Publication Summary

Report on Antimicrobial Use and Resistance in Humans in 2014
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About this Release
This is the seventh annual report published by Health Protection Scotland (HPS) and the Information Services Division (ISD) of NHS National Services Scotland (NSS) on antibiotic use and antibiotic resistance in Scotland. The majority of information presented here covers the period up to the end of 2014.

Key Points

- The Scottish Management of Antimicrobial Resistance Action Plan 2014-18 (ScotMARAP 2) aims to reduce the use of antibiotics in Scotland. In 2014 the rate of antibiotics dispensed in primary care was reduced by 1.9% compared with 2013, the second successive reduction in primary care. This reduction means the rate of antibiotic prescribing in primary care is back down to the level seen in 2005.

- However, the rate of antibiotic use in hospitals was 5.9% higher in 2014 compared with 2013. This continues an upward trend observed since 2009.

- Overall there was continued progress toward reduction in the use of the antibiotics that are particularly associated with a risk of Clostridium difficile infection (CDI). In primary care, where the bulk of prescribing takes place, there was a 5.0% decrease in the use of these antibiotics. However, there was a 9.7% increase in their use in hospitals.

- Antibiotic resistance in the most common bacterial infections was stable in 2014, continuing the flat trend since 2011. However, resistance to a wide range of important antibiotics continues to occur for some serious infections.

- Carbapenemase producing organisms (CPOs) are an important cause of antibiotic resistance. The number of reported CPOs continues to increase in Scotland (43 were reported in 2014); though part of this increase could be due to improved reporting.

- The proportion of Meticillin Resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) among all S. aureus infections continues to decrease and was 9.2% in 2014.
Background
Resistance to antibiotics continues to pose a serious public health threat globally. The loss of effective antibiotics undermines our ability to fight infectious diseases. The problem is made worse by the fact that a new infectious disease has been discovered almost every year over the past 30 years, while very few new antibiotics have been developed.

This annual report presents detailed information on the use of antibiotics and on antibiotic resistance in Scotland and provides recommendations on interventions and national healthcare improvement activities aimed at stemming the tide of further antibiotic resistance.

Note that while the term ‘antibiotic’ has been used in this summary for clarity, the report focuses exclusively on antibacterial drugs, those drugs that act against bacteria causing infections. The term ‘antimicrobial’ covers drugs that act against any kind of microorganism, including fungi, viruses and bacteria.

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