

Prescribing & Medicines: Prescription Cost Analysis



Financial Year 2015/16

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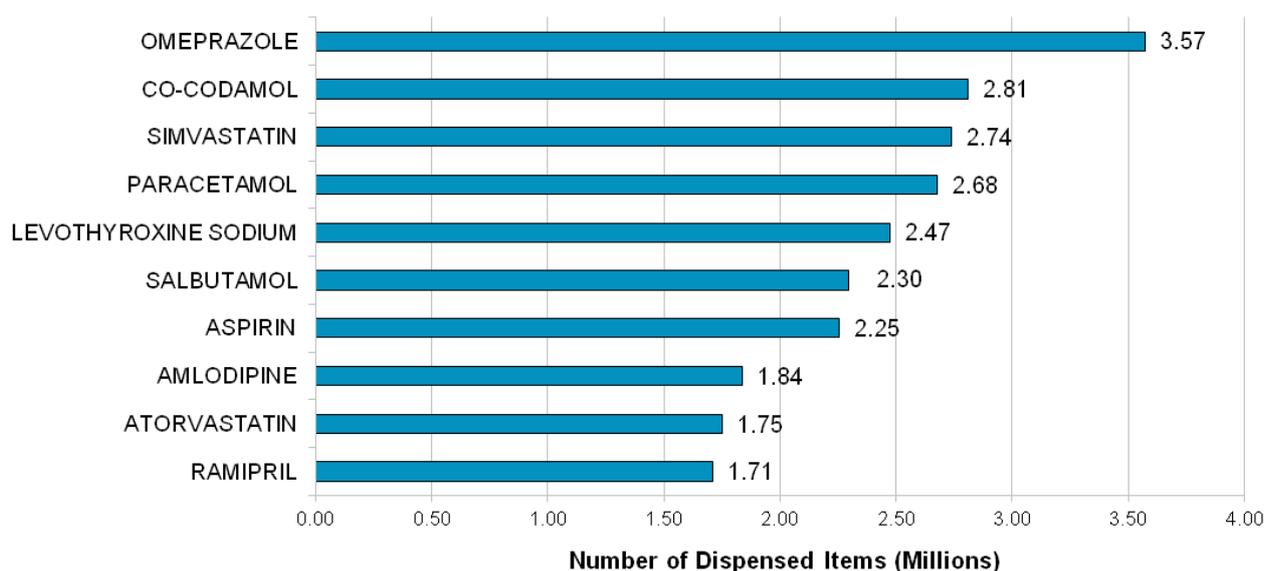
About this release

Information Services Division reports on the number and cost of NHS prescriptions dispensed in the community in Scotland for the financial year 2015/16.

Main points

- In 2015/16 the total number of items dispensed was 102.61 million items with a gross ingredient cost of £1.10 billion.
- In 2015/16, the drug omeprazole, used for reducing stomach acid, was the most commonly prescribed drug with 3.57 million dispensed items. This has been the most commonly prescribed drug since 2012/13.
- Inhalers that contain the drug salmeterol with fluticasone propionate, prescribed for respiratory conditions such as asthma, had the highest total gross ingredient cost in 2015/16 at £35.55 million. This has been the highest cost drug since 2011/12.
- The rate of generic prescribing was 83.6% in 2015/16. The percentage of generic prescribing has slowly but steadily increased since 2006/07.
- Many of the drugs showing volume increases have an equivalent therapeutic use to one or more drugs that have decreased in volume and vice versa.

Top 10 drugs by number of items dispensed in NHSScotland – 2015/16



Background

The information contained in this annual report is obtained from NHS prescriptions dispensed in the community in Scotland. These 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. This report does not include information on prescriptions dispensed within hospitals but does include information on prescriptions written in hospitals that were dispensed in the community. Prescriptions written on hospital forms are reimbursed from the hospital (secondary care) budget.

In Scotland, the gross ingredient cost is the cost of drugs and appliances reimbursed to prescribers, before deduction of any dispenser discount.

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Find out more

ISD holds several decades of information on medicines prescribed within NHSScotland. We currently have data on over one billion prescriptions. All of the information we publish on prescribing is available on our website at: <http://www.isdscotland.org/Health-Topics/Prescribing-and-medicines/>

Further information for 2015/16 can be found in the full [Prescription cost analysis report](#).

The next update of this publication will be in July 2017.

NHS Performs

A selection of information from this publication is included in [NHS Performs](#). NHS Performs is a website that brings together a range of information on how hospitals and NHS Boards within NHSScotland are performing.

ISD and Official Stats

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. Find out more about our statistics.