

**For the Record – Press Statements**

<b>Publication</b>	Express and Star
<b>Date of article</b>	Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup> January 2012
<b>Reporter</b>	Elizabeth Joyce
<b>Headline</b>	Patients waiting more than year for treatment
<b>First paragraph/s of article</b>	More than 3,000 people have had to wait longer than a year for treatment at Stafford and Cannock Chase Hospitals, latest figures show.
<b>Paragraph/s relating to The Dudley Group</b>	Dudley Group of Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust had 61 patients waiting for more than 52 weeks.
<b>Press enquiry</b>	<b>The Department of Health released November figures for incomplete pathways. Provider statistics show The Dudley Group had 61 patients waiting more than 52 weeks for treatment – can we comment?</b>
<b>Trust response</b>	
<p>First and foremost we would like to reassure our patients that every effort is made to carry out their treatment as quickly as possible and this effort does not relax if the treatment time breaches the 18-week target.</p> <p>As at the end of November 2011 96.6 per cent of our admitted patients were receiving their treatment within 18-weeks, against a target of 90 per cent. Of the non-admitted patients, 99.1 per cent received treatment within 18 weeks against a target of 95 per cent.</p> <p>The Department of Health announced in its latest bulletin, 'The Quarter' that we were in the top ten of best performing trusts in the country on referral to treatment in Quarter 2 (July to September 2011).</p> <p>In October this year the Trust carried out an audit of patients identified on our system as waiting more than a year. The audit showed that just one patient had actually</p>	

been waiting for more than a year. Other patients had either chosen to delay their treatment, not attended, or were receiving treatment but on a different 'pathway'. The reasons for a change in pathway may include different stages of treatment for certain conditions (e.g. some surgeries may need healing time before others can take place) or because the diagnosis means that the patient was receiving treatment from a different specialty from the initial referral.

The audit was carried out as part of a programme to develop our data system to recognise where patients have been moved to a different treatment pathway. We expect to have our new systems in place by 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012 when the new incomplete wait measure is introduced by the Department of Health.