



Prescriptions by GPs in Wales, 2015-16

14 September 2016
SFR 121/2016

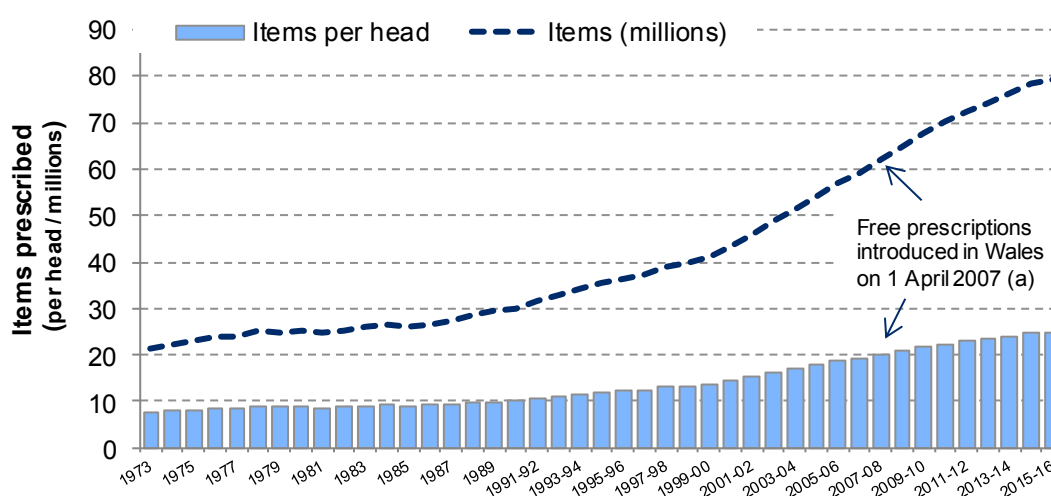
Prescription statistics published here are based on information obtained from prescriptions sent for payment to Prescribing Services, NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership.

The data is presented largely in terms of 'prescription items' which refers to single items prescribed by a doctor on a prescription form. If a prescription form includes three items it is counted as three prescription items. Full definitions are included in the notes section at the end of the release.

A large amount of complex data on prescriptions is available; it should be interpreted with the explanatory notes provided at the end of the release and with reference to the [Quality Report](#).

Data captured by Prescribing Services in the prescription pricing and remuneration process are also available on their [website](#).

Chart 1: Prescription items, since 1973



Source: NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership

(a) see [notes](#) for further details

The number of items prescribed in Wales in 2015-16 was 79.2 million - up from 21.3 million in 1973 (271%), and from 57.0 million in 2005-06 (39%).

The increase in items prescribed between 2014-15 and 2015-16 was 0.8%, the smallest increase since it fell in 1985.

The number of items per head (registered with a GP) in 2015-16 was 24.8 – up from 7.6 in 1973 (227%), and from 18.7 in 2005-06 (33%).

Items per head rose by 0.6% over the year; this is the smallest increase since it fell in 1985.

About this release

This release gives information on items which were prescribed by GPs in Wales, and dispensed, during the year. These are referred to in the release as items 'prescribed' by GPs. Items prescribed but not dispensed are excluded.

The release also highlights the main trends and patterns in prescribing over previous years, and aims to provide statistical context for current prescribing policy in Wales.

Further data can be found on [StatsWales](#), our interactive data dissemination service.

In this release

Prescribing trends	3
Therapeutic classes 2015-16	4
Therapeutic classes 10 year trend	6
Analysis by LHBs	10
Key quality information	13
Notes	17

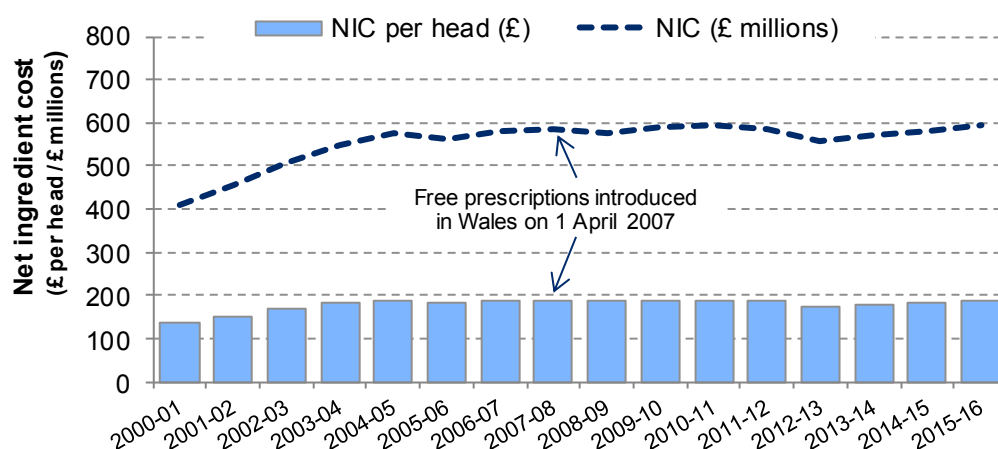
Contents:

Chart 1: Prescription items, since 1973.....	1
Prescribing trends	3
Chart 2: Net ingredient cost, 2000-01 onwards	3
Chart 3: Items prescribed generically (%), 2000-01 onwards	3
Therapeutic Classes – 2015-16	4
Chart 4: Items by therapeutic class, 2015-16	4
Chart 5: NIC by therapeutic class, 2015-16.....	4
Chart 6: Net ingredient cost per item, by therapeutic class 2015-16.....	5
Therapeutic Classes - 10 year trend	6
Chart 7: Prescription items by top ten therapeutic classes in 2015-16 compared with 2005-06.....	6
Chart 8: Net ingredient cost by top ten therapeutic classes in 2015-16 compared with 2005-06.....	7
Chart 9: Net ingredient cost per prescription item by top ten therapeutic classes in 2015- 16 compared with 2005-06.....	8
Chart 10: Items and net ingredient cost, annual percentage change, 2005-06 to 2015-16	9
Charts 11a to c: Annual percentage change of the number of items dispensed in the three largest classes (cardiovascular, central nervous and endocrine systems)	9
Analysis by Local Health Board.....	10
Chart 12: Number of prescription items per prescribing unit, by Local Health Board, 2015-16	10
Chart 13: Net ingredient cost per prescribing unit, by Local Health Board, 2015-16	10
Chart 14a: Number of items per prescribing unit, cardiovascular system, 2015-16	11
Chart 14b: Number of items per prescribing unit, central nervous system, 2015-16	11
Chart 14c: Number of items per prescribing unit, endocrine system, 2015-16.....	12
Chart 14d: Number of items per prescribing unit, gastro-intestinal system, 2015-16	12
Chart 14e: Number of items per prescribing unit, respiratory system, 2015-16.....	12
Key Quality Information.....	13
Definitions:.....	13
Therapeutic Class:	16
Notes:	17

Prescribing trends

Chart 2 shows the net ingredient cost (NIC) - see note (a) - of items prescribed by GPs in Wales, and the NIC per head of population registered with a GP.

