About this release
Information Services Division publish information on NHS General Dental Service (GDS) treatment and fees annually. This publication provides statistics for 2016/17 with comparisons with previous years.

Main Points

Treatment

Children
- Between 2000/01 and 2016/17 the number of fillings undertaken steadily decreased from around 775,000 to around 338,000.

- Similarly, the number of teeth extracted decreased overall from over 133,000 in 2000/01 to less than 90,000 in 2016/17.

- A third (33%) of the claimable dental treatments provided to children were given under Childsmile programme in 2016/17. These include fluoride varnish application, toothbrushing instruction, and diet advice.

- In 2016/17, the number of claimable courses of treatment given to children was around 506,000, slightly less than recent years.
Adults

- Since 2007/08, the number of courses of treatment given to adults has risen sharply, year on year, from nearly 3 million to over 4.1 million in 2016/17, the highest figure reported. This may be due to increasing numbers of patients participating in GDS.
- Around a third (31%) of the treatments claimed for adults were for examinations or provision of a care and treatment summary report.

Fees

- In 2016/17, around £289 million in GDS fees were authorised in Scotland, an increase of £3.5 million (1.2%) from 2015/16.
- GDS fees have increased each year since 2003/04, although the rate of increase has slowed in recent years.
- When adjusted for inflation, GDS fees increased each year from 2004/05 until 2010/11, and have since stabilised.

Background

Treatment

NHS dentists can provide a wide range of treatments to their patients, from a simple examination to complex surgical treatment. The Statement of Dental Remuneration (SDR) lists all the items of service (IOS) (i.e. treatments) which dentists can provide and claim payment for.

Fees

Dentists are paid fees both for each patient they have registered with them (capitation and continuing care payments) and for the treatments they provide.

Childsmile

Childsmile is a national programme designed to improve the oral health of children in Scotland, and reduce inequalities, both in dental health and access to dental services.

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Further Information

Further information can be found in the Full Publication Report or on the ISD website. The next release of this publication will be in September 2018.

ISD and Official Statistics

Information Services Division (ISD) is the principal and authoritative source of statistics on health and care services in Scotland. ISD is designated by legislation as a producer of ‘Official Statistics’. Our official statistics publications are produced to a high professional standard and comply with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. Further information about our statistics.