Publication Summary

Heart Disease Statistics Update
Year Ending 31 March 2014
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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, mortality and ambulance service activity 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 by 30.4% between 2004/05 and 2013/14.

- 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 43.2%.

- The reduction in death rates for CHD over the decade 2004-2013 has been seen in both the most and least materially deprived communities. The percentage reduction in deaths in the most deprived category (40.7%) over the last 10 years is smaller than that in the least deprived category (46.4%). However, the absolute difference in the death rate between the most and least deprived areas has 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 85.1% to 91.8%.

- The number of angioplasties used in the treatment of CHD has increased over the last 10 years (standardised discharge rate up by 47.1%), compared with a reduction in the number of coronary artery bypass grafts (CABGs) over the same period (standardised rate down by 45.5%).
Although the number of prescriptions for drugs to treat cardiovascular disease (all diseases of the circulation, including CHD) increased by 16.9% in the last 10 years, the overall costs of prescriptions dispensed for cardiovascular drugs fell in 2013/14 to £102.9 million, a reduction of 7.8% on the previous year. This is the lowest cost for these drugs over the last ten years (since 2004/05). 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 were 7,239 deaths in Scotland in 2013 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 7.1% of men and 5.3% of women are living with CHD (Scottish Health Survey 2013).

Please note that this publication uses the 2013 European Standard Population (ESP2013) to calculate the European Age Standardised Rates. Figures using the 1976 European Standard Population and ESP2013 are not comparable. Therefore, findings from this publication are not comparable with previous ISD reports. Further details regarding this change are included in Appendix A1 of the publication report.

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Further Information

Further information can be found in the Full Publication Report or on the ISD website

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