Chart 2: Net ingredient cost, 2000-01 onwards



Source: NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership

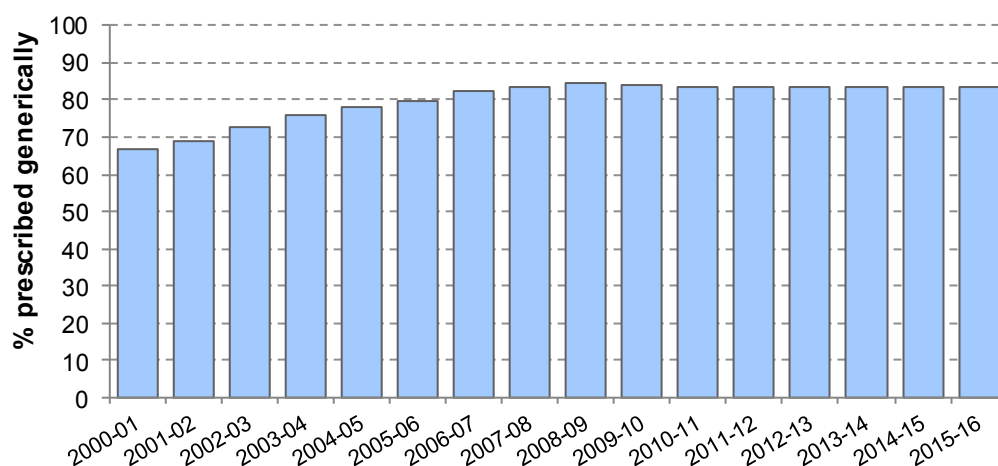
(a) Refers to the cost (which the dispenser is reimbursed) of the drug before discounts and does not include any dispensing costs or fees. It does not include any adjustment where the patient has purchased a pre-payment certificate (before 2007).

The net ingredient cost of items prescribed by GPs in Wales in 2015-16 was £593 million, up from £411 million in 2000-01 (45%) and from £563 million in 2005-06 (5%).

The NIC per head of population registered with a GP increased from £136.51 in 2000-01 to £189.73 (the highest) in 2004-05, but has remained under £190 for the last 10 years.

Chart 3 shows the percentage of prescription items prescribed generically (a).

Chart 3: Items prescribed generically (%), 2000-01 onwards



Source: NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership

(a) see the [notes](#) section at the end of the release for the definition of 'prescribed generically'

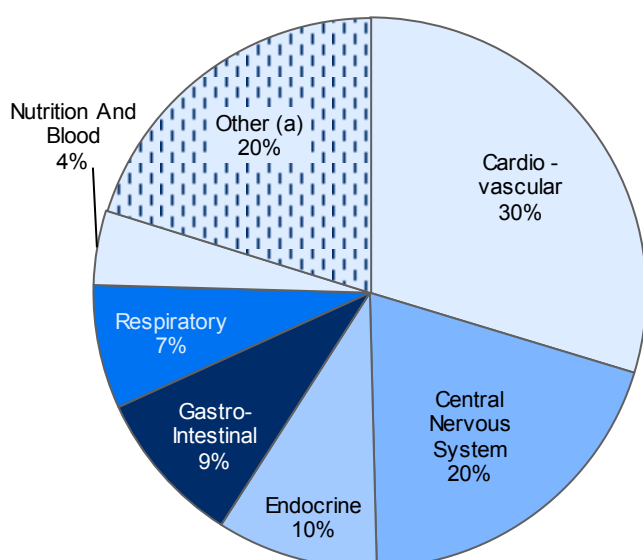
The percentage of items prescribed generically has risen from 66.7% in 2000-01 to more than 80% each year from 2006-07 onwards.

Therapeutic classes - 2015-16

Chart 4 shows the proportion of items prescribed in Wales, while **Chart 5** shows the net ingredient cost (NIC) of prescription items in Wales, by the six largest therapeutic classes (by items) during 2015-16. A list of the [therapeutic classes](#) is included in the notes section of this release.

- Half of all prescription items prescribed in Wales were for the treatment of conditions of the cardiovascular and central nervous systems.
- Almost a third (30% or 23.5 million) of prescription items prescribed were for treatment of the cardiovascular system; this equates to 7.4 items per head of population registered with a GP.
- 20% (15.8 million) items were prescribed for the treatment of the central nervous system, equal to 4.9 items per head of population registered with a GP.
- Although the number of items prescribed for treatment of the central nervous and cardiovascular systems accounted for half of the total items prescribed (see Chart 4), the NIC for the same classes only accounted for 32% of the total (see Chart 5).

Chart 4: Items by therapeutic class, 2015-16

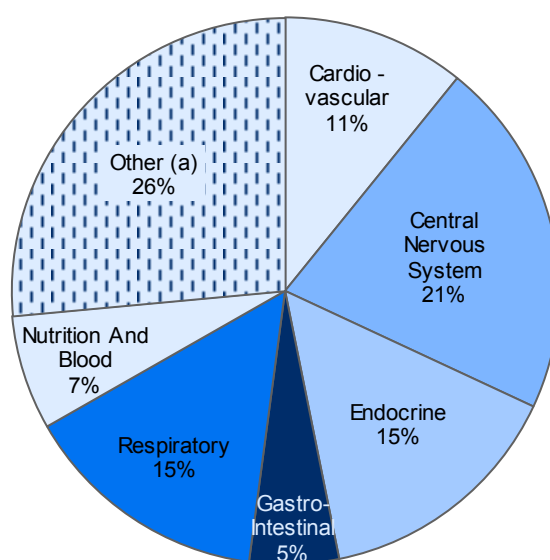


Source: NHS Wales shared Services Partnership

(a) 'Other' includes: skin, infections, musculoskeletal & joint, obstetrics, gynaecology & urinary tract, malignant disease & immunosuppression, ear, nose & oropharynx, eye, immunological products & vaccines, anaesthesia, other drugs & preparations, dressings, appliances, preparations used in diagnosis, incontinence appliances and stoma appliances.

It should be noted that the NIC in several classes included in 'other' (eg stoma appliances) is higher than the NIC of some of the classes shown; the same classes, based on highest number of items prescribed, are shown in both charts.

