NHS Direct Wales, quarter ended 31 March 2018

NHS Direct Wales is a 24-hour telephone and internet health advice service staffed by experienced nurses, dental and health information advisors.

Chart 1 shows the number of calls to NHS Direct per 1,000 population (resident in Wales[1]) by the age group and gender of the patients who were the subject of the calls, and were recorded as being resident in Wales.

Chart 1: Number of calls per 1,000 resident population by age and gender, quarter ended 31 March 2018
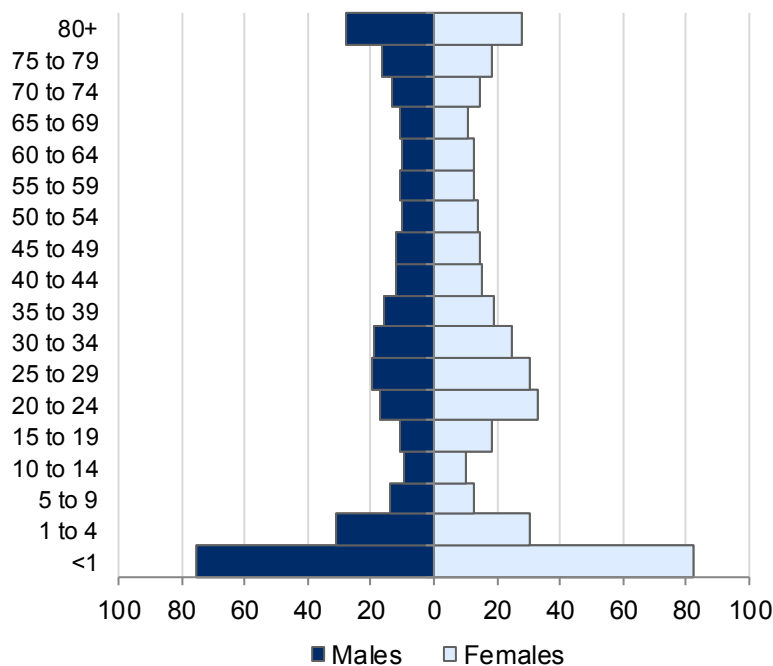
This information relates only to those calls which were triaged and recorded on the assessment system.

Age and/or gender are not recorded for a small proportion of the calls.

[1] 2016 mid year estimates of population (Office for National Statistics).

- The largest numbers of calls per 1,000 people in Wales related to patients under the age of 1. High rates were also seen for children aged 1 to 4, people in their twenties and early thirties and elderly people aged 80 or over.

- Rates for female patients were generally higher than for male patients.

Key results during the quarter ended 31 March 2018:

- The operation of 111 Wales in pilot areas will have affected the number of calls to NHS Direct Wales – see notes.

- 83,292 calls were made to NHS Direct Wales, of which 73,918 (89%) were to the main 0845 number; the other 9,374 (11%) were to information lines or transferred from A&E departments or the ambulance service *(Table 1).*

- 624 calls were answered *(Table 2)* (out of 625 made *(Table 1)*) from callers expressing a preference for the call to be taken in Welsh.

About this release

This Statistical Release presents the latest quarterly data on the total number of calls made to, and answered by, NHS Direct Wales, the number of calls where callers chose the Welsh speaking option, and the number of calls to information help lines, alongside data for previous quarters. Charts presenting data on daily calls, web visits, use of on-line symptom checkers and patient characteristics are also shown.

Further information about NHS Direct Wales can be found in the 'Key Quality Information' section of this release.

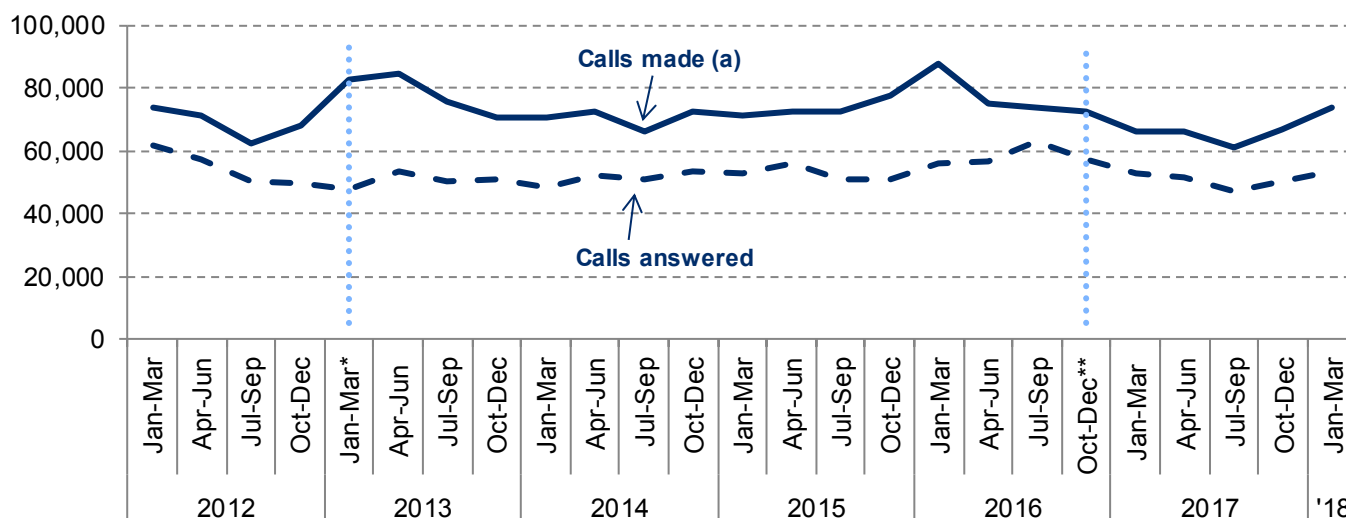Data from the start of the service is available in tables on the StatsWales website.

