Termination of Pregnancy Statistics
Year ending December 2017
A National Statistics publication for Scotland

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About this release
This release by Information Services Division (ISD) provides an annual update on Termination of Pregnancy Statistics to December 2017. These data are derived from the Notifications of Abortion to the Chief Medical Officer for Scotland (CMO) under the Abortion (Scotland) Regulations 1991. Information is provided by age, gestation, method of termination, NHS Board of residence, deprivation area, previous termination and ground(s) for termination.

Some comparative data for England and Wales are also included, although 2017 data will not be available until 7 June 2018.

Main Points
• The number of terminations in Scotland was at a five year high in 2017. There were 12,212 terminations of pregnancy in Scotland in 2017. This was 106 more terminations than reported in 2016; an increase of just under one percent. The number of terminations remained below the 2008 high of 13,908.

Number of terminations of pregnancy in Scotland between 2000 and 2017

![Graph showing number of terminations of pregnancy in Scotland between 2000 and 2017]
- For the fourth successive year the lowest termination rate was in the under 16 age group. The under 16 termination rate has been falling since 2007, down from 4.0 to 1.3 per 1,000 women aged 13-15.
- Year on year increases in the termination rates (between 2013 and 2017) have been recorded in the most deprived areas. Termination rates in the most deprived areas were twice as high as those from the least deprived areas.
- Women living in remote rural localities remain at a disadvantage when accessing termination services early in pregnancy. In 2017 the percentage of women having a termination under nine weeks in the remote rural category remained below the Sexual Health Standard of 70% falling to 66.5% from 69.9% in 2016.

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 CMO of all terminations carried out in Scotland. ISD is responsible for the collation of data derived from notifications of abortions on behalf of the CMO 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
Find out more in the full report. The data from this publication are available to download from our web page.

For related topics, please see the Sexual Health pages.

The next release of this publication will be May 2019.