Chart 5: NIC by therapeutic class, 2015-16

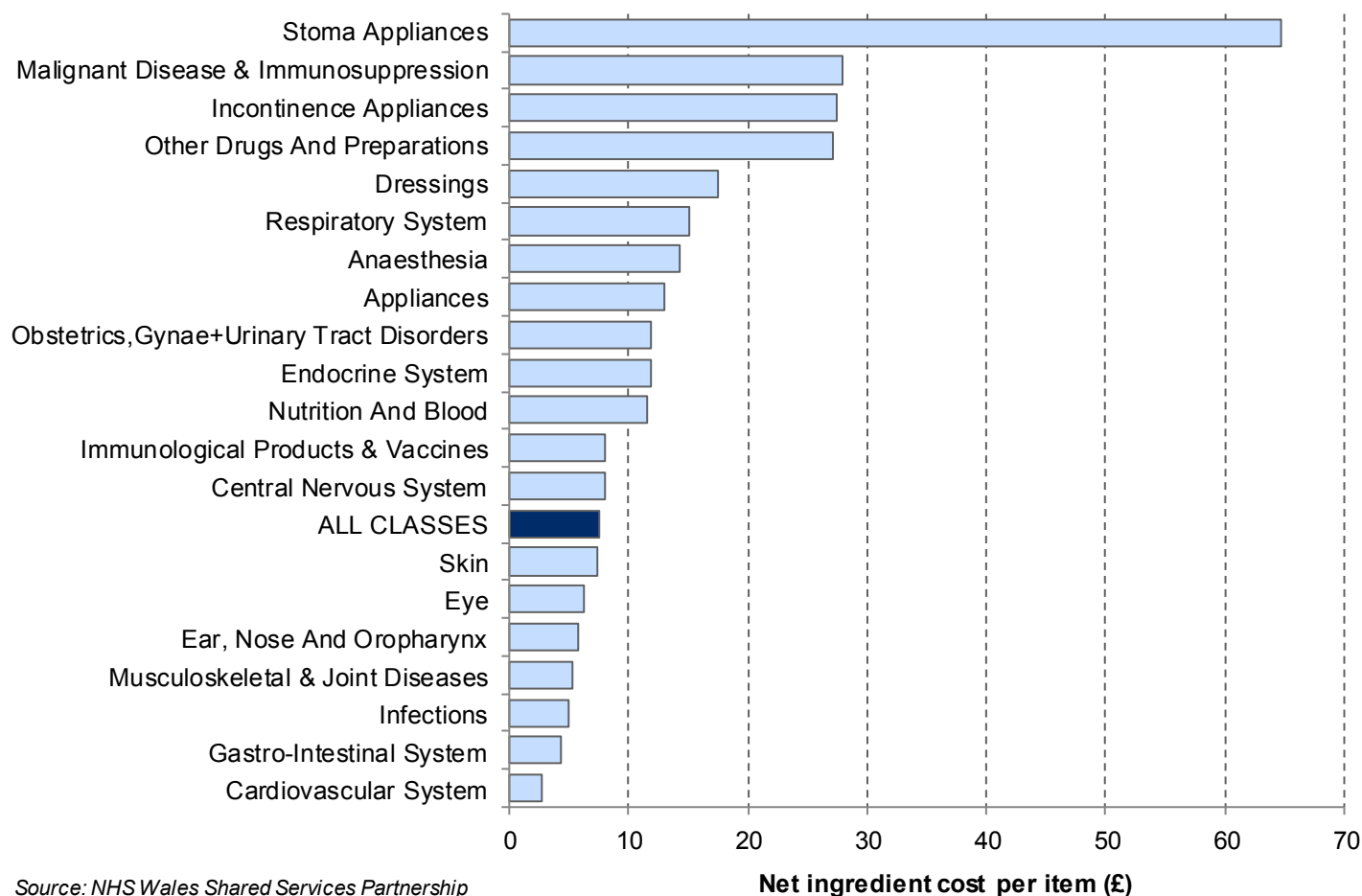


Source: NHS Wales shared Services Partnership

Chart 6 shows the net ingredient cost (NIC) per item, of prescriptions dispensed in Wales during 2015-16, by therapeutic class.

- The net ingredient cost per item ranged from £2.73 in the cardiovascular system class to £64.80 for items in the stoma appliances class.
- For all therapeutic classes together, the net ingredient cost per item was £7.50, 9p higher than the previous year, the first year since 2003-04 that an increase has been recorded.

Chart 6: Net ingredient cost per item, by therapeutic class 2015-16



Source: NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership

Note: No items prescribed in the 'preparations used in diagnosis' class in 2015-16
(a) See the [notes](#) for a list of therapeutic classes.

Therapeutic classes - 10 year trend

Charts 7-9 show the number of items prescribed, the costs¹ per head of population and the cost per prescription item, by the top ten therapeutic classes, in Wales in 2015-16 compared with 2005-06.

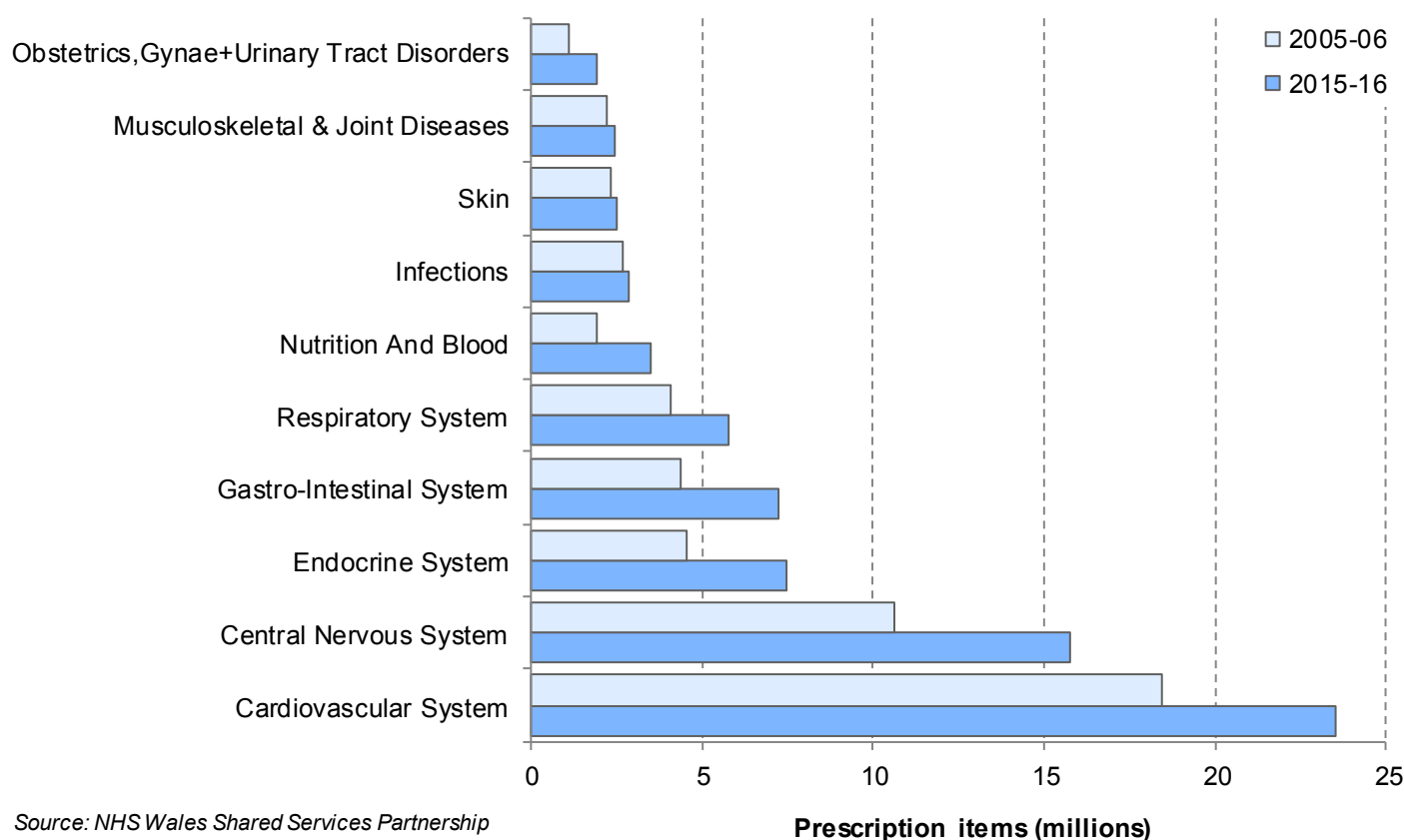
These three charts should be read in conjunction with each other, for while the total net ingredient cost has increased by just over £30 million (5.4%) compared with 2005-06, 22.1 million more items were prescribed, an increase of almost 39%.