In this release

Contents

Chart 2: Calls to the NHS Direct Wales 0845 number, quarter ended 31 March 2012 to date

(a) the number of calls where the caller has listened to all of the welcome messaging and stayed on the line to be answered.
* Changes to the telephony system during the Jan-Mar 2013 quarter mean calls are not strictly comparable with previous data.
*** The introduction of a pilot of 111 Wales during October 2016 will have affected the number of calls to NHS Direct from this time onwards.*

NOTES:
(a) the number of calls where the caller has listened to all of the welcome messaging and stayed on the line to be answered.
- this data does not include around 10,000 calls which are transferred each quarter from the Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust for clinical triage.
- the data underlying this chart, and out-of-hours and other calls, is shown in Table 1 (calls made) and Table 2 (calls answered), and by month on StatsWales.

- 73,918 calls were made to the NHS Direct Wales 0845 number in the January to March quarter of 2018; of those, 53,433 were answered.

Chart 3: Daily calls made to the NHS Direct 0845 service, quarter ended 31 March 2018
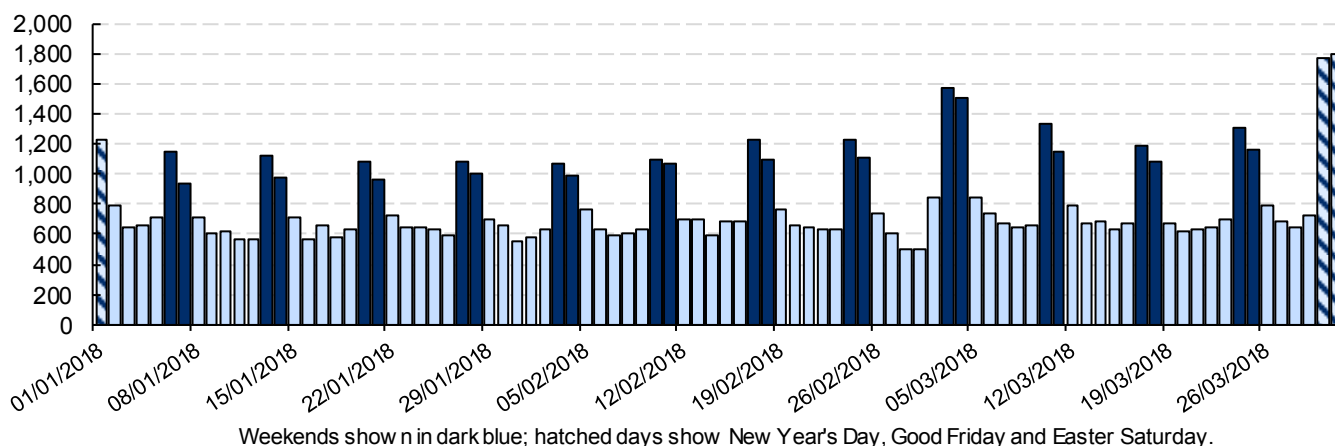
Weekends shown in dark blue; hatched days show New Year's Day, Good Friday and Easter Saturday.

NOTES:
Calls made are those where the caller has listened to all of the welcome messaging and stayed on the line to be answered.
Changes to the telephony system from 30 January 2013 mean calls are not strictly comparable with previous data (see notes).

- During the quarter ended 31 March 2018, almost 1,200 calls were made each day over the weekends, compared with a daily average of nearly 700 on weekdays.

- Over the quarter, Saturdays were the busiest day, with an average of 1,251 calls, Thursdays the quietest with 622.

- The busiest days during the quarter were Friday 30 March (Good Friday) and Saturday 31 March (Easter Saturday) with almost 1,800 calls on both days (note however that as on any busy day, some of these calls may have been repeat calls).

Chart 4 shows the number of quarterly on-line enquiries submitted to the NHS Direct Wales website. These enquiries are confidential and a reply is sent back within a maximum of three working days (see notes). Note that people may use the symptom checkers and self assessments developed by NHS Direct rather than submit an on-line enquiry.

