About this Release
This publication relates to the annual update of stroke statistics, including information on cerebrovascular disease, stroke, subarachnoid haemorrhage and transient ischaemic attacks. Information on hospital activity, incidence, operations, 30 day survival following first admission, mortality and prescribing is included in this release.

Key Points
- The standardised hospital discharge rate for stroke decreased by 5.7% for men over the last ten years, from 267.2 per 100,000 in 2002/03 to 251.8 in 2011/12. For women, it decreased by 4.2% from 194.2 per 100,000 in 2002/03 to 185.9 per 100,000 in 2011/12.

- The standardised hospital discharge rate for cerebrovascular disease (CVD) in men decreased by 6.0% between 2002/03 and 2011/12 (from 395.2 to 371.6). For women, the decrease was 1.7% (from 297.8 to 292.6) over the same period.

- In the past decade, the incidence rate (the number of new cases) of CVD, decreased by 21.7% (from 199.3 cases per 100,000 population in 2002/03 to 156.0 cases per 100,000 population in 2011/12).

- Age-standardised mortality rates for CVD have fallen steadily over the last 10 years, from 81.9 per 100,000 population in 2002 to 47.7 in 2011, an overall reduction of 41.8% and a fall of 5.7% from the previous year.

- The overall costs of prescriptions dispensed for cardiovascular related drugs fell to £157.8 million in 2011/12, a reduction of 5.8% on the previous year. This is the lowest cost for cardiovascular drugs observed for any year over the last decade to 2011/12. Costs may reduce as medicines become available in generic form once drug patents expire.
Background

Cerebrovascular disease (CVD), which includes cerebrovascular accident/stroke and transient ischaemic attack (TIA), was responsible for the deaths of 4,600 people in Scotland in 2011. A stroke or TIA happens when the blood supply to part of the brain is interrupted and the brain cells are starved of oxygen. This usually occurs because a blood vessel becomes blocked by fatty deposits or a blood clot. The problem is temporary in the case of a TIA but longer lasting in the case of a stroke. Stroke is more common in people over the age of 65. Subarachnoid haemorrhage occurs when a blood vessel supplying the brain bursts.

CVD is largely preventable. Reducing CVD is a priority in Scotland where prevalence of risk factors, such as smoking, high blood pressure, and alcohol consumption above recommended limits is high. Around 2.9% of men and 2.7% of women are living with stroke (Scottish Health Survey 2011, table 8.1).

The Scottish Government published their strategy document Better Heart Disease and Stroke Care Action Plan in June 2009 and this confirmed that stroke would continue to be a national clinical priority for NHS Scotland.

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Further Information

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

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