

Lucia Pinar

St number : 2308620

Waiting times for surgery can be adress

Introduction

Waiting a long time for a surgery is a big problem in NHS wales today. Many people are not getting treatment quickly, and waiting lists are very very long.

The welsh parliament said in 2025 :

Around one in four people in Wales is waiting for treatment or surgery , wich shows how serious this issue is .

Causes of long waiting times

One of the main reasons for long waiting time is the covid-10 we know is been long time a go but still causing side effects . During this time, many of operations were delayed or cancelled becouse hospitals had to focus on emergency care .

Welsh goverment said in 2025 : Before 2020 , people usually waited about 9 to 11 weeks for treatment , but this become much longer after the pandemic.

The another reason like NHS WALES said these year 2026 : is that there are not enough staff in the nhs . The are short staff of doctors , nurses or care workers . This makes it more harder to treat patients quickly .

Hospitals also have limited space and time for surgeries , wich adds ti the delays

There iss also more demand for healthcare now.

More people need treatment , British medical association said in 2025 :

this puts pressure on the system . Emergency cases are often treated first , wich means planned surggeries get delayed.

CURRENT SITUATION

The welsh goverment said in 2025 again are trying to improve waiting times . They have set targets , such as making sure no one waits more than one year for treatment and aiming to treat most people within 26 weeks only .

There has been some small improvement . Waiting times have started to go down slightly , and fewer people are waiting extremely long periods .

However , many patients are still waiting too long , and the problem is not fully fixed .

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

To reduce waiting times, NHS Wales needs to take several solutions. First, they need to hire and training for more staff so more patients can be treated .

Increasing the number of doctors and nurses would help to reduce pressures on the system .

The second option is the hospitals could improve how they organise services . For example , they could increase surgery hours or use extra clinics or GPs to treat more patients in the waiting list . Another solution may be to focus on preventing illness . If people stay healthier , fewer will need surgery , which would reduce demand in the long term .

Waiting times for surgery in NHS in Wales are still a major problem . There has been some improvement , more needs to be done .

Maybe staff increase more employment . Improve the services , phone lines as well , start to improve now in prevention for reduce the waiting list in the future .

STRATEGIC RESPONSE TO WAITING TIMES IN NHS IN WALES

To deal with long waiting times for surgery in NHS Wales , there needs to be a clear and simple plan .

This plan should focus on improving how hospitals work , helping staff , and making the system faster and more organised .

Right now at the moment the waiting times are still a big problem , even though are very slowly getting better , but still the patients don't see the change .

This plan should focus on improving how hospitals work , helping staff and making the system more faster and more organised .

Recent data shows that waiting list have been going down for several months , and the number of people waiting over two years has dropped a lot . For example , over 90% of very long waits have been reduced since their highest point . However , many people are still waiting too long , and the system is still under pressure the NHS Confederation said in 2026 , this shows that more action is needed .

One important idea from management is planning and organising work properly . Hospitals need to use their time better . For example , they can do more surgeries in evenings and weekends . This is already happening in some places , where more appointments and operations are being carried out to reduce waiting list . Better planning can help reduce delays and make services more faster .

Another useful idea is lean management , which means removing waste and saving times . In NHS in Wales , waste can be things like cancelled operations , long delays between appointments , or slow referral system . If hospitals improve how patients move through the system , they can treat more people quicker . For example , the NHS has already increased the number of appointments and operations to speed things up .

Staff is also very very important , they do a very crucial support . There are not enough doctors or nurses or care workers as well . All this makes waiting times more worse .

This links human resources management , which is about managing staff well .

NHS Wales need to hire more workers , but also support the current staff so they do not leave for bad conditions in their jobs , like long shifts , extra hours , on call when you are at home , less pay , no incentive treats for your job...

If the staff are tired or stressed , the system will not work properly .

Reports show that demand is still high and staff are under pressure , even with improvements .

