

31 October 2025

## Delayed Discharge Statistics

Freedom of Information request regarding the number of patients who have been declared medically fit for discharge but remain in hospital in Northern Ireland.

1. How many patients were declared medically fit for discharge but remain in hospital due to external factors (e.g. lack of care packages) from 2020-2024

See below, discharges with a complex reason for delay due to external factors recorded between 1st January 2020 and 31st December 2024<sup>2</sup>

	Years				
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
<b>Total Complex Delayed Discharges</b>	5,317	6,205	5,602	5,294	4,328

2. How many patients were declared medically fit for discharge but remain in hospital due to external factors on a monthly basis (e.g. lack of care packages) in 2025?

Below find discharges with a complex reason for delay due to external factors recorded in each month in 2025<sup>2</sup>

	2025								
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Total
<b>Total Complex Delays</b>	428	392	447	420	427	430	480	430	3,454

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**3. Please break down by reason where possible (waiting for home care package, housing, adaptations, assessment delays).**

See below, discharges with any complex reason for delay<sup>3</sup> recorded from 2020 to 2024<sup>2</sup> by reason for delay.

Reason for Delay	Year				
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Waiting The Test Result	<5	15	5	5	0
1 To 1 Care (Dementia)	0	0	0	0	9
Additional Criteria Applied By Care/Home	7	12	26	15	0
Adult Safeguarding	0	0	0	8	<5
Await Assessment/Acceptance To Care Home	319	480	477	556	193
Bed Based IC - Care Homes	357	487	286	292	187
Bed Based IC - Sub Acute / Non-Acute Hospital	761	1012	763	569	173
Care Planning	153	0	0	0	0
Community Rehabilitation	135	0	0	0	0
Community Respiratory	<5	<5	0	0	0
Community Stroke	20	15	8	7	<5
Covid Outbreak	0	<5	10	<5	0
Covid Rehab	0	<5	0	0	0
Crisis Response	<5	0	0	<5	0
Delirium	0	18	19	27	16
Dementia	7	16	41	93	45
Enhanced Care Requirements	224	425	475	233	42
Essential Equipment / Adaptation Not Available	36	30	24	47	26

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Reason for Delay	Year				
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Financial Considerations	0	0	0	<5	9
Home Based IC	365	752	534	574	276
Hospital Assessment	<5	0	0	0	0
Hospital At Home (Acute Care at Home)	0	0	0	<5	<5
Housing	<5	7	15	16	10
Infection Related Delay - Hospital Setting	0	0	0	<5	7
Infection Related Delays - Community Setting	0	0	0	0	<5
Internal Hospital Assessment Process	0	0	0	390	330
Learning Disability	<5	<5	0	<5	<5
Legal/Residency Issues	0	0	0	<5	0
Medical Adherence Support (Blister Pack)	0	0	0	5	<5
Mental Capacity	<5	8	<5	5	5
Mental Health	8	11	25	22	12
No Care Home Bed Available	31	18	30	21	35
No Domiciliary Package Available	2,425	2,721	2,764	2,266	736
No EMI Bed Available	8	0	0	0	0
No Fixed Abode	8	14	12	20	<5
No Nursing Home Bed Available	86	0	0	0	0
No Residential Home Bed Available	36	0	0	0	0
No Significant Delay	1,261	1,586	743	463	750

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Reason for Delay	Year				
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
No Suitable Step Down Bed Available	101	0	0	0	0
Other Complex Delay Reason	9	0	0	0	0
Palliative Care	13	0	0	0	0
Palliative Care Community Arrangement Not Made	19	30	38	14	<5
Palliative Care IP Arrangements Not Made	13	18	16	6	8
Patient/Family Refusal Covid Specific	0	<5	<5	<5	0
Patient/Family Resistance	5	0	0	0	0
Patient/Relative Choice	9	20	21	74	25
Physical Disability	0	0	<5	<5	0
Reablement	143	88	12	5	6
Sampling Within The Acute Setting	<5	<5	0	0	0
Staffing	0	<5	0	0	0
Training Related Delay	5	<5	7	8	7
Transport Delay	<5	0	0	0	0
Grand Total	6,580	7,797	6,355	5,759	2,926

**Use of <5 (less than five):** We are unable to provide an exact figure - exempt from release under Section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act, as the small numbers involved could make patients personally identifiable. Disclosure would constitute a breach of the principles of the General Data Protection Regulation 2018.

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Below see discharges with any complex reason for delay<sup>3</sup> recorded from 2024 to 2025<sup>2</sup> by reason for delay.

Discharge Delay Reason	Year	
	2024	2025
Dementia	101	144
1 to 1 Care (Dementia)	21	28
Adult Safeguarding	10	26
Await Assessment/Acceptance to Care Home	86	231
Bed Based IC - Care Homes	211	316
Bed Based IC – Sub Acute / Non-Acute Hospital	53	50
Community Stroke	<5	6
Delirium	31	32
Enhanced Care Requirements	32	30
Essential Equipment/Adapt Not Available	27	69
Financial Considerations	11	5
Home Based IC	181	307
Hospital at Home	0	<5
Housing	10	36
Infection Related Delay - Hospital Setting	<5	<5
Infection Related Delays - Community Setting	<5	<5
Internal Hospital Assessment Process	718	1252
Learning Disability	<5	<5
Legal / Residency Issues	0	<5
Medicine Adherence Support (Blister Pack)	10	21
Mental Capacity	8	16
Mental Health	7	26
No Care Home Bed Available	161	117
No Domiciliary Package Available	409	605
No Fixed Abode	5	10
No Significant Delay	843	1,445
Palliative Care Community Arrangements Not Made	21	28
Palliative Care IP Arrangements Not Made	<5	14

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	Year	
Patient/Relative Choice	20	57
Physical Disability	0	7
Reablement	<5	<5
Training Related Delay	5	10
Grand Total	2,995	4,899

**Use of <5 (less than five):** Again we are unable to provide an exact figure - exempt from release under Section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act.

**4. What is the longest number of days a patient was declared medically fit for discharge but remained in hospital in 2024?**

175 Days

**5. What is the longest number of days a patient was declared medically fit for discharge but remained in hospital in 2025?**

243 Days

Notes:

<sup>1</sup>Reason codes to denote external factors are any complex delay reason with the exception of crisis response, no significant delay, staffing, Covid outbreak and Covid rehab.

<sup>2</sup>Data shown for years prior to 2024 have been taken from PAS. Encompass went live in June 24, any data for 2024 includes data from PAS from 01/01/24 to 05/06/24 and data from Encompass from 06/06/24 to 31/12/24. Data shown from 2025 onwards is sourced from Encompass.

<sup>3</sup>Guidance for recording Delayed Transfers of Care was updated in June 2023 and, as such, the codes were revised.