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 December 2013.

Key points
- The gross total payments to Scottish dispensing contractors increased from £1,126.5 million in 2012 to £1,136.6 million in 2013.
- The net ingredient cost (NIC) paid to dispensing contractors for drug reimbursement has increased from £919.0 million in 2012 to £929.1 million in 2013. The cost of remuneration of services is similar at around £207.5 million for both 2012 and 2013.
- The gross ingredient cost (GIC) paid to dispensing contractors in 2013, in respect of dispensing, was £970.4 million. This is an increase of £4.7 million (0.5%) compared to 2012.
- The number of prescription items dispensed in 2013 was 98.4 million. This is an increase of 1.8 million items (1.9%) compared to 2012. The number of prescription items in 2012 was 96.6 million. This was an increase of 2.8 million (3.0%) compared to 2011.
**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 data are published on a quarterly basis by ISD 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.