

Publication Report



General Ophthalmic Services Statistics

Updates of existing pages as at 31st March 2012

Publication date – 31st July 2012



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Introduction

The NHS General Ophthalmic Service is provided by [eye care professionals](#) who carry out eye examinations and provide eye glasses, repairs or replacements. ISD collects information on NHS General Ophthalmic Service activity in Scotland as performed by eye care professionals. These data are collected on a series of forms referred to as [GOS \(General Ophthalmic Services\) forms](#).

If a patient is entitled to free or subsidised eye care (excluding eye examinations, which are free to all), they must present evidence of this to the optician ([Exemption categories](#)). The optician submits a claim form for the services provided, which is signed by both the optician and the patient. This form is sent to [Practitioner Services Division \(PSD\)](#) for processing of payments to the optician. The forms are scanned and their information is stored in a database called OPTIX. ISD then collates these data to provide annual tables of GOS activity.

The data presented here exclude NHS hospital eye services and optical services provided privately.

Key points

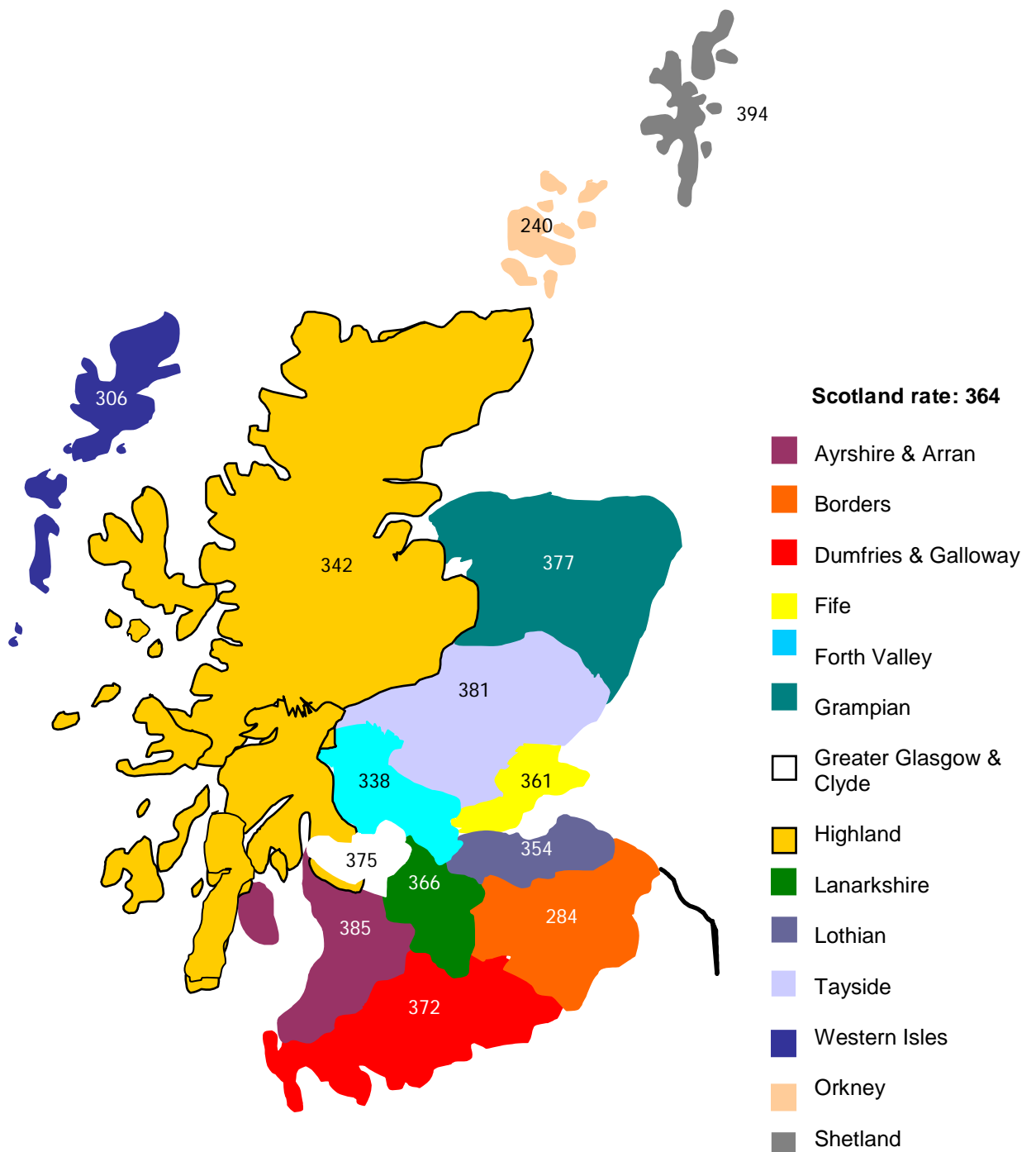
- The total number of NHS eye examinations increased by 6.0% from 1.8 million in year ending March 2011 to 1.9 million in year ending March 2012.
- The number of patients receiving a primary eye examination increased by 6.5% from 1,504,230 in year ending March 2011 to 1,601,729 in year ending March 2012. Of the 1,601,729 primary eye examinations carried out 1,594,815 were for ordinary residents, an increase of 6.5%; and 6,914 were for exempt visitors, an increase of 2.8%.
- The number of patients receiving a supplementary eye examination increased by 3.8% from 300,451 in year ending March 2011 to 311,836 in year ending March 2012. Of the 311,836 supplementary eye examinations carried out 310,521 were for ordinary residents, an increase of 3.8%; and 1,315 were for exempt visitors, an increase of 11.9%.