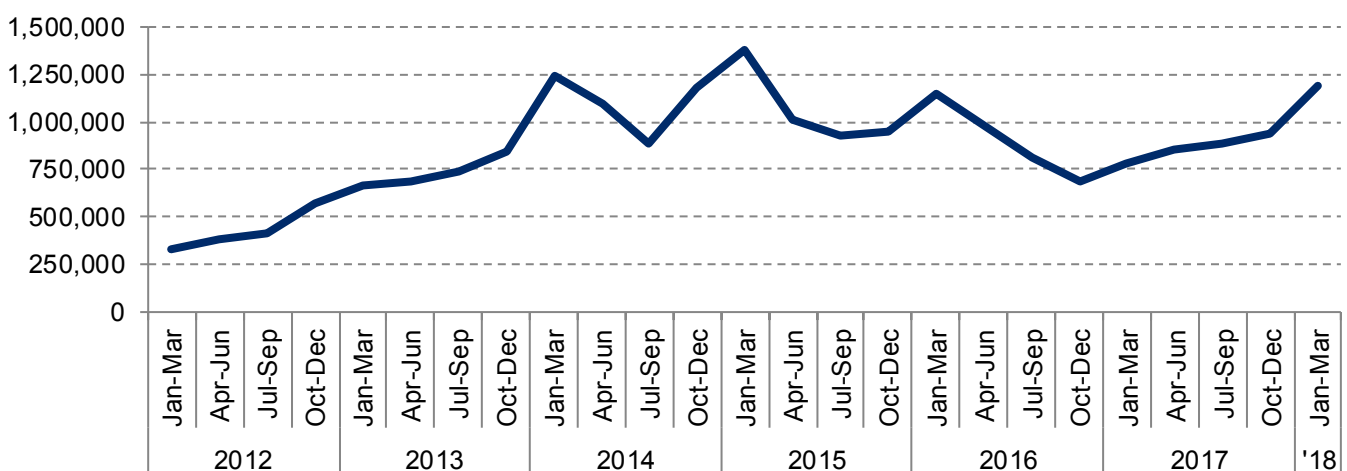## Chart 4: On-line enquiries, quarter ended 31 March 2012 to date

* Updated in the Oct-Dec 2015 release
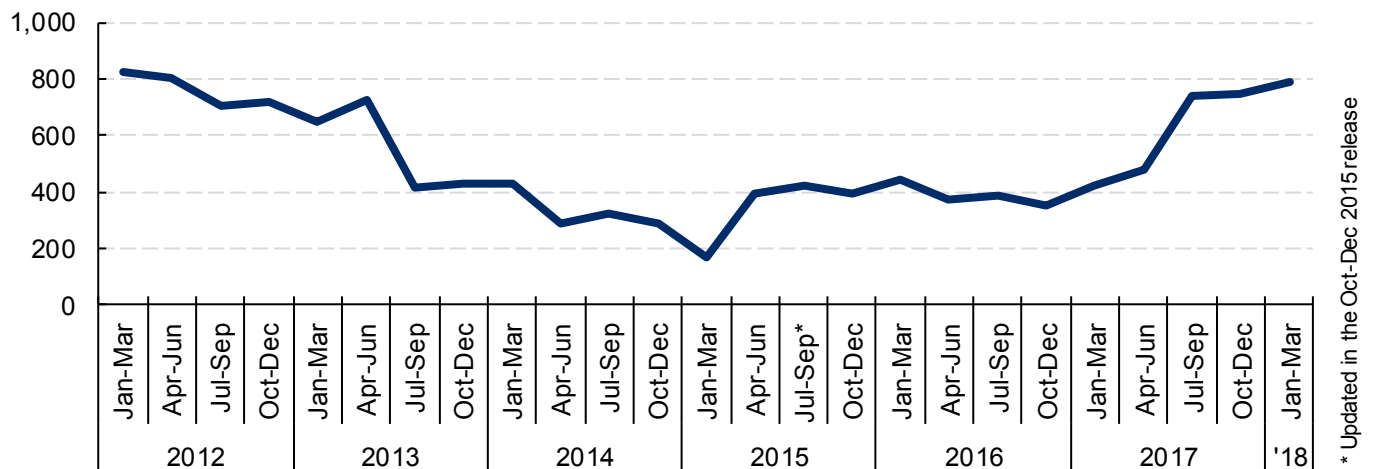
NOTE: The data underlying this chart is shown in Table 3 and on StatsWales.

- During the quarter ended 31 March 2018, 793 on-line enquiries were submitted to NHS Direct Wales via the website, up 5.9% (from 749) over the quarter ended 31 December 2017, but 4.0% down on the number (826) in the quarter ended 31 March 2012.
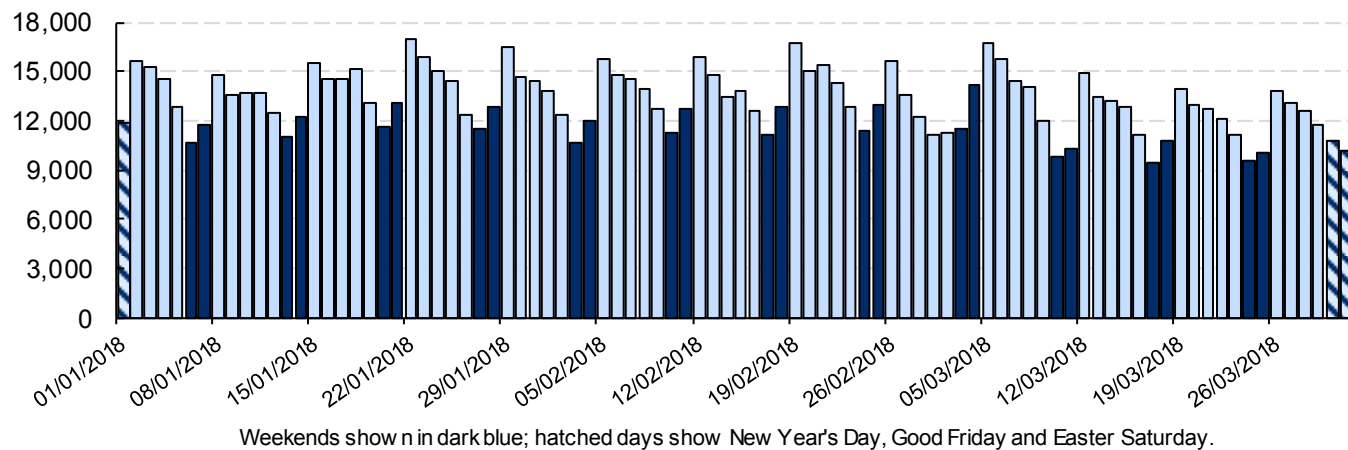
Chart 5: Web hits, quarter ended 31 March 2012 to date

NOTE: The data underlying this chart is shown in Table 3 and on StatsWales.

