

Approximate waiting times for an initial appointment at a multidisciplinary pain service (non-urgent patients)

Pain service	Waiting time
Concord Hospital	15 months
John Hunter Hospital	5 months*
Liverpool Hospital	6 months
Nepean Hospital	18 months
Prince of Wales Hospital	3 months
Royal North Shore Hospital	18 months [¶]
Royal Prince Alfred Hospital	6 months [#]
St Vincent's Hospital	6 months
Westmead Hospital	15 months
Paediatric services (combined)	4–6 weeks [§]

* The Hunter Integrated Pain Service has redesigned its service system; appropriate patients are now initially referred to a large group (up to 50 attendees) pre-clinic pain education seminar.⁸³

[¶]Includes complex paediatric referrals.

[#]Co-located with private services.

[§] Children with ongoing pain are often referred first to paediatricians and paediatric subspecialists; this filtering may account for short waiting times at paediatric pain services. However, this may not be optimal in terms of patient outcomes, as many children have stopped attending school by the time they are referred to a paediatric service.

⁸³ Hayes C and Hodson F. In press. A whole person model of care for persistent pain: from conceptual framework to practical application. Pain Medicine 2011..