General Ophthalmic Services Statistics

Statistics as at year ending 31 March 2018

A National Statistics publication for Scotland
Publication date: 9 October 2018

About this release

This release by Information Services Division provides information on NHS General Ophthalmic Services eye examinations and related findings for 2017/18 and comparisons to previous years.

Main Points

- In 2017/18 over 2.2 million eye examinations were performed by optometrists working in Scotland, the highest level reported since reporting began.

Number of eye examinations, Scotland, by year; 2006/07 - 2017/18

Source: Ophthalmic Data Warehouse

- Most patients attending for an eye examination were managed within primary care optometry (94%) and not referred for further investigation.
- Four in five claims were for initial regular eye examinations (primary examinations). The remainder were for emergency, additional or follow-up care (supplementary examinations).
- The most common reason for a supplementary examination was 'Patient presenting with reduced visual acuity, sudden vision loss, sudden onset of flashes and floaters, or neurological symptoms (37%).'
- Cataracts were the most common of all the conditions recorded (17%) during eye examinations.
Background

NHS General Ophthalmic Services

NHS General Ophthalmic Services in Scotland are provided by eye care professionals who use a wide variety of tests and procedures to examine the eyes of a patient during an eye examination. There are a number of possible outcomes following the examination including:

- no medical or corrective action needs to be taken;
- a prescription for spectacles / contact lenses needs to be issued;
- treatment for an ocular condition is prescribed and followed up by the practitioner;
- repeat examinations or procedures are conducted to refine a hospital referral, or to rebook for continual monitoring in the community;
- referral to the patient’s General Practitioner with general health concerns;
- referral for specialist ophthalmic care by a hospital consultant.

In April 2010, a change in legislation reduced the frequency and circumstances under which a primary examination can be undertaken. If these conditions are not met, only a supplementary examination can be claimed (see Ophthalmic Report for further information).

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Find out more

Find out more in the full report. The data from this publication is available to download from our web page along with a background information, glossary and metadata document.

The next release of this report is expected in October 2019 and will present data as at 31 March 2019.

NHS Performs

A selection of information from this publication is included in NHS Performs. NHS Performs is a website that brings together a range of information on how hospitals and NHS Boards within NHS Scotland are performing.

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.