

Emergency Department (ED) Wait to See a Physician

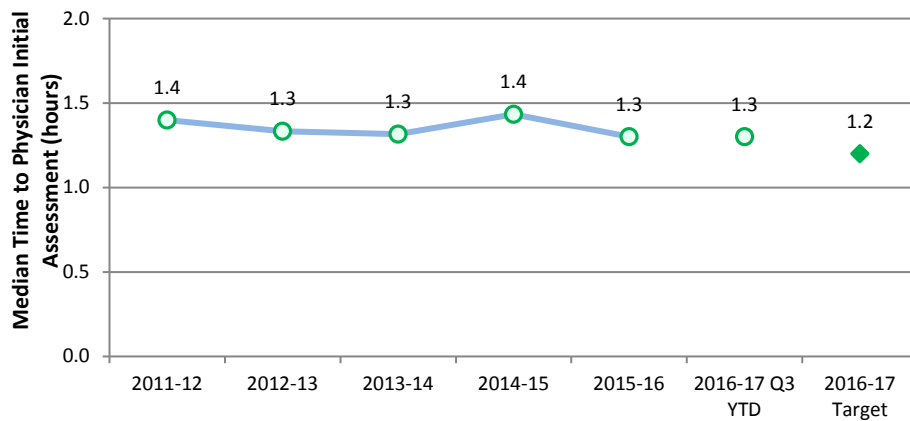
Measure Definition

The average patient's length of time (hours) that they wait to be seen by a physician at the busiest emergency departments. This is calculated as the median wait which means that 50 per cent of patients wait to be seen by a physician in the emergency department in this length of time or less. This measure is the time between when a patient is assessed by a nurse in the emergency department and when they are first seen by a physician.

Understanding this Measure

Patients coming to the emergency department need to be seen by a physician in a timely manner for diagnosis or treatment. It is important to keep this number low to ensure people do not leave without being seen.

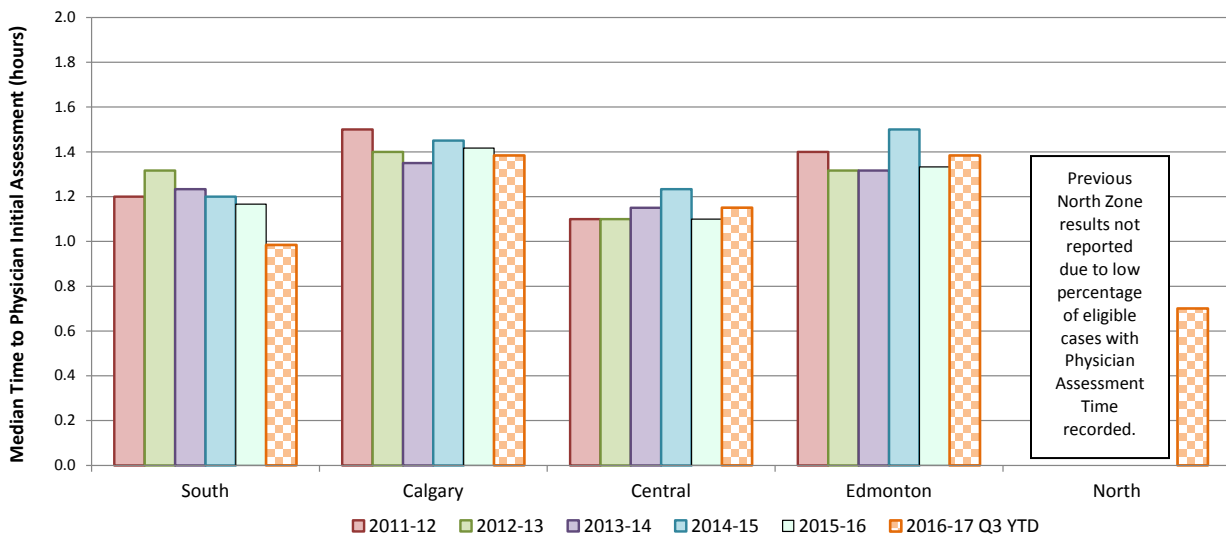
ED Time to Physician Initial Assessment - Annual



How Do We Compare?

Alberta ranked 4th nationally out of 5 provinces in 2015-16.

ED Time to Physician Initial Assessment - by Zone



ED Wait to See a Physician

ACTIONS

AHS continues to develop initiatives to assist in ensuring patients are seen and treated in a reasonable time launching Dementia Advice through Health Link and HEAL (Health Education and Learning) program.

South Zone is improving efficiencies in utilization of the ambulatory stream in the ED, strategic utilization of the internal waiting and treatment spaces, as well as increasing ED physician coverage during peak periods.

Calgary Zone is creating utilization efficiencies for physician assessments by optimizing clinical workspaces in high volume areas (such as EMS park areas), as well as implementing "Choosing Wisely" elements to reduce non-value added processes. Strategies will be developed to reduce Emergency Inpatient (EIP) volumes to increase available assessment spaces in all EDs.

Central Zone has harmonized physician schedules with ED demand and capacity.

Edmonton Zone is working on strategies to increase physician hours and improve workflow, reinforce triage standard protocols to improve access to care spaces for the sickest patients and those transferred from zone ED's, and optimize the team lead nurse role in acute care pods to focus on discharge planning and support front line nurses.

