

Publication Summary



Prescribing & Medicines: Drugs indicated for the treatment of obesity

Financial Years 2001/02 – 2010/11

Publication date – 27 September 2011



About this Release

This release updates the prescribing of drugs used in the treatment of obesity in Scotland for financial years between 2001/02 and 2010/11. This includes the number of dispensed items, defined daily doses and gross ingredient cost. Data by NHS board and annual trends are also shown.

Key Points

- A total of 95,108 items were prescribed in Scotland during 2010/11, a decrease of 29.3% on the previous year.
- Expenditure on obesity drugs decreased from £4.64 million to £3.39 million between 2009/10 and 2010/11.
- Prescribing of Orlistat fell by 11.1%, down from 106,927 items in 2009/10 to 95,084 in 2010/11.

Background

Three drugs are indicated for the treatment of obesity, as described in the British National Formulary section 4.5; Orlistat, Rimonabant and Sibutramine. Rimonabant was withdrawn by the European Commission on the 16th January 2009 and Sibutramine was suspended across the European Union on the 21st January 2010 as deemed unacceptably safe.

The publication will no longer be updated due to the withdrawal of Rimonabant and Sibutramine, there is only one drug which is currently dispensed within the community.

Information on drugs which are indicated for the treatment of obesity, are obtained from NHS prescription dispensed in Scotland that are prescribed in Scotland and elsewhere in the United Kingdom. All these prescriptions are dispensed by community pharmacies, dispensing doctors, a small number of speciality appliance suppliers and stoma providers. GPs write the vast majority of these prescriptions with the remainder written by authorised prescribers such as nurses and dentists. Also included are prescriptions written in

hospitals that were dispensed in the community, but exclude prescriptions dispensed within hospitals. Items which are purchased over the counter are excluded.

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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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