- There were 1,187,884 visits to the NHS Direct Wales website during the quarter ended 31 March 2018, 25.9% up on the quarter ended 31 December 2017, and almost four times as many as in the quarter ended 31 March 2012.

Chart 6: Daily web visits, quarter ended 31 March 2018

Weekends shown in dark blue; hatched days show New Year's Day, Good Friday and Easter Saturday.

- Unlike calls made to NHS Direct Wales which are higher at weekends, web visits are higher on weekdays.

- An average of almost 14,000 web visits were made each weekday, compared with around 11,500 on Saturdays and Sundays.

- Mondays were the busiest day, with an average of more than 15,300 web visits; Saturdays the least busy with 10,700.

Chart 7 shows the number of completed visits[a] to the online symptoms checkers, an interactive source developed by NHS Direct Wales following requests by users.

The chart shows the 'top 20' symptoms checkers used during the latest quarter.

- 'Cold and flu' took over as the most common symptom checker during the quarter, accounting for more than a fifth (21.7%) of all the symptom checkers used, followed by 'stomach pain (20.8%) and 'generally unwell' (20.3%);

- The 'cold and flu' checker was completed more than 23,300 times during the quarter, up from 13,000 in the previous quarter, an increase of 79.4%.

- Combined, these three accounted for more than 6 out of 10 of the checkers used during the quarter.

Chart 7: Completed visits to the 'top 20' online symptoms checker during the quarter ended 31 March 2018
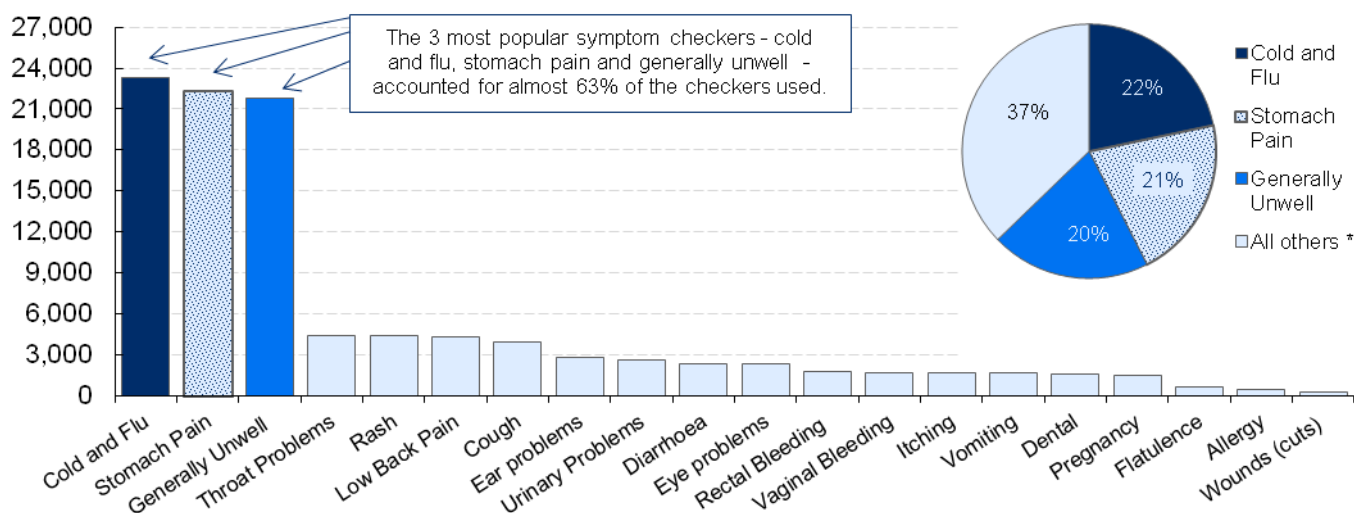
(a) Completed symptom checks made i.e. where a person has gone through to the final step, ie the 'recommended outcome'.

Chart 8: Outcomes for calls to the NHS Direct 0845 number, quarter ended 31 March 2018
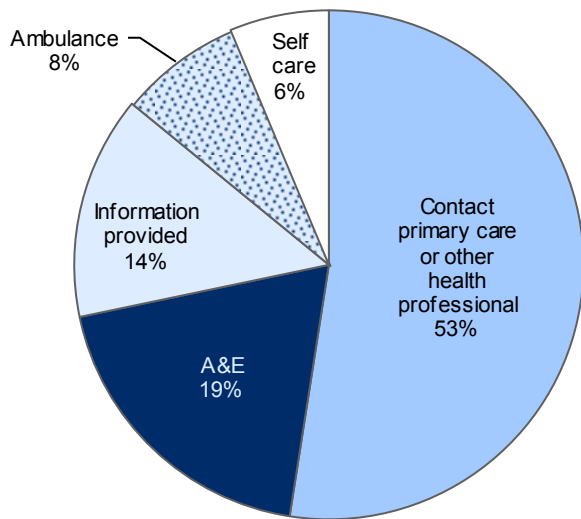
- 53% of the 0845 calls where a final outcome was recorded[a] during the quarter ended 31 March 2018 were directed towards primary care (GP, dentist), other healthcare professionals or to minor injury units.