North Zone is supporting the advancement of enhanced primary care teams to reduce the presentation of Canadian Triage and Acuity Scale (CTAS) 4/5 visits to the ED. CTAS levels are designed such that level 1 represents the sickest patients and level 5 represents the least ill group of patients.

SUMMARY

Increases in occupancy, average length of stay, demand in emergency and percentage of patients requiring alternate levels of care have all contributed to wait times for patients who are ultimately discharged from emergency departments. Combined, these factors reduce the ability to transfer patients who need to be admitted into the hospital from the emergency departments to inpatient units, and reduce the spaces available to treat patients quickly.

South and North Zones achieved target for Q3 YTD. Provincially and Calgary Zone showed improvement.

Central Zone experienced capacity challenges for the winter season. In early December, additional spaces for emergency CT scans were created to help with patient flow.

In the Edmonton Zone, University of Alberta Hospital and Stollery Children Hospital have seen an increase in site occupancy and activity in ED and in-patient units. As a result, the sites are experiencing patients waiting longer in the ED for beds. Sites are implementing more proactive surge protocols, isolation co-horting and quality initiatives related to service processes and patient experience.

DID YOU KNOW

AHS monitors transfer processes and has identified opportunities for improvement. This includes increasing communication and collaboration as patients move through the hospital.

Dementia Advice through Health Link was launched in North, Central and South Zones in September 2015. This service provides 24/7 telephone nurse advice for individuals living with dementia and their caregivers.

The content for **HEAL** comes directly from the Pediatric Emergency Medicine experts at the Alberta Children's Hospital and Stollery Children's Hospital. While children with illnesses such as cough, fever, ear pain, vomiting and diarrhea can feel very uncomfortable, they are most often safely and best cared for in their own home; the majority of these illnesses do not require a visit to the ED.

Examples of other initiatives to ensure patients are seen and treated in a reasonable time include launching "Know Your Options", Dementia Advice through Health Link and offering estimated real time ED wait times on the AHS website.

ED Wait to See a Physician

The average patient's length of time (hours) that they wait to be seen by a physician at the busiest emergency departments.

ED Time to Physician Initial Assessment - Busiest Sites	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	Q3 YTD		Trend	2016-17 Target
				2015-16 Last Year	2016-17 Current		
Trend: ★ Achieved Target, ✓ better or ⇔ stable than prior period*, ✗ Area requires additional focus							
Provincial	1.3	1.4	1.3	1.3	1.3	✓	1.2
South Zone Total	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.0	★	1.1
Chinook Regional Hospital	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.1	★	1.1
Medicine Hat Regional Hospital	1.1	1.2	1.1	1.1	0.8	★	1.1
Calgary Zone Total	1.4	1.5	1.4	1.4	1.4	✓	1.2
Alberta Children's Hospital	1.1	1.2	1.1	1.0	1.1	★	1.1
Foothills Medical Centre	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	✓	1.3
Peter Lougheed Centre	1.8	1.8	1.6	1.5	1.6	✗	1.4
Rockyview General Hospital	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	✓	1.2
South Health Campus	N/A	1.6	1.6	1.5	1.5	✓	1.0
Central Zone Total	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.2	✗	1.1
Red Deer Regional Hospital Centre	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.2	✗	1.1
Edmonton Zone Total	1.3	1.5	1.3	1.3	1.4	✗	1.2
Grey Nuns Community Hospital	1.1	1.2	1.1	1.0	1.1	✗	1.0
Misericordia Community Hospital	1.4	1.4	1.3	1.2	1.6	✗	1.3
Northeast Community Health Centre	1.4	1.4	1.3	1.3	1.3	★	1.3
Royal Alexandra Hospital	1.9	2.2	1.9	1.8	1.9	★	2.0
Stollery Children's Hospital	0.8	1.1	1.0	0.9	1.0	✗	0.9
Sturgeon Community Hospital	1.3	1.5	1.3	1.3	1.4	✗	1.2
University of Alberta Hospital	1.5	2.1	1.7	1.6	1.9	✗	1.4
North Zone Total					0.7	★	1.1
Northern Lights Regional Health Centre	North Zone results prior to Q1 2016-17 are not reported due to low percentage of eligible cases with Physician Assessment Time recorded.				0.6	★	0.9
Queen Elizabeth II Hospital					0.9	★	1.3

N/A: No results available. South Health Campus opened February 2013.

* "Stable" trend indicates when current period performance (Q3 year-to-date) is within 5% from the same time period as last year.

ED Time to Physician Initial Assessment - Eligible Cases (Busiest Sites)	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	Q3 YTD	
				2015-16 Last Year	2016-17 Current
Provincial	894,448	891,643	894,908	665,875	752,097
South Zone	85,567	86,187	86,208	63,951	64,973
Calgary Zone	363,570	367,775	365,513	272,137	274,521
Central Zone	54,730	55,861	55,893	41,879	41,626
Edmonton Zone	390,581	381,820	387,294	287,908	293,946
North Zone	North Zone results not reported due to low percentage of eligible cases with Physician Assessment Time recorded and not comparable historically.				77,031