

## Next available time to start Radiation Treatment in Queensland Health facilities

Radiation therapy services are available at four public hospitals in Queensland.

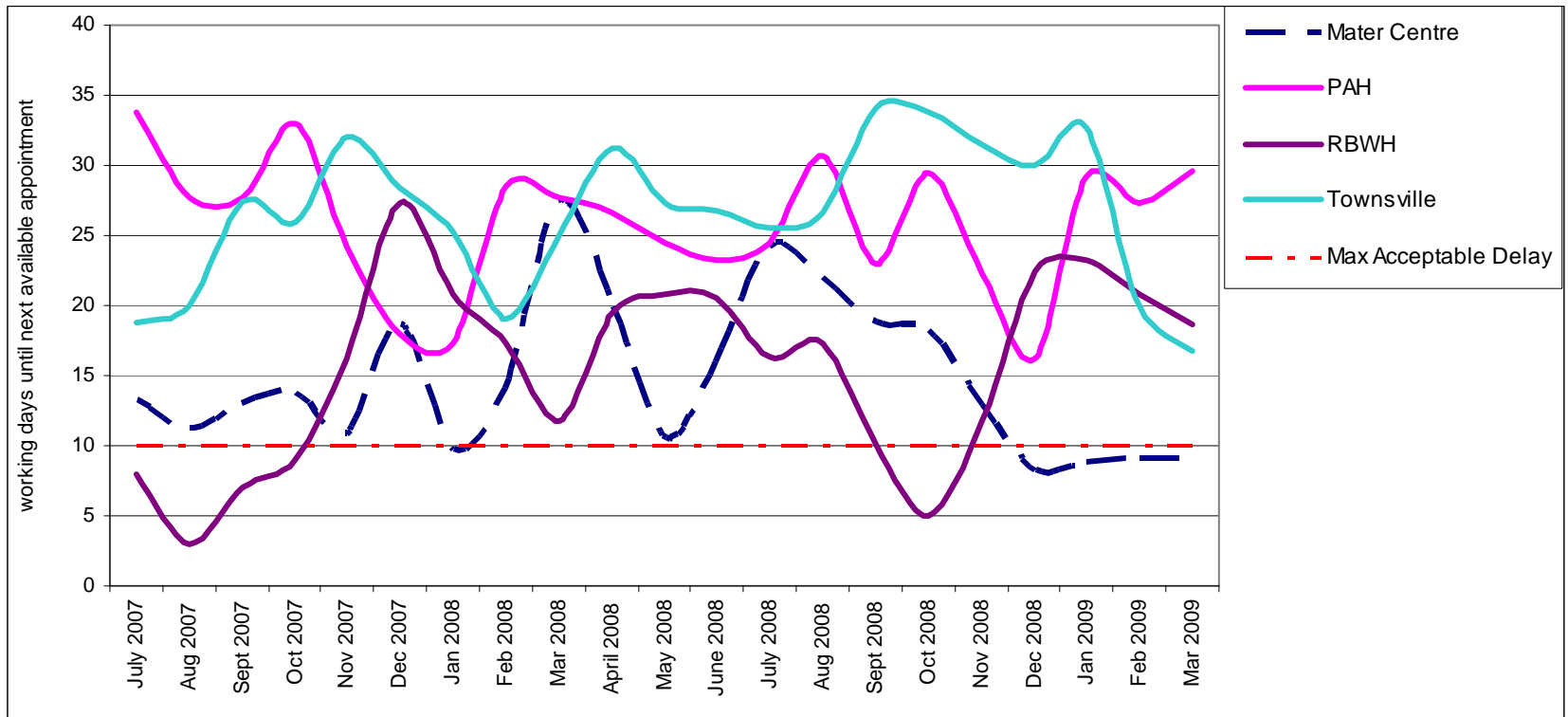
Each week these hospital services report their next available start dates for radiation therapy treatment according to three priority categories which are based on clinical need.

The table below shows the time frames within which patients from each of the priority categories should be treated (Maximum Acceptable Waiting Time as defined by the relevant Medical Specialist College<sup>1</sup>).

