About this Release
Dispensing contractors, i.e. community pharmacists, dispensing doctors and appliance suppliers, are contracted by NHS Scotland to provide services to the population 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 services they provide and reimbursement for the drugs they dispense. Information is shown by calendar and financial year up to June 2013

Key Points
- The gross total payments to Scottish dispensing contractors increased from £281.5 million in quarter 1 of 2012/13 to £283.3 million in quarter 1 of 2013/14.

- The net ingredient cost (NIC) paid to dispensing contractors for drug reimbursement has increased from £229.6 million in quarter 1 of 2012/13 to £231.3 million in quarter 1 of 2013/14. The cost of remuneration of services also showed a slight increase of £0.2 million (0.4%) from £51.8 million in the first quarter of 2012/13 to £52.0 million in the first quarter of 2013/14.

- The gross ingredient cost (GIC) paid to dispensing contractors in quarter 1 of 2013/14, in respect of dispensing was £242.3 million. This is a slight increase of £0.9 million (0.4%) compared to the same quarter in 2012/13.

- The number of prescription items in quarter 1 of 2013/14 was 24.6 million. This is an increase of 0.6 million items (2.5%) compared to quarter 1 of 2012/13. The number of prescription items for quarter 1 of 2012/13 was 24.0 million. This was an increase of 0.5 million (2.3%) compared to quarter 1 of 2011/12.
Background
Payments are derived from information gathered by Practitioner Services Division (PSD), after the pricing of prescriptions has taken place. Payments to dispensing contractors are made by PSD on behalf of the NHS Boards. Monthly schedules are made available on a quarterly basis and a year-end summary is provided.

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

About ISD
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
Information Services Division (ISD) is the principal and authoritative source of statistics on health and care services in Scotland. ISD is designated by legislation as a producer of ‘Official Statistics’. Our official statistics publications are produced to a high professional standard and comply with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. The Code of Practice is produced and monitored by the UK Statistics Authority which is independent of Government. Under the Code of Practice, the format, content and timing of statistics publications are the responsibility of professional staff working within ISD.

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/