- 19% were directed towards A&E departments, and an ambulance was called in 8% of calls.

- Self care was advised for 6% of calls and information was provided for a further 14%.

NOTE: (a) Only 0845 calls where a final outcome was recorded for the patient are included; calls where the patient chose not to proceed, for example, are omitted.

Table 1: Total number of calls made to NHS Direct Wales by service, and number of calls where the Welsh language option was chosen

Quarter:	Calls to 0845 service (a)	Calls to GP OOH services (a)(b)(e)	Calls to other services (a)(c)(d)	Total calls made (a)	Calls requested in Welsh (e)(g)
April - June 2011	64,397	8,789	18,437	91,623	1,629
July - September 2011	60,685	2,337	13,191	76,213	1,891
October - December 2011	62,392	1,984	15,411	79,787	718
January - March 2012	73,575	229	3,910	77,714	1,054
April - June 2012	71,151	0	14,244	85,395	1,248
July - September 2012	62,708	0	18,692	81,400	1,154
October - December 2012	68,164	0	19,689	87,853	1,330
January - March 2013 (f)(g)	82,577	0	9,842	92,419	895
April - June 2013	84,486	0	4,197	88,683	513
July - September 2013	76,033	0	3,751	79,784	351
October - December 2013	70,403	0	3,478	73,881	415
January - March 2014	70,556	0	4,011	74,567	429
April - June 2014	72,868	0	4,280	77,148	383
July - September 2014	66,211	0	3,776	69,987	348
October - December 2014	72,607	0	4,815	77,422	444
January - March 2015	71,175	0	5,466	76,641	460
April - June 2015	72,837	0	5,051	77,888	548
July - September 2015	72,338	0	4,216	76,554	431
October - December 2015	77,932	0	3,631	81,563	487
January - March 2016	87,674	0	3,644	91,318	555
April - June 2016	75,091	0	3,414	78,505	536
July - September 2016	73,641	0	3,806	77,447	634
October - December 2016 (h)	72,690	0	4,623	77,313	709
January - March 2017	66,488	0	4,491	70,979	702
April - June 2017	66,488	0	5,650	72,138	721
July - September 2017	61,089	0	7,440	68,529	605
October - December 2017	66,774	0	9,426	76,200	700
January - March 2018	73,918	0	9,374	83,292	625
Annual summary:					
2011-12 (e)	261,049	13,339	50,949	325,337	5,292
2012-13 (f)(g)	284,600	0	62,467	347,067	4,627
2013-14	301,478	0	15,437	316,915	1,708
2014-15	282,861	0	18,337	301,198	1,635
2015-16	310,781	0	16,542	327,323	2,021
2016-17 (h)	287,910	0	16,334	304,244	2,581
2017-18	268,269	0	31,890	300,159	2,651

See also Chart 2; data by month is shown on StatsWales.

NOTES:

(a) The number of calls where the caller has listened to all of the welcome messaging and stayed on the line to be answered.

(b) GP 'Out of Hours' service.

(c) Calls to other services include all recorded messaging services. See the table in the Key Quality Information section of the notes for details of the operation dates for each service.

(d) The Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust (WAST) transfer significant numbers of non immediately life-threatening calls to NHS Direct Wales nurses for triage. Around 10,000 such calls are transferred each quarter; these calls are not included in any of the tables and charts in this release as they are not part of the NHS Direct Wales telephony system.

(e) From 1 April 2011 NHS Direct Wales was no longer responsible for the GP out-of-hours service in Gwynedd & Anglesey; this will have a significant impact on total GP out-of-hours calls as well as those requested in Welsh; NHS Direct Wales was not responsible for any GP out-of-hours services in Wales from 3 July 2011.

(f) Changes to the telephony system during the January to March 2013 quarter mean calls are not strictly comparable with previous data - see notes.

(g) Following the introduction of the new telephony system during the January to March 2013 quarter, it appears that not all calls requested in Welsh are being identified as such.

(h) The introduction of a pilot of 111 Wales during October 2016 will have affected the number of calls to NHS Direct from this time onwards.

Table 2: Total number of answered calls by service, and number of calls where the Welsh language option was chosen

Quarter:	Calls to 0845 service	Calls to GP OOH services (b)(e)	Calls to other services (c)(d)	Total calls (a)	Calls requested in Welsh (e)(g)
April - June 2011	48,528	6,927	14,086	69,541	854
July - September 2011	53,379	370	6,147	59,896	1,118
October - December 2011	53,601	0	11,813	65,414	440
January - March 2012	61,832	0	3,225	65,057	747
April - June 2012	57,553	0	7,437	64,990	838
July - September 2012	50,354	0	10,358	60,712	762
October - December 2012	49,846	0	11,664	61,510	765
January - March 2013 (f)(g)	47,817	0	6,541	54,358	649
April - June 2013	53,710	0	3,183	56,893	505
July - September 2013	50,620	0	2,802	53,422	347
October - December 2013	50,747	0	2,853	53,600	412
January - March 2014	48,686	0	3,335	52,021	425
April - June 2014	52,520	0	3,513	56,033	381
July - September 2014	51,232	0	3,397	54,629	344
October - December 2014	53,393	0	4,209	57,602	442
January - March 2015	52,600	0	4,803	57,403	454
April - June 2015	56,160	0	4,503	60,663	540
July - September 2015	50,865	0	3,611	54,476	426
October - December 2015	50,882	0	3,161	54,043	482
January - March 2016	56,174	0	3,212	59,386	543
April - June 2016	56,966	0	3,083	60,049	528
July - September 2016	63,273	0	3,186	66,459	621
October - December 2016 (h)	57,391	0	4,055	61,446	702
January - March 2017	53,162	0	4,020	57,182	694
April - June 2017	51,417	0	4,399	55,816	719
July - September 2017	47,298	0	5,281	52,579	602
October - December 2017	50,106	0	6,319	56,425	700
January - March 2018	53,433	0	5,961	59,394	624
Annual summary:					
2011-12 (e)	217,340	7,297	35,271	259,908	3,159
2012-13 (f)(g)	205,570	0	36,000	241,570	3,014
2013-14	203,763	0	12,173	215,936	1,689
2014-15	209,745	0	15,922	225,667	1,621
2015-16	214,081	0	14,487	228,568	1,991
2016-17 (h)	230,792	0	14,344	245,136	2,545
2017-18	202,254	0	21,960	224,214	2,645

