Guide to Prescribing Services

Helping you to make best use of prescribing information and intelligence
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Introduction

The Information Services Division (ISD) is responsible for managing health service data for NHSScotland. We provide information, intelligence, statistical services and advice to support safe, effective and person-centred care.

Few countries in the world can rival the quality of the health service data held in Scotland. Since the 1950’s Scotland has developed a national data resource that offers consistency, national coverage and the ability to link data to allow patient based analysis and follow up.

This ‘Guide to Prescribing Services’ has been developed to assist current and new users of our services make best use of the information and intelligence we have available.

ISD is part of NHS National Services Scotland (NSS). NSS supports Scotland’s health by delivering shared services and expertise that helps other organisations to work more efficiently and effectively.

Prescribing Data

ISD has held data on medicines prescribed within NHSScotland for several decades. These data are generated as a by-product of prescription processing by NSS Practitioner Services for the payment of dispensing contractors. We currently have data on over one billion prescriptions which we make available to customers through routine reporting, bespoke analysis and online tools. This ‘Guide to Prescribing Services’ outlines how we support key aspects of prescribing, catalogues the information that is available routinely and describes the help we can offer.

ISD Prescribing Services

Our prescribing team provide a national information and intelligence service for customers in NHS Boards, Government, Academia and Industry. Through our work we support improved health and ensure efficient and effective use of public money.

- We deal with around 300 information requests per year on topics such as remuneration and on specific types of prescribing such as methadone, oxygen and prescribing via particular services types e.g. minor ailments service.
- A wide range of our outputs are available online at: www.isdscotland.org/Health-Topics/Prescribing-and-Medicines/
- We run a programme of routine reporting, designed to meet the specific needs of customers.
- We make information available through a range of electronic reporting tools designed specifically for NHSScotland staff.
- We visit NHS Board customers on a regular basis, assisting staff with the interpretation of data locally.
- We offer a specialist analytical services to support individual customers with their specific information needs. You can find out more about these services by e-mailing: nss.isdprescribing@nhs.net.
Developments

The implementation of the ePharmacy programme across NHSScotland has led to improvements that increase the range of prescribing data available for analysis. These include:

- the Community Health Index (CHI) unique person identifier, allowing linking of prescriptions and other health data for the same individual;
- access to the electronic prescribing and dispensing messages which provides new data on when prescriptions were written as opposed to when they were dispensed;
- additional demographic data on individuals e.g. age, gender, location, care home marker; and
- data on medicines use via the new services provided through community pharmacies e.g. acute and chronic medication services and minor ailments service.

These changes have greatly increased our ability and potential to develop specific population-based analyses of medicines data e.g. co-prescribing of drugs and sequencing of drugs and the impact of prescribing patterns preceding or following significant clinical events.

Improving Access to National Data

Through a single IT interface, authorised NHSScotland users have secure online access to the NHSScotland Corporate Data Warehouse. Users can run reports locally on latest available national data at a time that suits them. For example reports can be scheduled to run overnight in readiness for the next days work.

We currently offer three prescribing datamarts.

- The PRISMS datamart offers information on all prescriptions dispensed in the community from April 2004 onwards. PRISMS can be interrogated to provide reports at individual prescriber, practice, locality, Community Health Partnership, NHS Board and Scotland level.
- The Hospital Medicines Utilisation Database (HMUD) allows the comparison of medicines use in different hospitals across Scotland. It contains data sourced from hospital stock control systems and enables comparison of medicine use in different NHS Boards and hospital sites.
- The Antimicrobial datamart (AMIDS) provides information on anti-microbial use and patterns of anti-microbial resistance.

ISD are working to increase the range of information available to users in this way by developing access to the complete national prescribing dataset - the Prescribing Information System (PIS). These developments will give users information on CHI, e-messaging and additional financial items, a far richer dataset than can currently be provided. We expect this to be of particular interest to prescribing, financial and information analyst users who are looking to undertake more complex analysis of these data.

ISD offer training in the use of all our datamarts. We have a helpdesk to assist users with all aspects of access and use of the datamarts.

For more information about our datamarts please contact our Product Support Team at nss.isdshis@nhs.net or telephone 0131 275 7050.
Prescribing Information and Intelligence produced by ISD supports

Patient Safety
- Identify safe and unsafe combination of medicines through co-prescribing indicators.
- Reduce inappropriate prescribing in children and older people e.g. identification of polypharmacy.
- Monitor compliance with clinical guidelines.
- Feedback to GPs on their prescribing practice.
- Monitor medicines for infections to support their appropriate use.

Effective Prescribing
- Appropriate medicine use through open access to national and local therapeutic prescribing indicators.
- Assessing medicines use in line with local guidance e.g. formularies.
- Identifying patients on multiple concurrent drug treatments.
- Analysis of prescriptions which patients do not get dispensed.

Efficient Prescribing
- Reporting on prescribing spend and performance against budgets.
- Providing access to national and local indicators of prescribing efficiency.
- Enabling the detection of fraud.
- Identifying potential efficiencies from improved generic prescribing.