¹ Net ingredient cost – see [notes](#) section at the end of the release

Items

- 23.5 million items were prescribed to treat conditions or diseases of the cardiovascular system in Wales in 2015-16, an increase of 27% from the 18.5 million items dispensed in 2005-06.
- Items to treat conditions or diseases of the cardiovascular system accounted for 30% of all items prescribed in 2015-16, down slightly from 32% in 2005-06.
- 15.8 million items were prescribed to treat conditions or diseases of the central nervous system in Wales in 2015-16, an increase of 48% from the 10.6 million items dispensed in 2005-06.
- Of the ten largest groups, the biggest increase over the 10 years is in the nutrition and blood class, with 3.5 million items prescribed in 2015-16 compared with 1.9 million in 2005-06.
- Over the last 10 years, the number of items prescribed in all classes has increased by 39%, up from 57.0 million items in 2005-06 to 79.2 million in 2015-16.

Chart 7: Prescription items by top ten therapeutic classes in 2015-16 compared with 2005-06



Source: NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership

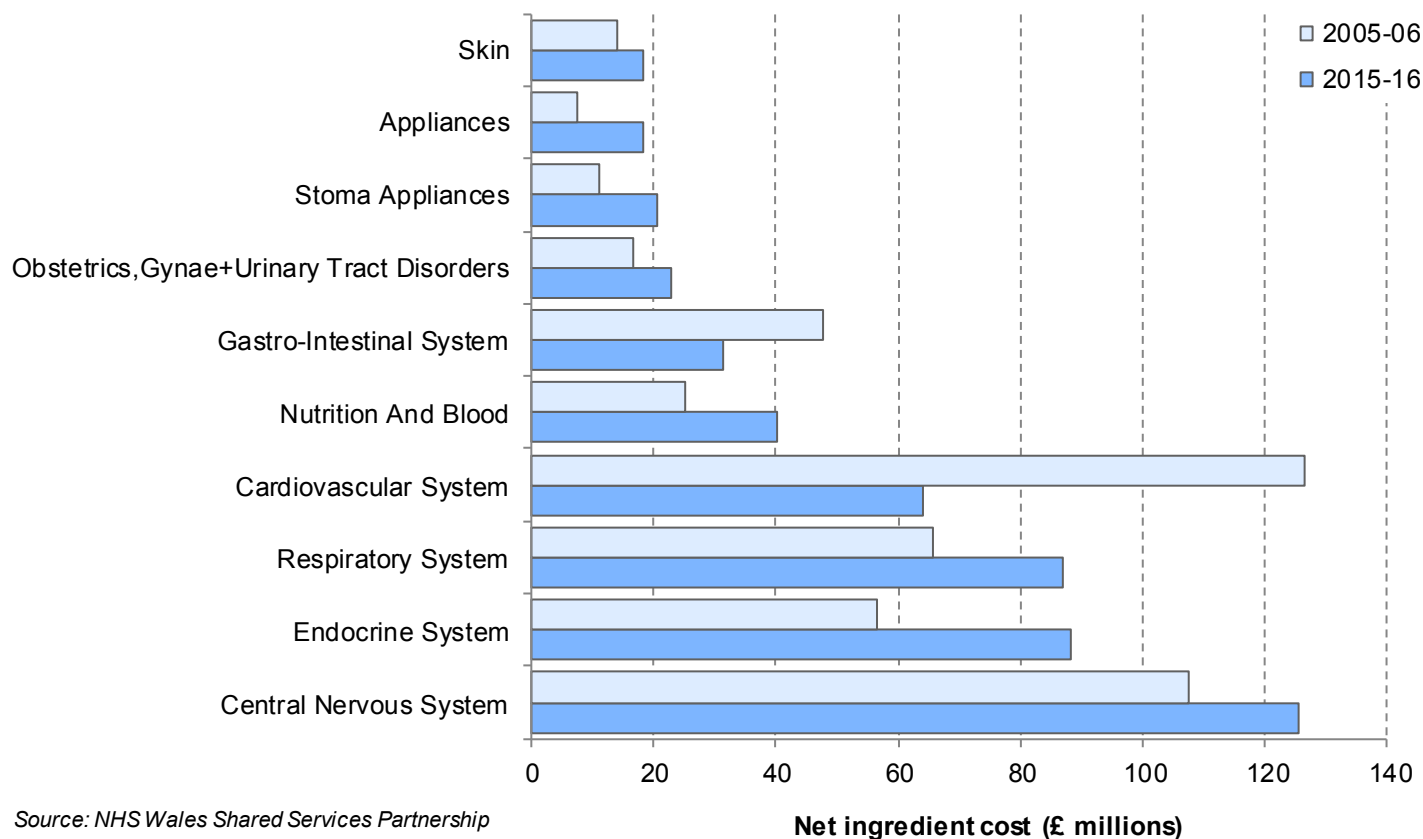
See [StatsWales](#) for more detail

Net ingredient cost (NIC)

- The total net ingredient cost of items prescribed in the largest class (by cost), the central nervous system, was £125.4 million in 2015-16, an increase of 17% from the £107.6 million in 2005-06.
- The total net ingredient cost of items prescribed in the second largest class (by cost), the endocrine system, which has overtaken respiratory as the second largest class (by cost) in this latest year, was £88.3 million in 2015-16, up 56% from £56.6 million in 2005-06.
- The biggest increase in cost over the 10 years is in the appliances class, up 143% in 2015-16 (£18.3 million) compared with 2005-06 (£7.5 million).
- The total net ingredient cost of items in the cardiovascular system class has fallen by 49% over the last 10 years, from £126.3 million in 2005-06 to £64.2 million in 2015-16¹.
- The total net ingredient cost of items in the gastro-intestinal system class has fallen by 34% over the last 10 years, from £47.6 million to £31.3 million.
- Over the last 10 years, the total net ingredient cost for all classes has increased by 5.4%, up from £563.2 million in 2005-06 to £593.5 million in 2015-16.
- A major change in the last 10 years has been the fact that the cardiovascular system was the largest class by cost 10 years ago, but since 2007-08 the central nervous system has taken over as the largest group by cost.