See also Chart 2; data by month is shown on StatsWales.

NOTES:
(a) The number of calls answered by NHS Direct Wales.
(b) GP 'Out of Hours' service.
(c) Calls to other services include all recorded messaging services. See the table in the Key Quality Information section of the notes for details of the operation dates for each service.
(d) The Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust (WAST) transfer significant numbers of non immediately life-threatening calls to NHS Direct Wales nurses for triage. Around 10,000 such calls are transferred each quarter; these calls are not included in any of the tables and charts in this release as they are not part of the NHS Direct Wales telephony system.
(e) From 1 April 2011 NHS Direct was no longer responsible for the GP out-of-hours service in Gwynedd & Anglesey (around 6,000 calls per quarter); this will have a significant impact on total GP out-of-hours calls as well as those requested in Welsh; NHS Direct Wales was not responsible for any GP out-of-hours services in Wales from 3 July 2011.
(f) Changes to the telephony system during the Jan-Mar 2013 quarter mean calls are not strictly comparable with previous data - see notes.
(g) Following the introduction of the new telephony system during the January to March 2013 quarter, it appears that not all calls requested in Welsh are being identified as such.
(h) The introduction of a pilot of 111 Wales during October 2016 will have affected the number of calls to NHS Direct from this time onwards

Table 3: Web visits and on-line enquiries

Quarter:	Web visits (a)(c)	Online enquiries (b)(d)(e)
Apr-Jun 2011	178,388	927
Jul-Sep 2011	213,117	719
Oct-Dec 2011	248,975	626
Jan-Mar 2012	323,287	826
Apr-Jun 2012	376,482	803
Jul-Sep 2012	409,777	709
Oct-Dec 2012	568,474	717
Jan-Mar 2013	664,847	646
Apr-Jun 2013	685,888	725
Jul-Sep 2013	736,657	419
Oct-Dec 2013	848,322	429
Jan-Mar 2014	1,244,329	430
Apr-Jun 2014	1,096,712	292
Jul-Sep 2014	888,078	321
Oct-Dec 2014	1,177,942	288
Jan-Mar 2015	1,382,401	172
Apr-Jun 2015	1,006,949	398
Jul-Sep 2015 (d)	927,355	426
Oct-Dec 2015	949,389	392
Jan-Mar 2016	1,147,599	447
Apr-Jun 2016	983,537	372
Jul-Sep 2016	808,327	388
Oct-Dec 2016	688,779	350
Jan-Mar 2017	782,336	423
Apr-Jun 2017	849,640	479
Jul-Sep 2017	890,521	743
Oct-Dec 2017	943,303	749
Jan-Mar 2018	1,187,884	793
Annual summary:		
2011-12	963,767	3,098
2012-13	2,019,580	2,875
2013-14 (e)	3,515,196	2,003
2014-15	4,545,133	1,073
2015-16	4,031,292	1,663
2016-17	3,262,979	1,533
2017-18	3,871,348	2,764

See also Chart 4, Chart 5 and StatsWales.

NOTES:
(a) A web visit is a series of actions that begins when a visitor views their first page from the server and ends when the visitor leaves the site or remains idle beyond the idle-time limit (currently 30 minutes) – see notes.
(b) A web-based enquiry service accessed via the NHS Direct Wales website that enables visitors to send their health enquiries via email to the health information team at NHS Direct Wales. A response is sent back answering the queries within a maximum of 3 working days. All on-line enquiries are confidential – see notes.
(c) Visitor numbers exclude all known spiders. A spider is a program that trawls the internet looking for web pages and adding them to a database, in order for search engines to be able to find the page.
(d) Online enquiries data amended in the October – December 2015 release.
(e) The expansion of the online symptom checkers towards the end of 2013 will have affected the use of the online enquiry service.

