

# Statement by the Health Secretary on the latest NHS performance stats

Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Services, Vaughan Gething, said:

“Despite the busiest December on record for our A&E Departments and the busiest ever month for the Welsh Ambulance Service, our NHS has continued to perform under exceptional pressure in delivering emergency and scheduled care. The ambulance target was comfortably achieved in December. Although there was a slight drop in the proportion of patients admitted or discharged within four hours of arrival at A&E, A&E performance for the whole year has improved with 82.5% of patients seen in under four hours up from 81.2% last year.

I want to once again thank our NHS and social care staff for their commitment and hard work in delivering care during this extremely busy period.

“We have worked closely with health boards and partners since last winter to plan for this winter period and invested an additional £60m to help them deliver urgent and emergency care, and ensure planned care activity can continue during this time. During November, the number of patients waiting over 36 weeks stabilised, and while sadly some activity has to be postponed our investment has ensured operations and other procedures have continued through winter. We expect to see reductions in waiting times up to the end of March 2018.

Delayed transfers of care in December were lower than they were the same time last year and for the whole of 2017 the lowest they’ve been since records began. Therapy waiting times have again improved over the month and more people were treated within target times for cancer than in any previous November. Over 90% of urgent cancer patients were seen within the target times, the best performance since February 2014 and the target for non-urgent cancer patients was met.

“We still need to drive up performance in a number of areas but under severe pressure and record levels of demand our NHS has held up and continues to deliver high quality healthcare to patients.”