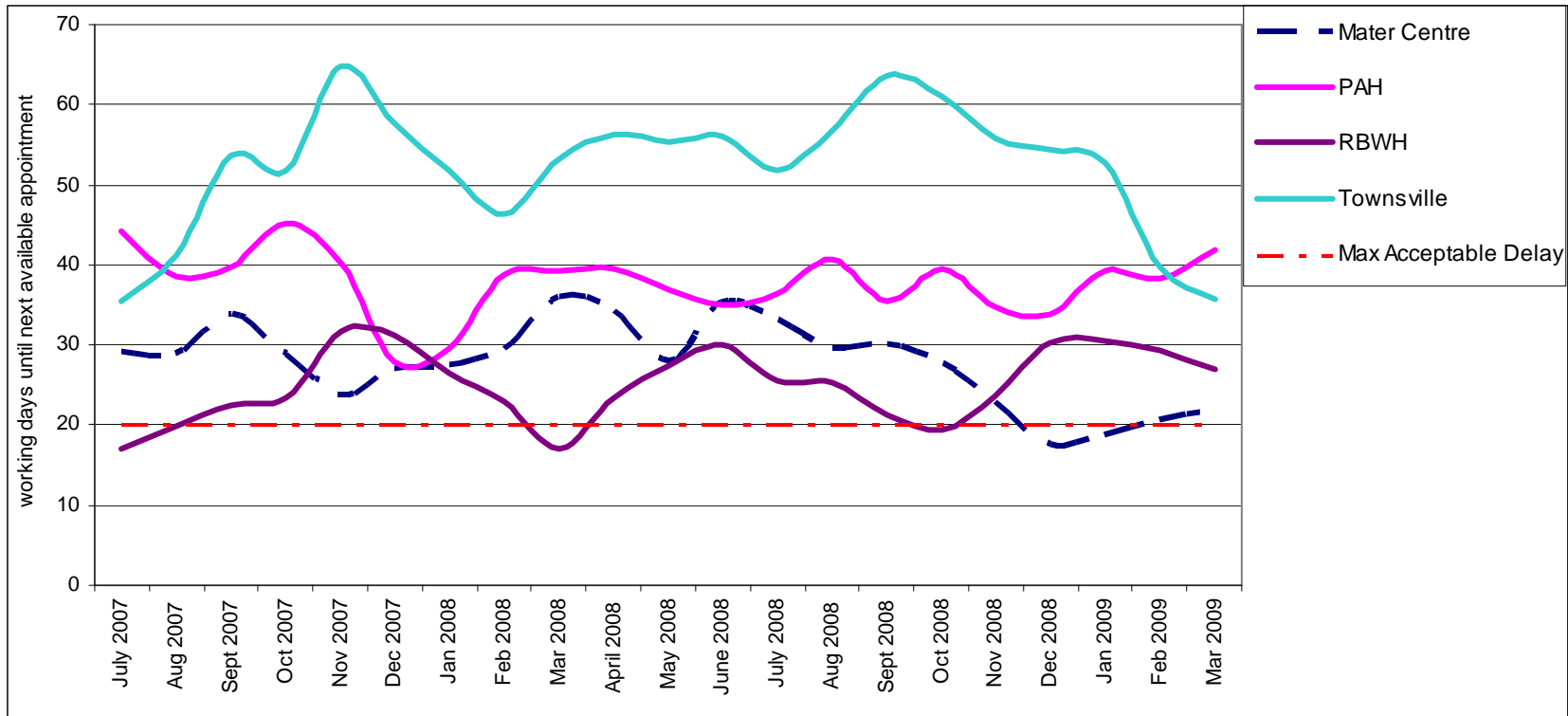
Category	Definition	Maximum Acceptable Waiting Time	Further explanation
Emergency Care	Medical emergency	24 hours	This is an extremely small group of people with cancer for whom emergency, same day radiation treatment is required and given within 24 hours. Examples of this would include malignant spinal cord compression, uncontrolled bleeding or mediastinal/airway compression threatening imminent death.
High Priority Care	Patients for whom delay in starting will have a significant adverse effect on outcome	14 calendar days	This is a large group of people with cancer who fall broadly into two categories: 1. People being treated for cure where there is evidence that a delay to commence within this time frame will adversely affect outcome (for example people with head and neck cancer or brain cancer) 2. People who have pressing cancer symptoms such as pain and endure personal suffering or other complications as a consequence of delay.
Planned Care	All others	28 calendar days	This is a large group of people with cancer who need planned radiation treatment as a major part of their cancer care. Often this course of radiation treatment is combined with surgery and chemotherapy and can be planned for in advance (for example people with breast cancer or prostate cancer).

The 'waiting times' show weekly 'snapshots' (averaged for the month) of the number of calendar days until the next available appointment to commence treatment.

**Graph 1:** Calendar days wait till next available start date for High Priority Care by Queensland Health facilities, July 2007 – March 2009



**Graph 2:** Calendar days wait till next available start date for Planned Priority Care by Queensland Health facilities, July 2007 – March 2009



Note: Data is not available where public holidays fall on the data collection day.

Data on this website will be updated every 3 months.

<sup>i</sup> The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Radiologists (<http://www.ranzcr.edu.au/index.cfm>)