About this release

This publication from the Information Services Division provides an annual update to figures on alcohol-related inpatient and day case activity within general acute hospitals and psychiatric hospitals in Scotland. This release covers general acute hospital activity for the financial years 1981/82 to 2016/17 and psychiatric hospital admissions from 1997/98 to 2015/16.

Main Points

- In 2016/17 there were 36,235 alcohol-related hospital admissions (stays) in general acute hospitals in Scotland. These relate to 24,060 Scottish residents who had at least one admission to hospital with an alcohol-related condition. Of these people 11,777 were admitted for an alcohol-related admission for the first time or had not been admitted to hospital for an alcohol-related admission in the previous 10 years.

- In 2016/17 the alcohol-related stay rate per 100,000 population in general acute hospitals was 685.2; an increase compared to the previous year (673.2). Prior to this there had been a steady decline in alcohol-related stays since 2007/08.

Alcohol-related hospitalisation rates\(^1\) for general acute hospitals, Scotland, financial years 1981/82 to 2016/17\(^p\)

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\(^1\) European age sex standardised rates (EASR). \(^p\) Provisional
• Stays in general acute hospitals for alcohol liver disease continues to rise for the fourth consecutive year, with a rate of 140.0 stays per 100,000 population during 2016/17. This is similar to 2007/08 (140.1 per 100,000 population), which is the highest recorded since 1997/98.

• The rate of alcohol-related stays in psychiatric hospitals in 2015/16 is unchanged from previous year (2014/15) at 54.4 per 100,000 population.

• There is a difference in the pattern of alcohol-related admissions by deprivation. In the general acute setting in 2016/17, there were nearly eight times as many people (per 100,000 population) admitted from the most deprived areas compared to the least deprived areas. In the psychiatric setting in 2015/16, the difference was more pronounced, with just over 15 times as many people from the most deprived areas.

Background

Excessive consumption of alcohol can result in a wide range of health problems. Some may occur after drinking over a relatively short period, such as acute intoxication (drunkenness) or poisoning (toxic effect). Others develop more gradually, only becoming evident after long-term heavy drinking, such as damage to the liver and brain.

Alcohol is a factor in a wide range of hospital admissions; this publication reports on admissions that are entirely due to alcohol.

Estimates of the number of inpatient and day case hospitalisations are based on counts where a range of alcohol-related conditions are diagnosed during the hospital stay. Attendances at Accident and Emergency that do not result in an admission to hospital are not included. Individuals may have more than one hospital stay hence the number of people admitted will be less than the total number of stays.

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Further Information

Further information can be found in the Alcohol-related hospital statistics 2016/17 report.  
Figures relating to this publication can be viewed via our interactive dashboard.

Data within the dashboard is also available to download alcohol-related hospital statistics 2016/17 data.

The next release of this publication will be November 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.