¹ The NICs of a number of medicines in the cardiovascular class have decreased considerably in recent years. The decrease is related to changes in the price the NHS pays for a medicine when the relevant originator brand loses its patent protection and equivalent generic products, which generally have a lower acquisition cost, become available.

Chart 8: Net ingredient cost by top ten therapeutic classes in 2015-16 compared with 2005-06

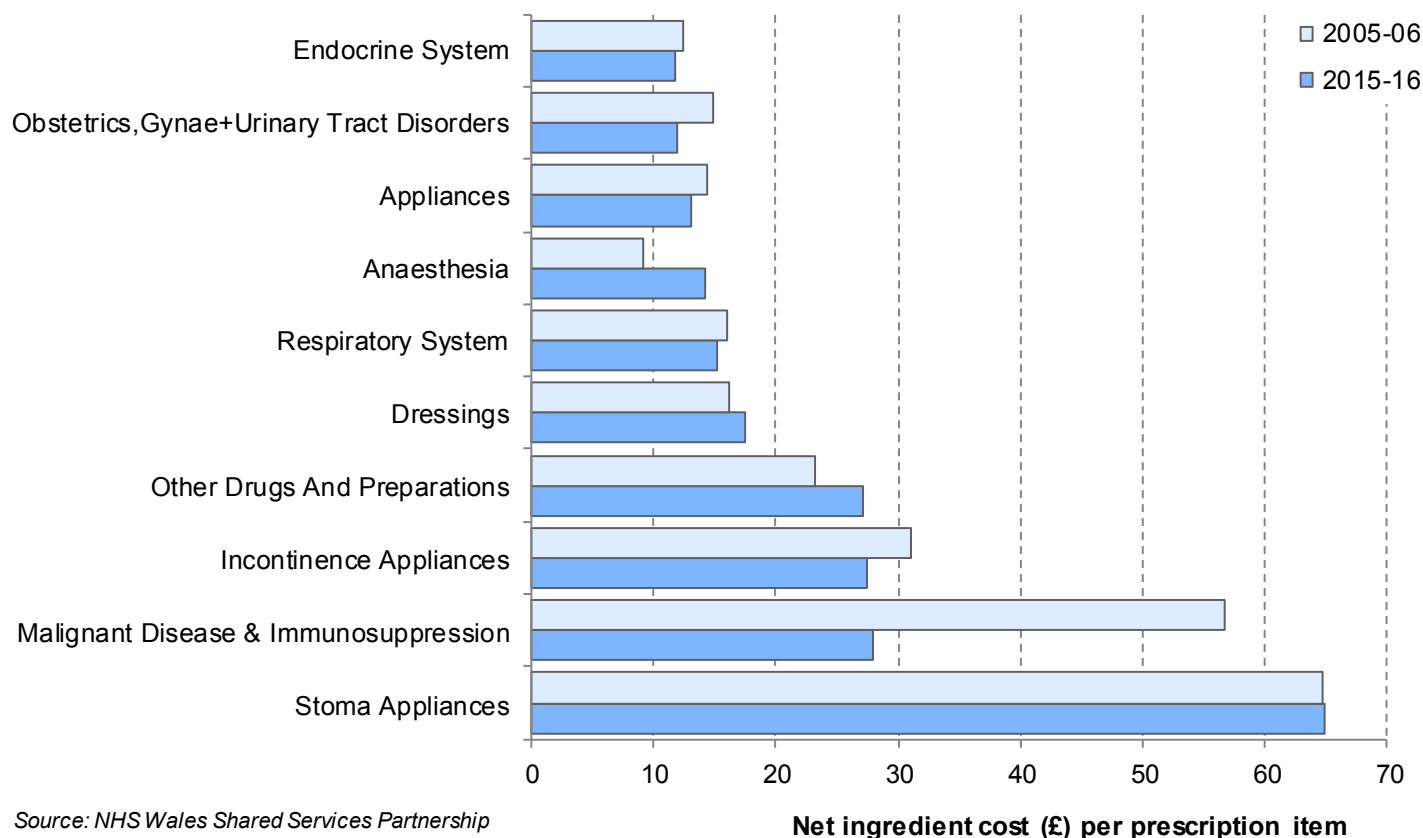


See [StatsWales](https://stats.wales.gov.uk/) for more detail

Net ingredient cost (NIC) per prescription item

- In 2015-16 the most expensive therapeutic class, in terms of cost per item, was stoma appliances, at £64.80 per prescription item, about the same as in 2005-06 (£64.78).
- Many of the classes show a reduction in cost per item from 2005-06 to 2015-16, for example malignant disease and immunosuppression (-51%), although anaesthesia has risen by 56% from £9.11 to £14.25, and other drugs and preparations from £23.23 to £27.13 (17%).

Chart 9: Net ingredient cost per prescription item by top ten therapeutic classes in 2015- 16 compared with 2005-06



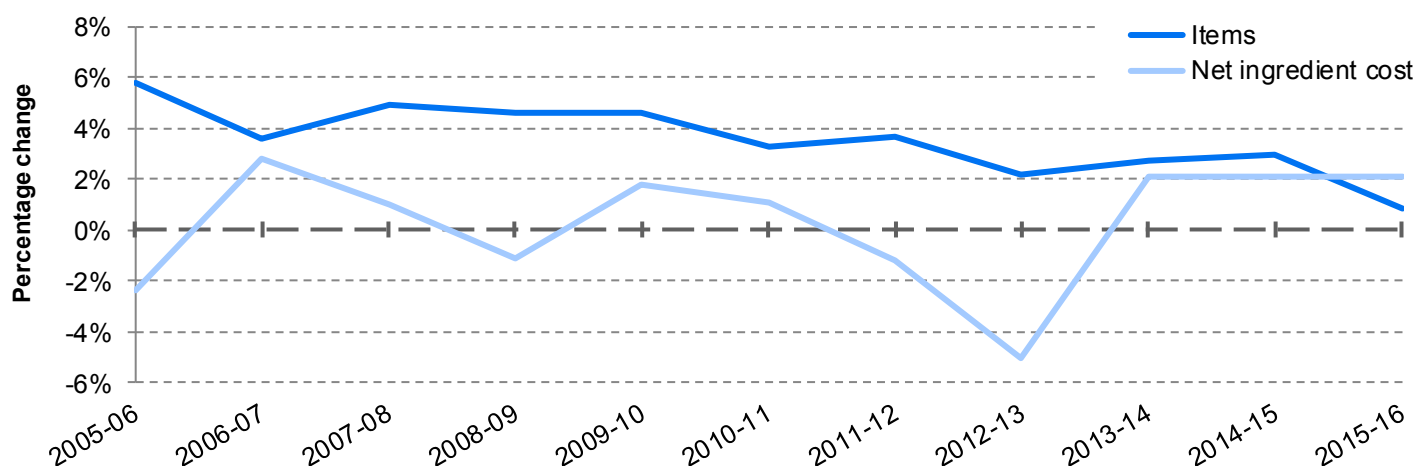
¹Preparations used in diagnosis' have been excluded from this analysis as in most years very few or no items were prescribed.