Results and Commentary

Eye Exams

The rate of eye examinations across all NHS Boards in Scotland for year ending 31st March 2012 was fairly consistent. The highest rates were for NHS Shetland, at 394, and for NHS Ayrshire & Arran, at 386 eye examinations per 1,000 population. The lowest rate was for NHS Orkney, at 240 per 1,000 population.

Rate of eye examinations per 1,000 population by NHS Health Board; year ending March 2012



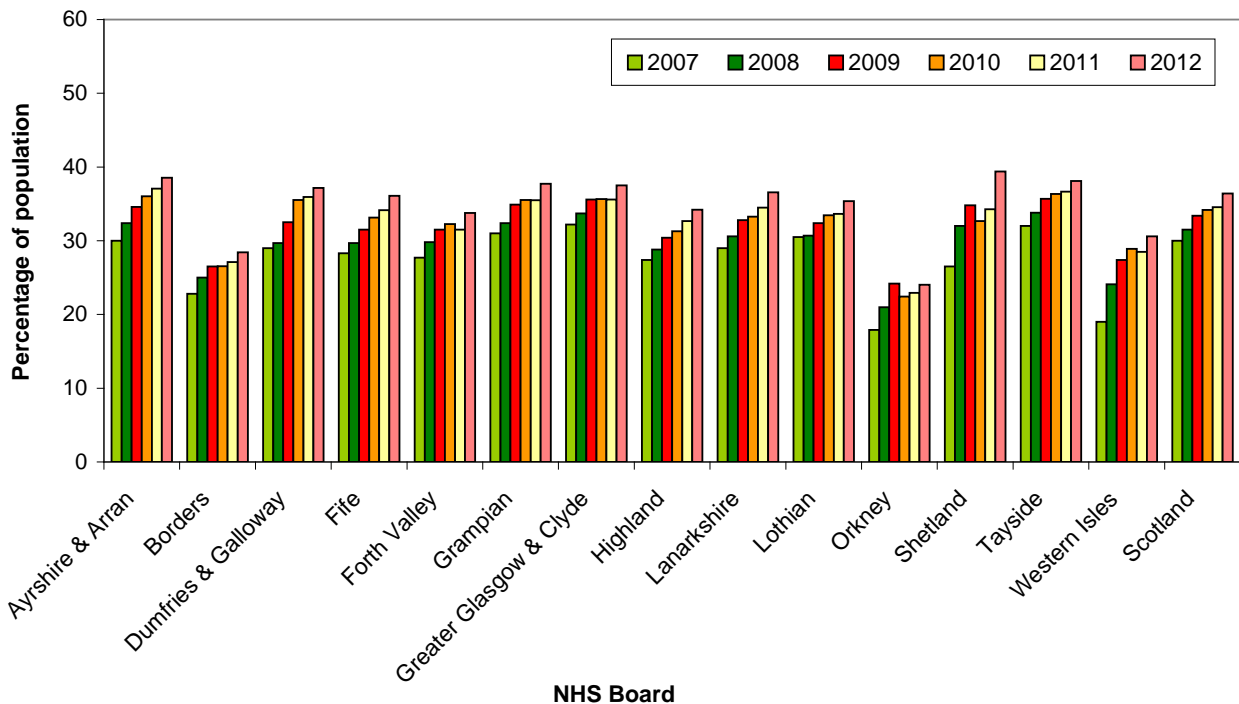
There was a steady increase in the level of the population who received an NHS eye examination between 2007 and 2012. During 2011/12, the total number of eye examinations (primary and supplementary) increased by 6.0% (primary eye examinations increasing by 6.5% and supplementary eye examinations by 3.8%). Note that a change in policy on the frequency of primary eye examinations accounts for large increase in the number of supplementary eye examinations carried out between financial years 2009/10 and 2010/11.

