About this release

This release from the Information Services Division provides an annual update on cerebrovascular disease in Scotland, including stroke, brain haemorrhage and ‘mini-stroke’. This publication includes information on hospital activity, operations, incidence, 30-day survival following first emergency admission, GP prescribing, mortality and ambulance service activity.

Main Points

- Cerebrovascular disease develops as a result of problems with the blood vessels supplying the brain. The incidence rate for cerebrovascular disease decreased over the last decade by 14.0%. Incidence rates were consistently higher in males than females.

- In the last decade, the mortality rate for cerebrovascular disease decreased by 33.5%.

Figure 1. Cerebrovascular disease – age and sex adjusted mortality rates per 100,000 population, Scotland, 2006-2015
The mortality rate for cerebrovascular disease in the most deprived areas was 42.3% higher than in the least deprived areas in 2015.

The percentage of people surviving 30 days or more following their first emergency admission to hospital with a stroke improved slightly over the last ten years from 80.7% in 2006/07 to 84.9% in 2015/16.

The number of prescriptions for drugs to treat diseases of the circulation increased by 6.6% in the last ten years. Despite this increase, the cost of prescriptions dispensed for these drugs has fallen by 44.6% over the last ten years to £116.8 million in 2015/16, reflecting falls in drug prices for these conditions.

Background

Despite a substantial decrease in rates of death over the last decade, there were 4,310 deaths in Scotland in 2015 where cerebrovascular disease, including stroke, is the underlying cause.

Scotland has a high prevalence of the risk factors associated with cerebrovascular disease such as smoking and high blood pressure. Treating and preventing stroke is a national clinical priority for Scotland as outlined in the Stroke Improvement Plan.

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Further Information

The Information Services Division publishes a range of cerebrovascular disease-related information. You can find all our information on stroke section of the ISD website. More information is also available from the Scottish Stroke Care Audit. Further information can be found in the Stroke Statistics report. The next update of this publication will be in January 2018.

Corresponding information on heart disease can be found on the heart disease section of the ISD website.