See [StatsWales](#) for more detail

Chart 10 shows the annual percentage change, over the last 10 years, of the total number of prescription items prescribed and the total net ingredient cost.

- Apart from 2012-13 when the net ingredient cost fell by 5.1%, the annual percentage change has fluctuated around zero (2.1% in 2015-16 from the previous year).
- The annual percentage increase in the number of items has fallen slightly from around 6% a year to 1% in 2015-16.

Chart 10: Items and net ingredient cost, annual percentage change, 2005-06 to 2015-16



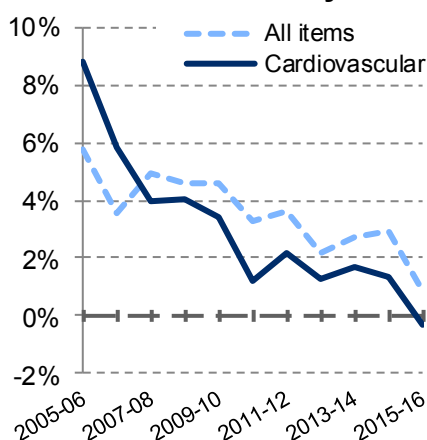
Source: NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership

Charts 11a to 11c shows the annual percentage change, over the last 10 years, of the number of items prescribed in the three largest classes, cardiovascular system, central nervous system, and endocrine system, plus all items.

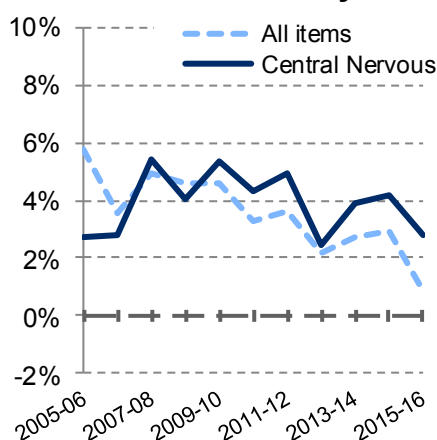
Annual increases in the cardiovascular system class and for endocrine items mirrored the all items trend, with the number of cardiovascular items actually falling for the first time in 2015-16 (a negative annual change). Annual increases for the central nervous system class varied between 2.5% and 5.4%.

Charts 11a to c: Annual percentage change of the number of items dispensed in the three largest classes (cardiovascular, central nervous and endocrine systems)

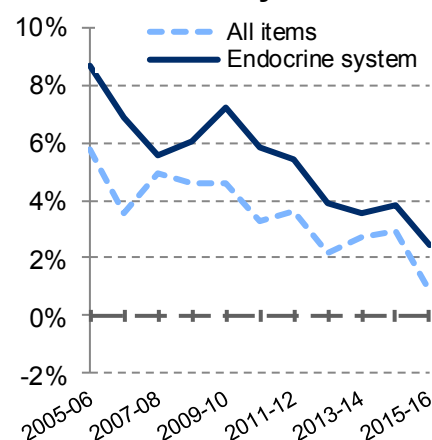
11a - cardiovascular system



11b - central nervous system



11c - endocrine system



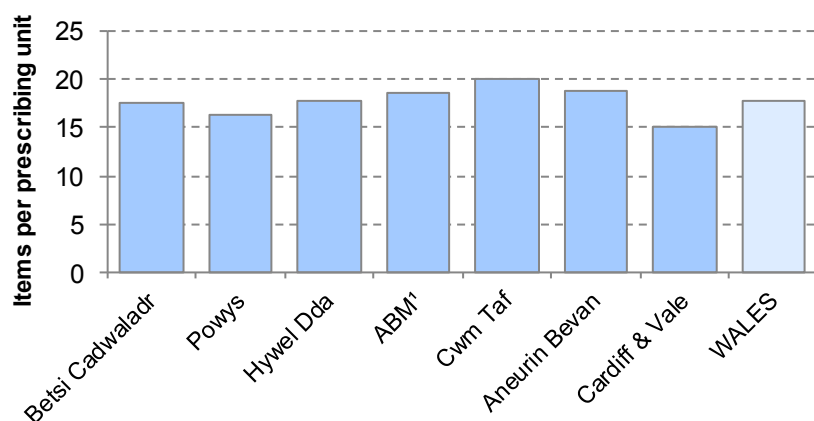
Source: NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership

Analysis by Local Health Board

The following charts show the numbers of items prescribed by GPs contracted to Welsh Health Boards together with the associated NIC. Rather than comparing items per **head** of population registered with a GP, the charts show items and NIC per **Prescribing Unit**. Prescribing units (PUs) are calculated by giving a greater weight (by a factor of three) to the registered population aged 65 or over. They have been adopted here to take account of the greater need of elderly patients for medication and so to make more meaningful comparisons between Health Boards. The remaining differentials may be related to relative need and local culture and practice. 25 per cent of the population registered with a GP in Powys was aged 65 or over in 2015 whereas only 15 per cent of Cardiff & Vale's population fell into this group. Cwm Taf and Aneurin Bevan also had relatively fewer older GP patients (less than 20 per cent of the total population) and Hywel Dda had the 'oldest' population after Powys.

Chart 12 shows the number of items prescribed per prescribing unit – see above - by Local Health Board, in 2015-16.