Planning
- Identification of the burden of specific diseases on service provision.
- Forecasting future spend on medicines.

Research
- Working with researchers who are studying the safe, effective and efficient use of current medicines and the potential for improvements in service provision and configuration for a range of conditions including asthma and diabetes.

Medicines Evaluation
- ISD supports the work of the Scottish Medicines Consortium (SMC) whose role is to analyse information supplied by pharmaceutical manufacturers to assess the appropriateness of new medicines for use in Scotland.

A summary of our routine prescribing service outputs can be found in Appendix One.
Bespoke Analytical Services

ISD offer bespoke analytical services to customers through individually-specified projects that support:

- research and development of treatments to improve the health of the Scottish population;
- the provision of information to support applications for marketing authorisations/licences for use of treatments and/or applications to the Scottish Medicines Consortium for approval for use of treatments by NHSScotland Health Boards; and
- monitoring the safety and effectiveness of licensed treatments used within Scotland.

Each project will typically require detailed discussion to develop initial ideas into an agreed analytical specification, outputs and the contractual terms for the service.

Examples of Bespoke Projects

- Analysis of co-prescribing of anti-inflammatory products and products for gastric protection.
- Estimation of prevalence in Scotland of irritable bowel syndrome with constipation.
- Estimation of the number of patients receiving multiple nicotine replacement products for smoking cessation.
- Estimation of the prevalence of asthma in Scotland.

Contact NSS.ISD-BSSrequests@nhs.net to discuss your requirements.

Other NSS Services

There are prescribing services provided by two other divisions of NSS, Practitioner Services and National Procurement.

Practitioner Services

Practitioner Services are responsible for the processing of all prescriptions and subsequent payments to community pharmacists. Providing services such as the transfer of medical records between GP practices, assisting patients to access GP and dental practices, as well as assisting practitioners to maintain accurate and up-to-date patient registers. We also have a Clinical Governance role with regard to dental services to ensure services are delivered to high professional standards. The division are able to advise on all matters relating to payment and pharmacy contracts and work with NHS Boards on payment verification.

www.psd.scot.nhs.uk

National Procurement

National Procurement (NP) provides procurement expertise for NHSScotland. As part of its role NP works to maximise the purchasing power of NHSScotland to ensure cost effective purchase, supply and use of medicines in secondary care. NP also assess the suitability of Patient Access Schemes for their ability to be implemented as part of the Scottish Medicines Consortium (SMC) approval process for new medicines, supports NHSScotland in managing medicine shortages to minimise risk to patients and provides advice on sourcing of identified alternatives, designs specifications for supply of medicines through the homecare route, participates in the Department of Health contacting for vaccines on behalf of NHSScotland and supports emergency planning stockpiles of medicines and their rotation to minimise wastage.

www.nhsscotlandprocurement.scot.nhs.uk
## Appendix One: Summary of Routine Prescribing Outputs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ISD Prescribing Service Output</th>
<th>Summary</th>
<th>Frequency of Update</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Datamart (NHS only)</td>
<td>AMIDS Datamart: Contains information on anti-microbial use and patterns of anti-microbial resistance that can be analysed online locally. HOSPITAL MEDICINES UTILISATION DATABASE (HMUD): Contains information sourced from hospital stock control systems from 2009 onwards that can be analysed online locally. PRISMS Datamart: Contains information on all prescriptions dispensed in the community from April 2004 onwards that can be analysed online locally. PRISMS holds 275 pre-built reports that can be run locally including: • budget reports; • comparison reporting; • controlled drug monitoring; • cost and volume report; • generic savings reports; • growth reports; • national therapeutic indicators; • prescribing indicators; • Quality Outcome Frameworks (QOF) reports; • unscheduled care. In addition, through PRISMS, ISD hosts over 180 local reports on behalf of eight NHS Boards.</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Publication (available to all)</td>
<td>Antimicrobial Use and Resistance in Humans: Report produced jointly with Scottish Medicines Consortium. Dispenser Remuneration: Report detailing contractors’ remuneration and reimbursement by calendar year and financial year. Mental Health: Report detailing medicines used in mental health including antidepressants; attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD); dementia, hypnotics and anxiolytics; and psychoses. Minor Ailment Service (MAS): Report detailing the number of registrations and treatments. Contains a monthly breakdown of the number of patients registered for the service and provides information on the number of items dispensed. Prescribing of Smoking Cessation Interventions: Report detailing the prescribing of smoking cessation products in Scotland by financial year. Data is shown by NHS Board and annual trend. Prescription Cost Analysis: Report detailing prescription cost analysis and associated statistics including volume, cost, and the top ten drugs prescribed in a financial year.</td>
<td>Annual - September</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Routine Reporting (customer request)</td>
<td>We run a programme of routine reporting, designed to meet the specific needs of customers in Scottish Government and Pharmaceutical industry. You can find out more about this service by e-mailing <a href="mailto:nss.isdprescribing@nhs.net">nss.isdprescribing@nhs.net</a>.</td>
<td>As per customer requirements</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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