Table 4: Completed visits to a selection of the most used on-line symptoms checkers, by quarter

	Generally unwell	Cold and flu	Cough	Ear problems	Throat problems	Rash	Stomach pain	Low back pain	Other[1]	TOTAL
Jul-Sep 2014	738	464	803	688	721	0	0	1,238	5,918	10,570
Oct-Dec 2014	3,154	1,488	1,733	1,003	843	0	0	1,070	7,804	17,095
Jan-Mar 2015	2,598	1,599	2,228	1,158	1,028	0	0	1,118	7,766	17,495
Apr-Jun 2015	1,597	649	1,177	904	679	77	0	742	5,424	11,249
Jul-Sep 2015	1,089	317	488	917	583	461	0	676	4,489	9,020
Oct-Dec 2015	1,138	803	785	881	713	510	2,183	752	4,999	12,764
Jan-Mar 2016	1,727	1,876	1,151	945	1,047	938	3,971	1,128	6,765	19,548
Apr-Jun 2016	9,962	2,592	1,252	1,292	1,771	2,722	6,785	2,557	11,546	40,479
Jul-Sep 2016	6,878	1,809	932	1,209	1,208	2,383	6,014	2,378	11,051	33,862
Oct-Dec 2016	6,187	4,311	1,545	1,239	1,231	2,171	6,387	2,376	9,987	35,434
Jan-Mar 2017	9,667	5,231	1,829	1,581	1,761	2,855	8,877	2,989	12,750	47,540
Apr-Jun 2017	13,290	3,864	1,797	1,935	2,568	4,309	13,347	3,975	18,382	63,467
Jul-Sep 2017	16,669	4,647	1,911	2,244	2,553	3,204	17,310	3,621	18,009	70,168
Oct-Dec 2017	17,872	12,974	3,509	2,403	3,365	3,518	19,002	3,702	18,037	84,382
Jan-Mar 2018	21,799	23,281	3,974	2,798	4,477	4,432	22,296	4,344	17,492	104,893
Annual summary:										
2014-15 from July	6,490	3,551	4,764	2,849	2,592	0	0	3,426	21,488	45,160
2015-16	5,551	3,645	3,601	3,647	3,022	1,986	6,154	3,298	21,677	52,581
2016-17	32,694	13,943	5,558	5,321	5,971	10,131	28,063	10,300	45,334	157,315
2017-18	69,630	44,766	11,191	9,380	12,963	15,463	71,955	15,642	71,920	322,910

- Completed symptoms checks made i.e. where a person has gone through to the final step, ie 'recommended outcome'.
- Not all symptoms checkers started in the September 2014 quarter; see table below.
[1] 'Other' includes: contraception, dental, diarrhoea, eye, flatulence, wounds, hayfever, allergy, itching, vomiting, mole, nail problem, nosebleed, pregnancy, rectal bleeding, stings, sunburn, urinary problems, vaginal bleeding, head lice and female sexual health (various start and finish dates).

Key quality information

Source

The data is provided by the Health Informatics Department of the Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust.

Description

NHS Direct Wales answers calls in English, Welsh and over 120 other languages via a language line. In addition to the main telephone helpline (0845 46 47), they handle triage calls transferred from A&E departments and the Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust (WAST), and provide a dental information line.

NHS Direct Wales also provides ad hoc information lines to support public health campaigns. The number of calls will be affected by ad-hoc services provided at points in time. The table below gives details of services, other than the main 0845 health helpline. Some of these have not been operational in the period covered by the release. Calls to other services include all recorded messaging services.

This table provides information on the various ad-hoc public health information lines that have been run by NHS Direct Wales. These lines are set up to support national and local public health campaigns, and remain in use for as long as necessary. Callers to closed lines will receive a message directing them to an appropriate alternative service; for a limited period after the closure of a line there will still be calls recorded as 'made' although these calls will not be answered.

Details of Non-0845 services and operation dates

Service	Operation dates
GP out-of-hours	24 April 2001 to 3 July 2011
A&E (including Minor Injuries Units)	15 November 2001 to date
Dental information line	8 November 2003 to 20 January 2012, re-opened 20 April 2012 until 30 January 2013, and re-opened during the quarter ended 30 September 2016
Other:	
Health Information Wales	May 2001
Category C (Ambulance triage calls)	January 2004 – February 2005 Re-opened 2 September 2009
Health Challenge Wales	31 January 2005 – 30 June 2005
Cryptosporidium Helpline	24 November 2005 – 10 February 2006
HPV Helpline - automated message facility only	11 August 2008 to date
HPV Helpline	15 September 2008 to date
Public Health Wales - childhood height & weight campaign	5 January 2009 – December 2009
Smoking Line	1 April 2009 to date
H1N1 (Swine Flu)	30 April 2009 to date
Cold & Flu Line	26 February 2010 (seasonal). Dedicated line closed 20 January 2012. From December quarter 2012, cold and flu information available as an option from the main 0845 helpline number but still shown here separately for information
Air Alert	30 January 2013 to date
Patient Pathway	30 January 2013 to date
NHSDW Control (test calls)	April - June quarter 2013 only
Gwent out-of-hours (Aneurin Bevan) - caller can choose option to speak to NHS Direct Wales	24 March 2014 onwards

To improve patient experience and ensure that emergency 999 calls receive an appropriate level of assessment and response, WAST has implemented a system to pass a significant number of its non immediately life-threatening calls to NHS Direct Wales nurse advisors for clinical triage. The triage model was established as a pilot in South East operational region on 2nd September 2009, and phased into the

other two operational regions (North and Central & West) in October 2010. These calls are not included in any of the tables and charts in this release as they are no longer part of the NHS Direct Wales telephony system. An indication of the number of these calls is provided in footnotes.

An H1N1 (swine flu) information line was operational from 30 April 2009, the calls to which have influenced figures particularly in the July to December 2009 quarters, as well as year on year comparisons made with quarterly 2009 data.

NHS Direct Wales was not responsible for any GP out-of-hours services in Wales from 3 July 2011.

111 Wales

111 Wales is a new, free way to contact the NHS from landlines and mobiles. The service is an amalgamation of NHS Direct Wales and the GP out-of-hours service and is currently being piloted in the Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board (ABMU) area, and Carmarthenshire. The 111 service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and can be used both for health information and advice and to access urgent care.

