Question: Number of patients who waited more than 4-hours, 8-hours, and 12-hours in Type 1 Emergency Departments across Northern Ireland who were admitted into hospital and the same for those who were not admitted, for every month from July 2026 to the most recent month available.

Response:

Information on the number of new and unplanned review attendances at Type 1 Emergency Departments (EDs) across Northern Ireland who waited more than 4 hours, more than 8 hours, and more than 12 hours, from July to September 2026, broken down by whether the patient had a destination on discharge of admit or not, is provided in Table 1 overleaf [1,2,3,4].

Please note that information on destination on discharge from ED are not accredited official statistics but are provided to give a more comprehensive overview of activity at EDs across Northern Ireland. The classification of admit to hospital or not admit to hospital following an ED attendance is based on the discharge destination field that is recorded on the ED patient record system, this destination is then mapped by DoH to one of the agreed ED destinations on discharge regional codes, which includes a destination of 'admit'. Mapping codes from the new encompass system are under review.

The figures provided in Table 1 are sourced from the ED patient record systems to provide overall waiting times, and therefore, these will not agree with official figures on the number of emergency admissions to hospital which are recorded on the inpatient record systems.

For information on accredited official statistics regarding inpatient activity, including non-elective activity, please see the most recent "Northern Ireland Inpatient Activity Statistics 2025/26" publication which can be viewed at the following link:

https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/hospital-statistics-inpatient-and-day-case-activity-202526

It is also important to note that figures in table 1 refer to the number of attendances and do not equate to the number of patients, as a patient may attend emergency care departments more than once in a month.

A new attendance refers to the first unplanned attendance by a patient for a new clinical condition at an ED / Minor Injuries Unit (MIU).

An unplanned review attendance relates to any patient who returns to an ED / MIU without written instruction, for the same or related clinical condition within 30 days of the first (initial) attendance.

The length of time a patient waits refers to the time between entering the ED / MIU and being logged in at reception, until leaving the ED / MIU via discharge or admission to hospital.

Figures in Table 1 which were sourced from the encompass system are considered to be 'official statistics in development'.

Table 1: Number of attendances (New & Unplanned Reviews) who waited more than 4 hours, more than 8 hours and more than 12 hours in Type 1 EDs in Northern Ireland, broken down by destination on discharge of not admitted/admitted (July – September 2026)[1,2,3,4]

		All Waits Over 4 Hours		All Waits Over 8 Hours		All Waits Over 12 Hours		Overall NI Attendance (including waits under 4 Hours)
Year	Month	Not Admitted	Admitted	Not Admitted	Admitted	Not Admitted	Admitted	
2026	July	27,045	10,302	12,055	8,293	5,572	6,326	55,408
	August	27,907	10,286	13,481	8,481	6,473	6,449	55,290
	September	28,499	10,366	13,398	8,493	6,275	6,540	56,049

Source: encompass

[1] Consideration should be given to changes to ED service provision and designation when making comparisons over time, including changes during the COVID 19 pandemic and the provision of urgent and emergency care services. Further details of these changes can be found in the 'Northern Ireland Hospital Statistics: Emergency Care 2025/26' publication, at the following link: https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/hospital-statistics-emergency-care-activity-202526, and in the emergency care waiting times additional guidance document which can be accessed at the following link: https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/emergency-care-waiting-times-additional-guidance

[2] Figures sourced from the encompass system are considered to be 'official statistics in development'.

[3] Classification of admit to hospital following an ED attendance is based on the discharge destination that is recorded on the patient record system, this destination is then mapped to one of the agreed destination on discharge regional codes which includes a destination of 'admit'. These are not accredited official statistics but are provided to give a more comprehensive view of activity at EDs across Northern Ireland.

[4] Those waiting over 4, 8, and 12 hours set out above are not mutually exclusive. E.g. a person waiting over 12 hours is included in the numbers waiting over 8 hours and those waiting over 4 hours.

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