Another key idea is very important in our roles as well is the : leadership . Good leaders can improve how teams work . Leaders should support staff , listen to problems , and help find solutions . This is important because healthcare system are complex , and strong leadership can improve performance and reduce delays .

There is also the idea of systems thinking , which means looking at the whole system , not just one part . Waiting times are not only caused by hospitals . They also depend on GP referrals , diagnostics tests , and follow – up care . For example , even though overall waiting lists are going down , diagnostic waiting times are still very high . This shows that if one part of system is slow , it affects everything else .

Technology can also help . Using digital systems can make booking appointments faster and reduce mistakes .

This is part of modern management ideas about using innovation to improve services .

NHS Wales has already increased activity like outpatient appointments , which helps reduce delays .

Finally the NHS should focus on continuous improvements. This means always checking what is working and what is not working. Even though waiting times have improved in these years, progress has sometimes been uneven and not consistent.

RCOS said in 2025: the system needs to keep improving all the time.

NHS started to reduce waiting times, but the problem is not fully solved. Using simple management ideas like better planning, lean systems, strong leadership, and supporting staff can help improve and work on the whole system, waiting times for surgery can be reduced in the future.

Evaluation of effectiveness of NHS Wales strategies

This and last section will look at if the strategies used by NHS Wales to reduce waiting times are working or not. It will use evidence from reports and data, but explained in a simple way.

-Positive effectiveness: What is working.

First, there is clear evidence that some improvements are happening. Waiting lists have started to go down. Recent data shows that the waiting list has fallen for many months in a row. The Welsh Government said in 2026, which is a good sign.

Also, there has been a very big reduction in the longest waits. People waiting more than two years for treatments have dropped by more than 90% since the peak in 2022. This shows that the focus on reducing extreme delays is working.

Another positive point is that more patients are being treated. NHS Wales has increased the number of appointments and operations. For example, extra funding has helped deliver thousands of additional treatments and outpatient appointments.

This links to management ideas like capacity planning and lean management, where more activity helps reduce backlog.

Average waiting times have also improved slightly. Reports show waiting times are now around 18-19 weeks, which is lower than previous years after COVID-19.

This suggests that the system is slowly recovering.

Overall , these improvements show that the strategies used like a : better planning , more activity , and investment , are having some positive effect .

Negative effectiveness : what is not working well .

Even with improvements , there are still many problems .

Gov uk said in 2026 :

Firts :

waiting times are still too long compared to targets . Nhs wales aims for most patients to be treated within 26 weeks , but many people are still waiting longer than thus . This shows the system is not meeting its goals .

Second : The diagnostic waiting times are still very high like i said before .

Even though overall waiting list are falling , delays for test , scans , surgeons , hospital referral programmes are still record levels at the moment .

This is a very big issue because can cause more problems physical and mental so they continue to be stuck because patients need mental health appointment medication for depression and it costs more money to the government , more delays because more appointments needed , more calls needed , and it continues to be a ball and nothing is getting fixed at the moment .

Royal College said : These problems can be progress but go up and down . This means the strategies are not stable .

Staff shortages are still a major problem . Even with better planning , without enough staff the system cannot improve fast , so no solutions we can see yet .

Also pressure on staff affects quality and speed of care .

What is working well :

1-waiting lists are decreasing .

2 – Long waits (over 2 years or 3) reduced a lot

3- More patients are getting treatment .

4-Average waiting times improving slowly

What is not working well :

1 – waiting times still above targets

2 – diagnostic delays still very high

3 – staff shortages continue

4 –Progress is not consistent

5 – system still under pressure

That mean the strategies are helping , but not solving the big and siruos problems iin nhs .

The end of these report is thinking with all the problems we need to solve before they increas in nhs strategies can bee seen as moderately effective .

They are effective in the short term becouse they reduce backlog and improve performance slowly .

But they are not fully effective in the long term becouse : the system still has structural problems.

Workforceshortages are not fixed yet .

Different part of the system do not work well together ,

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