The 111 Wales service went live in part of the ABMU Health Board area on 4 October 2016 and was extended to cover the whole of the ABMU area by 28 October 2016. The pilot was further extended on 2 May 2017 to include the Carmarthenshire area of Hywel Dda LHB. Around 50,000 calls were made to the 111 service during the April to June and July to September quarters of 2017, and more than 60,000 during October to December 2017 and January to March 2018. These included calls for information and advice under the NHS Direct remit as well as those requiring GP OOHs. As such, the comparison with the previous NHS Direct call volume is not comparable within the ABMU or Hywel Dda areas, or with the Wales totals.

On 5 April 2018, the Cabinet Secretary for Health & Social Services announced that the 111 service will be rolled out to the rest of Wales over the next 2-3 years.

Definitions

To provide an accurate picture of calls activity at NHS Direct Wales, the data used represents the number of calls 'made' to NHS Direct Wales and the number of 'answered' calls. Prior to the October to December 2011 quarter, 'made' calls were identified as 'queued' or 'offered' calls. The definition has not changed.

Calls 'made' are those where the caller has listened to all of the welcome messaging and stayed on the line to be answered. '**Answered**' calls are those in which the caller speaks to an NHS Direct operative or receives information from an automated service. The difference between the number of 'calls made' and the number of calls 'answered' is abandoned calls.

NHS Direct Wales also provides information to the public via its website. The main features of the website include a bilingual health encyclopaedia, an on-line enquiry service and the facility to search for other NHS services, such as dentists.

Web visits are a series of actions that begin when a visitor views their first page from the server, and ends when the visitor leaves the site or remains idle beyond the idle-time limit (currently 30 minutes). Visitor

numbers exclude all known spiders. A spider is a program that trawls the internet looking for web pages, and adding them to a database in order for search engines to be able to find the page.

A **web-based enquiry service** accessed via the NHS Direct Wales website enables visitors to send their health enquiries via email to the health information team at NHS Direct Wales. A response is sent back within a maximum of 3 working days. All on-line enquiries are confidential.

A 'Cold and Flu' symptoms checker was first introduced on the NHS Direct Wales website in September 2010. A symptoms checker 'family' was introduced at the end of November 2013 following which the Cold & Flu symptoms checker was refined & re-launched on 9 December 2013. Visits to the web pages are defined as 'completed symptoms checks made' i.e. where a person has gone through to the final step, ie the 'recommended outcome'.

Age and gender of patients: the analysis is based on calls which have been answered and assessed and where the patient is recorded as resident in Wales. These are a similar but not identical number as that derived from the telephony software which is the source of the 'calls answered' data. A small proportion of the records do not have age and/or sex recorded. It is not known if some of these calls related to patients resident in Wales. The data is presented as rates per 1,000 Welsh resident population using Office for National Statistics (ONS) mid year estimates of population.

Outcomes of calls: The analysis is of 0845 calls where a final outcome was recorded for the patient. Calls where the patient chose not to proceed, for example, are omitted.

Users and uses

The aim of these statistics is to present data which is available from a routine administrative source in an accessible format providing a summary of NHS Direct Wales call statistics over time. Some of the key potential users are:

- Ministers and the Members Research Service in the National Assembly for Wales;
- Other areas of the Welsh Government;
- Other government departments;
- National Health Service and Public Health Wales;
- Students, academics and universities;
- Royal College of Nursing and other professional organisations;
- Individual citizens and private companies.

The statistics are used in a variety of ways. Some examples of the uses include:

- Advice to Ministers;
- To inform debate in the National Assembly for Wales and beyond;
- To monitor and evaluate performance and activity in the NHS.

Related statistics

Ambulance quality indicators

More detailed, contextual information about the Welsh Ambulance Service will be published quarterly by the Emergency Ambulance Services Committee (EASC) from Wednesday 27 January 2016. EASC has developed a Quality and Delivery Framework for Emergency Ambulance Services and a five-step ambulance patient care pathway. A number of the Ambulance Quality Indicators (AQIs) which have been developed relate to NHS Direct Wales, specifically to web hits and the reasons why people get in touch with the service.

You may be interested in some of our other statistical releases relating to unscheduled care:

Ambulance services in Wales – an annual release is available here, and data is included in the monthly summary release on NHS activity and performance.

Unscheduled care services in Wales, 2011/12

Flu statistics are published on the Public Health Wales website.

Welsh Health Survey

Well-being of Future Generations Act

The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act puts in place seven well-being goals for Wales. These are for a more equal, prosperous, resilient, healthier and globally responsible Wales, with cohesive communities and a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. Under section (10)(1) of the Act, the Welsh Ministers must (a) publish indicators ("national indicators") that must be applied for the purpose of measuring progress towards the achievement of the Well-being goals, and (b) lay a copy of the national indicators before the National Assembly. The 46 national indicators were laid in March 2016.

Information on the indicators, along with narratives for each of the well-being goals and associated technical information is available in the Well-being of Wales report.

Further information on the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

The statistics included in this release could also provide supporting narrative to the national indicators and be used by public services boards in relation to their local well-being assessments and local well-being plans.

Further details

The document is available at: http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/nhs-direct-wales/?lang=en

Next update

25 July 2018

We want your feedback

We welcome any feedback on any aspect of these statistics which can be provided by email to stats.healthinfo@gov.wales

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