About this Release
Dispensing contractors are contracted by NHS Scotland to provide a service in Scotland. This release updates what contractors are remunerated and reimbursed for this service. Information is shown by calendar year up to March 2012 and the full financial year 2011/12.

Key Points
- The gross total payments to Scottish dispensing contractors increased from £1,160 million in 2010/11 to £1,177 million in 2011/12.

- The net ingredient cost (NIC) paid to dispensing contractors for drug reimbursement continues to increase, from £951 million in 2010/11 to £974 million in 2011/12. However, the cost for remuneration of services shows a decrease of about £6.5 million (3.1%) from £209.4 million in 2010/11 to £202.9 million in 2011/12.

- The gross ingredient cost (GIC) paid to dispensing contractors for 2011/12 in respect of dispensing was £1,015 million. This is an increase of just under £12 million (1.2%) when compared to 2010/11.

- The number of prescription items for 2011/12 was 94.9 million. This is an increase of 3.5 million (3.8%) compared to 2010/11. The number of prescription items for 2010/11 was 91.4 million. This was an increase of 2.1 million (2.4%) compared to 2009.

- The prescription charge of a single prescription was reduced from £3.00 to £0.00 in April 2011.

Background
Dispensing contractors, i.e. community pharmacists, dispensing doctors and appliance suppliers, are contracted by NHS Scotland to provide a service to the populace of Scotland. To ensure drugs are available for dispensing when a patient arrives with a prescription, dispensing contractors purchase drugs in advance. Therefore, dispensing contractors...
receive two distinct types of payment; remuneration for the service they provide and reimbursement for the drugs they dispense.

The fees and allowances have been revised from April 2011 as explained in the Scottish Government circular PCA2012(P)08 and these payments make up the majority of the decrease.

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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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Scotland has some of the best health service data in the world combining high quality, consistency, national coverage and the ability to link data to allow patient based analysis and follow up.

Information Services Division (ISD) is a business operating unit of NHS National Services Scotland - and has been in existence for over 40 years. We are an essential support service to NHSScotland and the Scottish Government Health Department and others, responsive to the needs of NHSScotland as the delivery of health and social care evolves.

**Official Statistics**

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