Chart 12: Number of prescription items per prescribing unit, by Local Health Board, 2015-16



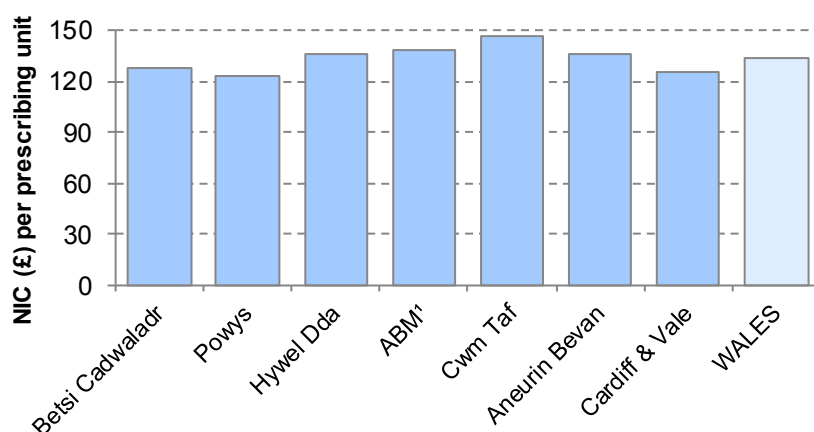
The number of items prescribed per prescribing unit in 2015-16 was 17.8 for Wales, and varied across the LHBs from 15.2 in Cardiff & Vale to 20.1 in Cwm Taf.

Sources: NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership and GMS census

¹Abertawe Bro Morgannwg

Chart 13 shows the net ingredient cost - see note (a) - of items prescribed by GPs in Wales, per prescribing unit, by LHB, in 2015-16.

Chart 13: Net ingredient cost per prescribing unit, by Local Health Board, 2015-16



The net ingredient cost per prescribing unit in 2015-16 was £133.53 in Wales, and ranged from £123.71 in Powys to £146.35 in Cwm Taf.

GPs in Cardiff & Vale prescribed fewer items per prescribing unit than in other Health Boards but at a higher cost per item: £8.27 per item as compared to Cwm Taf, for example, which had the highest rates per prescribing unit for both items and cost but the lowest cost per item (£7.27).

Sources: NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership and GMS census

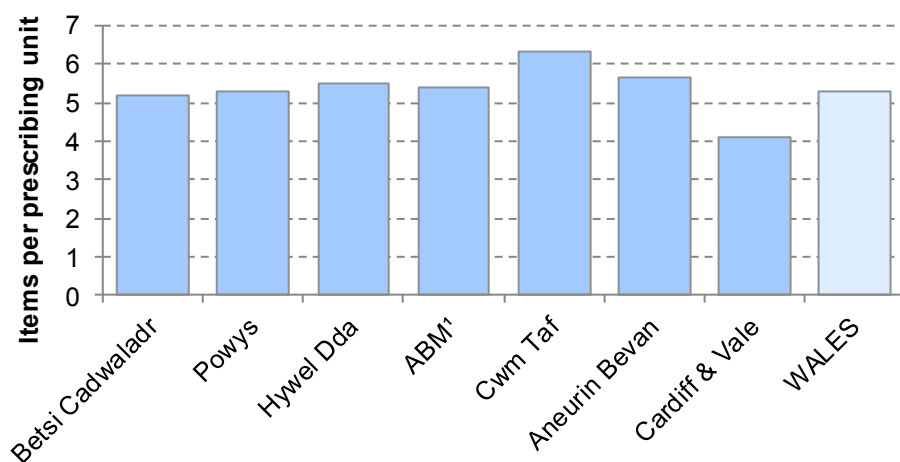
¹Abertawe Bro Morgannwg

(a) Refers to the cost (which the dispenser is reimbursed) of the drug before discounts and does not include any dispensing costs or fees

Charts 14a-d look at the number of items prescribed per prescribing unit – see [above](#) - by Local Health Board, in 2015-16 for the top 5 classes (by number of items prescribed) – cardiovascular, central nervous, endocrine, gastro-intestinal and respiratory system.

Despite having relatively high proportions of under 65 year olds, Cwm Taf has the highest prescribing rates for each of the classes shown below. The lowest rates were seen in Cardiff & Vale for the following classes: cardiovascular, endocrine and gastro-intestinal. Powys had the lowest rates for the central nervous system and respiratory classes, once the rates are weighted to allow for the relatively older population.

Chart 14a: Number of items per prescribing unit, cardiovascular system, 2015-16



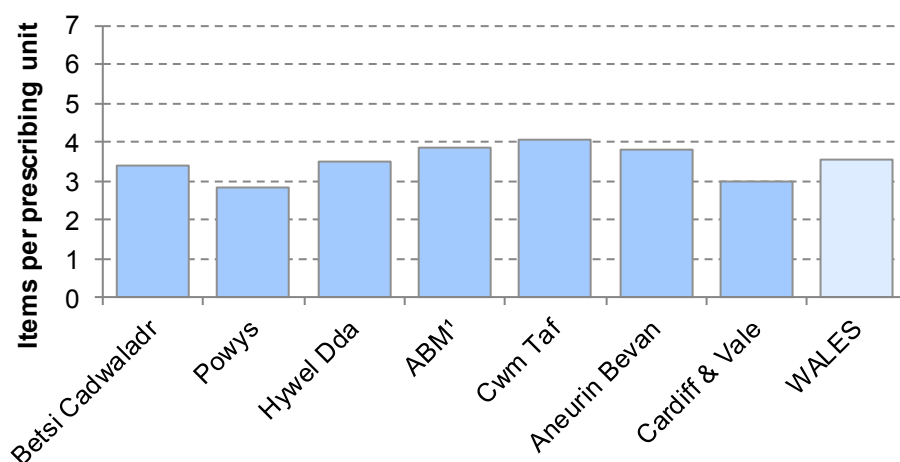
Sources: NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership and GMS census

¹Abertawe Bro Morgannwg

In Wales, the number of items prescribed - per prescribing unit – in the cardiovascular system class was 5.3.

Across the LHBs, this ranged from 4.1 in Cardiff & Vale to 6.3 in Cwm Taf.

Chart 14b: Number of items per prescribing unit, central nervous system, 2015-16



Sources: NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership and GMS census

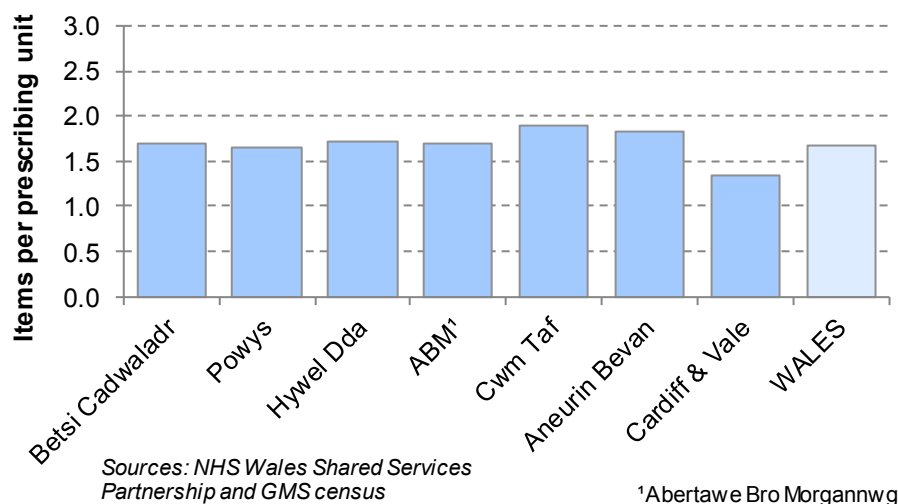
¹Abertawe Bro Morgannwg

The number of items prescribed - per prescribing unit – in the central nervous system class was 3.5 for Wales as a whole.