Table 1: Trend data in the number of primary and supplementary eye examinations; years ending March 2007 to March 2012

NHS Eye Exam Type	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Difference (+/-) between 2011 and 2012	Percentage point difference (+/-) between 2011 and 2012
Primary	1,480,187	1,542,566	1,630,600	1,655,076	1,504,230	1,601,729	+97,499	+6.5
Supplementary	64,515	84,074	97,479	120,381	300,451	311,836	+11,385	+3.8
Total	1,544,702	1,626,640	1,728,079	1,775,456	1,804,681	1,913,565	+108,884	+6.0

Source: ISD, OPTIX

Percentage of population who received an NHS eye examination (primary or supplementary); by NHS Board; years ending March 2007 to March 2012



Source: ISD, OPTIX

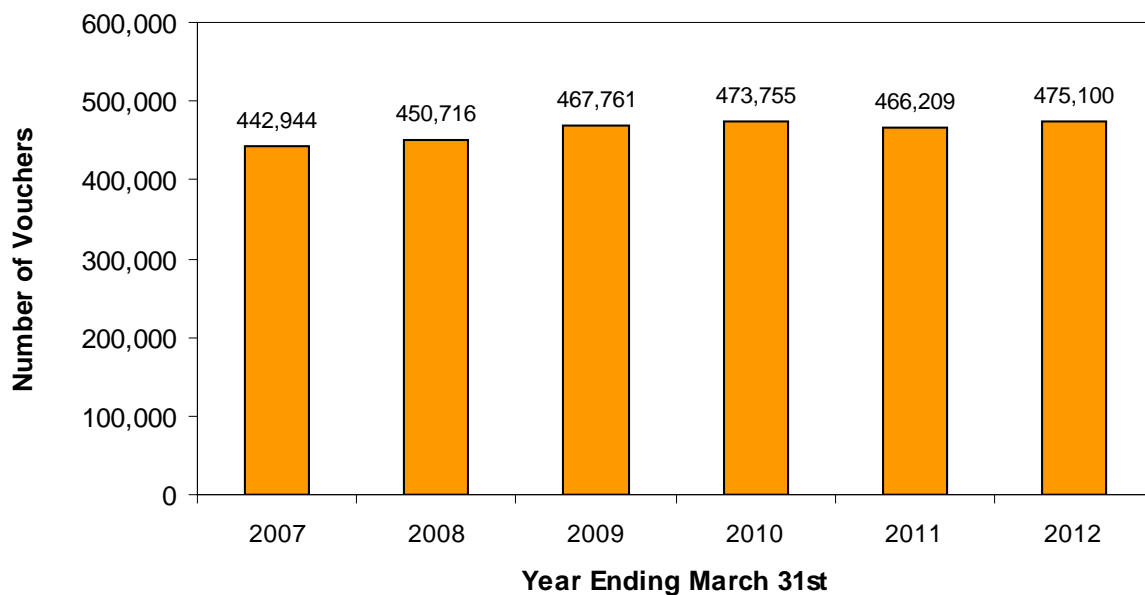
Other detailed findings regarding eye examinations are as follows:

