About this Release

This release provides information on the prescription cost analysis, the volume and cost of prescriptions, generic prescribing and the top 10 drugs for the financial year 2013/14.

Key Points

- The total volume of items dispensed in Scotland in 2013/14 was 98.8 million, a rise of 1.8% between 2012/13 and 2013/14.
- The number of items dispensed has been increasing year on year with a total increase of 31.8% between 2004/05 and 2013/14.
- Over the last 10 years, the number of items dispensed has increased at a greater rate than the total cost of drugs, this is because a number of high volume and high cost drugs have come out of patent, and increasingly drugs are prescribed generically.
- The rate of generic prescribing was 83.2% in 2013/14. The percentage of generic prescribing has increased steadily since 2004/05.
- The total (net) cost of items dispensed in Scotland in 2013/14 was £1.15 billion, an increase of 2.5% compared to 2012/13. The net cost has increased overall by 21.9% over the last ten years, although it has fluctuated slightly in recent years.
- In 2013/14 omeprazole (used for reducing stomach acid) was the most commonly prescribed drug by volume. This was also the case in 2012/13.
- Inhalers containing the drug salmeterol with fluticasone propionate, used for respiratory conditions such as asthma, had the highest total gross ingredient cost in 2013/14 at £43.5 million. This has been the highest cost drug to NHSScotland since 2011/12.
Background

This information contained in this report is obtained from NHS prescriptions dispensed in Scotland. All these prescriptions are dispensed by community pharmacies, dispensing doctors, a small number of specialist 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. It also includes prescriptions written in hospitals that were dispensed in the community. It does not include information on prescriptions dispensed within hospitals.

Contact

Lucy Aitken
Senior Information Analyst
lucya@isdscotland.org
0131 275 6801

Catriona Young
Senior Information Analyst
catriona.young@isdscotland.org
0131 275 6599

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.

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