Out of Hours Primary Care Services in Scotland
1 April 2014 – 8 January 2019

An Official Statistics publication for Scotland
Publication date: 22 January 2019

About this release
This release from Information Services Division (ISD) provides an update on statistics on patients attending Out of Hours (OOH) Primary Care services. Patients attend these services when their registered GP Practices are closed. It presents monthly and daily data from 1 April 2014 up to 8 January 2019. Data on attendances during the out of hours period at Accident and Emergency (A&E) Departments up to 30 November 2018 are also presented.

Main Points
- One in six of the Scottish population contact OOH Primary Care services each year with around 870,000 people being seen by them and having just under a million consultations.
- There were around 52,000 contacts with services over the two week festive period (22 December to 4 January). This was a decrease (16%) on the previous festive period, where there were two four day closures of in hours services due to where the public holidays fell.
- Over a typical weekend there are around 13,000 contacts with OOH Primary Care services.
- December continues to be OOH Primary care services busiest month with 86,000 contacts in 2018.

Number of contacts/consultations in OOH Primary Care and attendances at A&E Services (Out of Hours period only) NHSScotland, April 2016 – December 2018

1 Please note the chart does not include data for A&E for December 2018. This data will be available in February 2019.

- During the summer A&E services have more attendances in the out of hours period, than OOH Primary Care cases possibly as a result of longer days and greater risk of injuries. During the winter months and months with public holidays there are more OOH Primary Care cases.
Background

From April 2014, data on patient contacts at OOH Primary Care services across Scotland are collected and maintained by ISD in the national data warehouse known as the GP OOH datamart. Data are collected on a local IT system (Adastra), then extracted and submitted to the datamart on a weekly basis.

Patient consultations are recorded as an attendance at Primary Care Emergency Centres, Home Visits and/or GP OOH Advice. A patient with an OOH contact can have more than one consultation type (e.g. GP OOH advice followed by home visit).

It should be noted that in the areas where only aggregate A&E data is returned to ISD (typically NHS Grampian and NHS Highland), there will be an undercount of patients seen. This does not make a significant difference to the overall results. The time period being compared relates to when both services are open i.e. the out of hours time period. This includes evenings, weekends and Easter, Christmas and New Year public holidays.

Contact

Kathy McGregor
Principal Information Analyst
0131 275 6551
k.mcgregor2@nhs.net

Fiona MacKenzie
Service Manager
0131 275 6515
f.mackenzie@nhs.net

Further Information

Data tables for this publication are available along with relevant background information, glossary and metadata documents. This publication should be viewed as a complimentary analysis to other publications on emergency and urgent care. You may also be interested to read the publication on the National Review of Primary Care Out of Hours Services.

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.