until the census date.	1 st April 2004	
	Paediatrics		1 st April 2004	
	Learning Disabilities	Patients are removed from the waiting list on the Date of Commencement of Episode Care (Diagnostic and Therapy Services.)	1 st April 2004	
	Mental Health		1 st April 2004	
Physiological measurement	Limited Channel Cardio-respiratory Sleep Study (Polygraphy)		1 st June 2019	31 st May 2020
	Overnight Pulse Oximetry		1 st June 2019	31 st May 2020
	Urodynamic tests	Urodynamics is an umbrella term describing physiological measurements of the bladder and urethra's ability to fulfil these functions, including pressures & flows.	1 st April 2007	

		Waiting time from waiting list date until census date.		
	Vascular technology	Used to detect abnormalities within the vascular system, assisting a physician's diagnosis and decisions to treat surgically or otherwise. Waiting time from waiting list date until census date.	1 st April 2007	
Physiotherapy	Adults	Waiting time from waiting list date until the census date.	1 st April 2004	
	Paediatrics	Patients are removed from the waiting list on the Date of Commencement of Episode Care (Diagnostic and Therapy Services.)	1 st April 2004	
Podiatry	Urgent	Waiting time from waiting list date until the census date.	1 st April 2004	
	Routine	Patients are removed from the waiting list on the Date of Commencement of Episode Care (Diagnostic and Therapy Services.)	1 st April 2004	
Radiology – GP Referral	Barium Enema	Waiting time from waiting list date until census date. Patients are removed from the waiting list on the date the diagnostic test for which they are waiting is carried out	1 st April 2004	
	Computed Tomography		1 st April 2004	21 st March 2018
	Non Cardiac Computed Tomography		1 st April 2018	
	Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)		1 st April 2004	31 st March 2018
	Non Cardiac Resonance Imaging (MRI)		1 st April 2018	
	Non-Obstetric Ultrasound		1 st April 2004	
	Nuclear Medicine		1 st April 2004	31 st March 2018
	Non Cardiac Nuclear Medicine		1 st April 2018	
Radiology – Consultant Referral	Barium Enema	Waiting time from waiting list date until census date. Patients are removed from the waiting list on the date the diagnostic test for which they are waiting is carried out	1 st April 2004	
	Computed Tomography		1 st April 2004	31 st March 2018
	Non Cardiac Computed Tomography		1 st April 2018	
	Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)		1 st April 2004	31 st March 2018

	Non Cardiac Magnetic Resonance Imaging		1 st April 2018	
	Non-Obstetric Ultrasound		1 st April 2004	
	Nuclear Medicine		1 st April 2004	31 st March 2018
	Non Cardiac Nuclear Medicine		1 st April 2018	
Speech & Language	Adults	Waiting time from waiting list date until the census date.	1 st September 2004	
	Paediatrics		1 st September 2004	
	Learning Disabilities	Patients are removed from the waiting list on the Date of Commencement of Episode Care (Diagnostic and Therapy Services.)	1 st September 2004	
	Mental Health		1 st September 2004	

*Pilot period for additional cardiology diagnostic tests.

** Further pilot for additional cardiology diagnostic tests.