- The percentage of all patients who had an eye examination during 2011/12 and who were then referred to either their GP or hospital for follow-up care fell slightly to 4.3% from 4.4% in the previous year.
- The percentage of supplementary eye examinations carried out during 2011/12 to check side vision and pressure in the eye (referral refinement / repeat visual fields & applanation) fell to 26.6% from 29.1% in the previous year.
- The number of supplementary tints supplied during 2011/12 (7,685) decreased by 1% on the previous year (7,757).

Vouchers

Some patients are entitled to receive help with the cost of optical appliances. The trend in the number of GOS(S)3 voucher claims made in Scotland between years ending March March 2007 and March 2012 is shown below.

Total number of GOS(S)3 voucher claims; years ending March 2007 to March 2012



Source: ISD, OPTIX

These trend data show that the number of optical vouchers GOS(S)3 (claimed for pairs of spectacles, including complex appliances, and reimbursed by NHS Boards) increased between 2007 and 2010 but decreased slightly in 2010/11. In 2011/12, the number of GOS(S)3 vouchers increased again, by 1.2%, from 466,209 to 475,100.

Note that the exemption categories reported here do not include the Income Related ESA exemption category (for 2011/12 this numbered 14,209 GOS(S)3 vouchers) Information is further detailed [by exempt patient category and by voucher type for each NHS board.](#)

Glossary

- GOS(S)1 General Ophthalmic Service (application for NHS eye examination)
GOS(S)3 General Ophthalmic Service (NHS optical voucher)

List of Tables

Table No.	Name	Time period	File & size
1	Scotland summary (eye exams vouchers and repairs)	Years ending March 2001 to March 2012	Excel [52KB]
2	Eye exams vouchers lenses and repairs by NHS board	Years ending March 2007 to March 2012	Excel [207KB]
3	Eye exams by patient type and NHS board	Years ending March 2007 to March 2012	Excel [142KB]
4	Vouchers by exempt patient category, voucher type and NHS board	Years ending March 2007 to March 2012	Excel [169KB]
5	Eye exams by referral type and NHS board	Years ending March 2007 to March 2012	Excel [161KB]

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Further Information

Further information can be found on the [ISD website](#)

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Appendix

A1 – Background Information

On 1st April 2006, a new NHS eye examination was introduced and free NHS eye examinations were extended to all in Scotland. The traditional NHS sight test was replaced with a comprehensive eye examination appropriate to the patient's needs. An initial eye examination is carried out (primary eye examination) and where necessary a second eye examination (supplementary eye examination). An updated patient form (called a GOS(S)1) for eye care professionals was introduced on 1st April 2006 in line with the new NHS eye examination. However, some old forms continued to be submitted and are included in the total eye examinations in the Scotland trend table from years 2006/07 to 2008/09. There was a further update to the form in 2009 to reflect new patient categories. These categories are shown in this release.

On 1st April 2010, the NHS (General Ophthalmic Services) (Scotland) Regulations 2006 were amended to provide that primary eye examinations should only be undertaken in line with set frequencies for different categories of patient, i.e. every 1 or 2 years. Other eye examinations required at shorter intervals are undertaken as supplementary eye examinations. This change in policy accounts for the large increase in the number of supplementary eye examinations carried out between financial years 2009/10 and 2010/11.

