About this Release

The ‘Heart Disease Statistics Update’ is produced annually to provide information on a range of heart conditions in Scotland. Information on hospital activity, operations, incidence, 30 day survival following first emergency admission, GP prescribing and mortality is included in this release.

Key points

- Coronary heart disease (CHD), which includes heart attacks, is a leading cause of illness and death in Scotland.

- The number of new cases of CHD (incidence) has decreased over the past decade. The age and sex standardised incidence rate decreased from 361.7 per 100,000 in 2003/04 to 262.8 in 2012/13, a decrease of 27.3%.

- There has been a steady downward trend in deaths from CHD in Scotland, UK and Europe over the last 10 years with the mortality rate in Scotland falling by 43.6%.

- The reduction in death rates for CHD over the decade 2003-2012 has been seen in both the most and least materially deprived communities. The percentage reduction in deaths in the most deprived category (37.6%) over the last 10 years is larger than that in the least deprived category (29.0%). The difference in the death rate between the most and least deprived areas has also decreased over the last decade.

- For those admitted to hospital as an emergency with their first heart attack, the chances of surviving at least 30 days have improved over the last ten years from 84.4% to 91.8%.

- Although the number of prescriptions for drugs to treat cardiovascular disease (all diseases of the circulation, including CHD) increased by 25.8% in the last 10 years, the overall costs of prescriptions dispensed for cardiovascular drugs fell in 2012/13 to £111.7 million, a reduction of 29.1% on the previous year. This is the lowest cost for
these drugs over the last ten years (since 2003/04). Costs may continue to reduce as more medicines become available in less expensive non-branded (generic) form.

**Background**

Although CHD is a preventable disease, there are approximately 8,000 deaths in Scotland each year (7,541 people in 2012) where CHD is the underlying cause. The disease is caused when the heart's blood vessels, the coronary arteries, become narrowed or blocked and cannot supply enough blood to the heart. This can cause a heart attack, angina or heart failure.

Scotland has a high prevalence of the risk factors associated with heart disease such as smoking, poor diet and physical inactivity. Treating and preventing heart disease is a national clinical priority for Scotland ([Better Heart Disease and Stroke Care Action Plan](#)).

It is estimated around 7.3% of men and 5.7% of women are living with CHD ([Scottish Health Survey 2012](#)).

Please note that this publication uses population estimates that have been carried forward from the 2001 census (excluding 2011 onwards, which are based on the 2011 census) and the 1976 version of the European Standard Population (ESP1976) in the calculation of rates. Please refer to Appendix A1 in the publication report for more information on the calculation of rates in future publications.

**Contact**

Charles Guthrie  
Senior Information Analyst  
charles.guthrie@nhs.net  
0131 275 6340

Steven Hecht  
Information Analyst  
stevenhecht@nhs.net  
0141 282 2114

Andrew Deas  
Principal Information Analyst  
andrew.deas@nhs.net  
0131 275 7030

**Heart Disease & Stroke inbox**  
nss.isdhdstroke@nhs.net

**Further Information**

Further information can be found in the [Full Publication Report](#) or on the [ISD website](#)