



Termination of Pregnancy Statistics

Year ending December 2015

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About this release

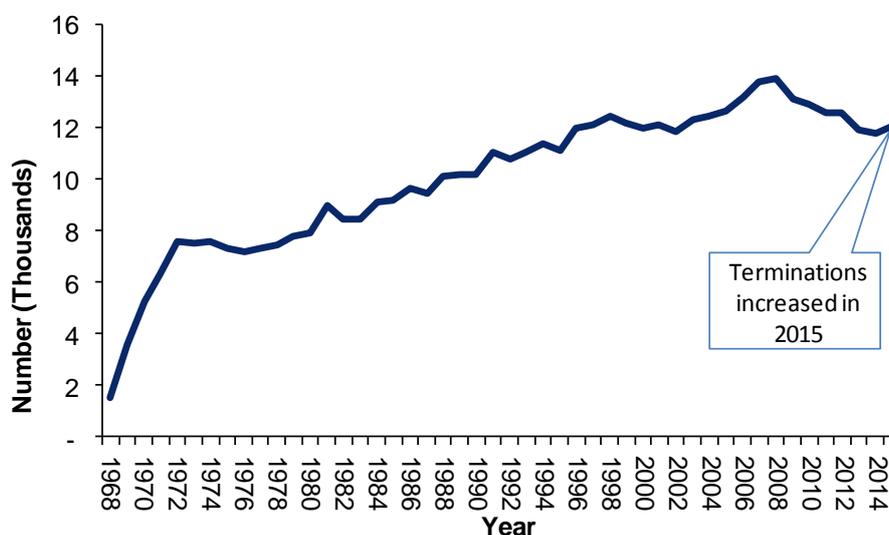
This release from the Information Services Division (ISD) provides an annual update on Abortion Statistics to December 2015. These data are derived from the Notifications to the Chief Medical Officer for Scotland under the Abortion Act 1967.

Information is provided by age, gestation, method of termination, NHS Board of residence, deprivation category, previous termination and ground for termination.

Main Points

- The number of terminations in Scotland increased by 306 between 2014 and 2015 from 11,776 to 12,082; a rise of 2.6%.

Terminations of pregnancy performed in Scotland 1968 – 2015



- Termination rates continue to decline in women under 20 years old but have increased among older women, particularly those aged 35-39 years.
- The increase in terminations in 2015 mainly occurred in women living in the most deprived areas of Scotland. Termination rates are higher among women living in more deprived areas.
- The majority of terminations are performed in early pregnancy using medical (involving the use of drugs) rather than surgical methods.

Background

An abortion is defined as a termination of pregnancy and is either induced (therapeutic) or spontaneous (miscarriage). The termination of pregnancy statistics reports on induced abortions only. A termination of pregnancy can be performed surgically (eg vacuum aspiration, dilation and curettage) or medically. Medical methods of termination are carried out using drugs such as mifepristone (an antiprogesterone) and misoprostol (a prostaglandin).

There is a legal requirement to notify the Chief Medical Officer in Scotland of all terminations carried out in Scotland. The Information Services Division is responsible for the collation of data derived from notifications of abortions on behalf of the Chief Medical Officer in Scotland.

All notifications are validated prior to analysis. Data quality is considered to be high, although occasional omissions and administrative errors in submitting notification forms are inevitable, leading to some under-reporting. All late submissions of notification forms are included in the following year's statistics release as revised figures.

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Further Information

The data from this publication is available to download [from our web page](#).

Further details are available in the full publication report: [Termination of Pregnancy Statistics 2015](#).

The next release of this publication (terminations performed in 2016) is scheduled for May 2017.

ISD and 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. [Further information about our statistics](#).