A2 – Publication Metadata (including revisions details)

Metadata Indicator	Description
Publication title	General Ophthalmic Services Statistics.
Description	This release provides information on General Ophthalmic Services (GOS) Statistics as at 31 st March 2012. Information on referrals, reasons for primary and supplementary NHS eye examinations and patient type for years ending 31 st March 2007 to 31 st March 2012 can also be found in this release.
Theme	Eye Care.
Topic	General Ophthalmic Services workload.
Format	Excel workbooks and PDF.
Data source(s)	OPTIX.
Date that data are acquired	20 th June 2012.
Release date	31 st July 2012.
Frequency	Annual.
Timeframe of data and timeliness	April 2011 to March 2012. One quarter in arrears.
Continuity of data	Reports annually as at 31 st March.
Revisions statement	These data are not subject to planned major revisions. However, ISD aims to continually improve the interpretation of the data and therefore analysis methods are regularly reviewed and may be updated in future.
Revisions relevant to this publication	None.
Concepts and definitions	See Glossary and footnotes.
Relevance and key uses of the statistics	Making information publicly available for planning, provision of services, research, etc.
Accuracy	GOS data, as recorded by eye care professionals for payment, probity and quality purposes, are regarded as highly accurate, but may be revised in a subsequent monthly payment schedule.
Completeness	GOS data, as recorded by eye care professionals for payment, probity and quality purposes, are regarded as complete, but may be revised in a subsequent monthly payment schedule.
Comparability	Comparable over time.
Accessibility	It is the policy of ISD Scotland to make its web sites and products accessible according to published guidelines .
Coherence and clarity	Tables and charts are accessible via the ISD website at: http://www.isdscotland.org/Health-Topics/Eye-Care/General-Ophthalmic-Services/ .
Value type and unit of measurement	Number of eye examinations and percentage of population carried out for by General Ophthalmic Services, number of payment exemption vouchers claimed.
Disclosure	The ISD protocol on Statistical Disclosure Protocol is followed.
Official Statistics designation	National Statistics.
UK Statistics Authority Assessment	Designated as National Statistics, subject to ISD implementing certain enhancements by August 2012.

Last published	26 th July 2011.
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Help email	NSS.ISD-Dental-Info@nhs.net
Date form completed	17 th July 2012.

A3 – Early Access details (including Pre-Release Access)

Pre-Release Access

Under terms of the "Pre-Release Access to Official Statistics (Scotland) Order 2008", ISD are obliged to publish information on those receiving Pre-Release Access ("Pre-Release Access" refers to statistics in their final form prior to publication). The standard maximum Pre-Release Access is five working days. Shown below are details of those receiving standard Pre-Release Access and, separately, those receiving extended Pre-Release Access.

Standard Pre-Release Access:

Scottish Government Health Department
NHS Board Chief Executives
NHS Board Communication leads
Scottish Government Health Department (Analytical Services Division)

Extended Pre-Release Access

Extended Pre-Release Access of 8 working days is given to a small number of named individuals in the Scottish Government Health Department (Analytical Services Division). This Pre-Release Access is for the sole purpose of enabling that department to gain an understanding of the statistics prior to briefing others in Scottish Government (during the period of standard Pre-Release Access).

Scottish Government Health Department (Analytical Services Division)
Scottish Government Justice Department (Analytical Services Division)

A4 – ISD and Official Statistics

About ISD

Scotland has some of the best health service data in the world combining high quality, consistency, national coverage and the ability to link data to allow patient based analysis and follow up.

Information Services Division (ISD) is a business operating unit of NHS National Services Scotland and has been in existence for over 40 years. We are an essential support service to NHSScotland and the Scottish Government and others, responsive to the needs of NHSScotland as the delivery of health and social care evolves.

Purpose: To deliver effective national and specialist intelligence services to improve the health and wellbeing of people in Scotland.

Mission: Better Information, Better Decisions, Better Health

Vision: To be a valued partner in improving health and wellbeing in Scotland by providing a world class intelligence service.

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. The Code of Practice is produced and monitored by the UK Statistics Authority which is independent of Government. Under the Code of Practice, the format, content and timing of statistics publications are the responsibility of professional staff working within ISD.

ISD's statistical publications are currently classified as one of the following:

- National Statistics (ie assessed by the UK Statistics Authority as complying with the Code of Practice)
- National Statistics (ie legacy, still to be assessed by the UK Statistics Authority)
- Official Statistics (ie still to be assessed by the UK Statistics Authority)
- other (not Official Statistics)

Further information on ISD's statistics, including compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics, and on the UK Statistics Authority, is available on the [ISD website](#).

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs;
- are well explained and readily accessible;
- are produced according to sound methods, and
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.