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 and financial year up to June 2012.

Key Points
- The gross total payments to Scottish dispensing contractors decreased from £295 million in quarter 1 of 2011/12 to £281 million in quarter 1 of 2012/13.

- The net ingredient cost (NIC) paid to dispensing contractors for drug reimbursement has decreased, from £244 million in quarter 1 of 2011/12 to £230 million in quarter 1 of 2012/13. However, the cost for remuneration of services shows an increase of £1.3 million (2.6%) from £50.5 million in 2011/12 to £51.8 million in 2012/13.

- The gross ingredient cost (GIC) paid to dispensing contractors in quarter 1 of 2012/13 in respect of dispensing was £241 million. This is a decrease of £12.4 million (4.9%) when compared to quarter 1 2011/12.

- The number of prescription items for quarter 1 of 2012/13 was 24.0 million. This is an increase of 0.5 million (2.3%) compared to quarter 1 of 2011/12. The number of prescription items for quarter 1 of 2011/12 was 23.5 million. This was an increase of 0.7 million (3.2%) compared to quarter 1 of 2010/11.

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.
About ISD
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Further information on ISD’s statistics, including compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics, and on the UK Statistics Authority, is available on the ISD website www.isdscotland.org/About-ISD/About-Our-Statistics/

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