Across the LHBs, this ranged from 2.8 in Powys to 4.1 in Cwm Taf.

Note that the scale on the two charts on this page is not the same as the scale on Charts 14c, 14d and 14e on the following page.

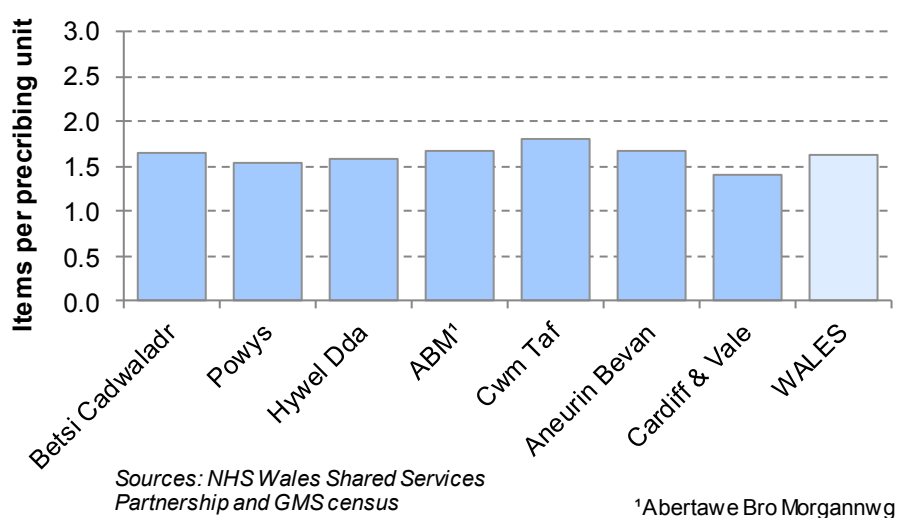
Chart 14c: Number of items per prescribing unit, endocrine system, 2015-16



In Wales, the number of items prescribed - per prescribing unit - in the endocrine system class was 1.7.

Across the LHBs, this varied from 1.3 in Cardiff & Vale to 1.9 in Cwm Taf.

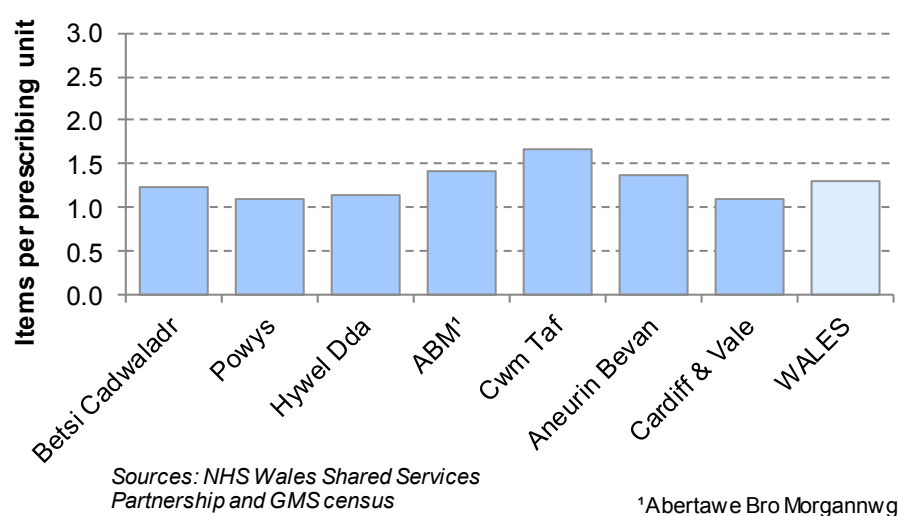
Chart 14d: Number of items per prescribing unit, gastro-intestinal system, 2015-16



The number of items prescribed - per prescribing unit - in the gastro-intestinal system class across Wales was 1.6.

Within the LHBs, this ranged from 1.4 in Cardiff & Vale to 1.8 in Cwm Taf.

Chart 14e: Number of items per prescribing unit, respiratory system, 2015-16



In Wales, the number of items prescribed - per prescribing unit - in the respiratory system class was 1.3.

Across the LHBs, this ranged from 1.1 in Powys (1.09) and Cardiff & Vale (1.10) to 1.7 in Cwm Taf.

Note that the scale on the three charts on this page is not the same as the scale on Charts 14a and 14b on the previous page.

Key quality information

Quality report

We publish a detailed [quality report](#) on 'Prescriptions by GPs in Wales' statistics. The quality report includes information on definitions and coverage, and details of our users.

Source

The data are obtained from Prescribing Services, NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership and are based on information obtained from prescriptions sent to Prescribing Services for payment.

Further data is available on the [Prescribing Services website](#).

From April 2013, prescribing data by individual GP practices is available via the [Prescribing Services website](#).

Coverage

This release covers prescription items prescribed (and dispensed) or dispensed by GPs in Wales. Excluded from this release are prescriptions which were prescribed but, for a variety of reasons, have not been dispensed. It also covers prescriptions submitted by prescribing doctors for items personally administered. Detailed data on all items dispensed in the community in Wales (including items not prescribed by GPs) are published in a separate Statistical Release together with comparisons of prescribing patterns in the four UK countries.

The statistics are based on the data provided by Prescribing Services following their payment processing. Prescribing Services, NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership have stated that due to the complex and manual processes involved there may be inaccuracies in capturing prescription information which are then reflected in the data. Internal quality assurance processes exist and currently the prescription processing activity is internally audited at around 99% accuracy (i.e. at least 99% of prescriptions are processed accurately).

Definitions

Items dispensed

A prescription item refers to a single item prescribed by a doctor on a prescription form. If a prescription form includes three items it is counted as three prescription items. A prescription item may be for a variable quantity eg 14, 28 or 56 tablets. A prescription item consists of a quantity of tablets or other preparation. This means that the cost per item does not equate to the cost, for example, per tablet or per pack of tablets but to the average number of packs prescribed per item.

Net Ingredient Cost (NIC)

NIC refers to the cost of the drug before discounts and does not include any dispensing costs or fees. It does not include any adjustment where the patient has purchased a pre-payment certificate.

Figures quoted for net ingredient cost for all years are unadjusted for inflation. Standard adjustments for inflation are not considered appropriate as drug prices are subject to controls under the Pharmaceutical Price Regulation Scheme and to other central controls.

Free prescriptions

Prescription charges were frozen on 1 April 2001 and gradually reduced each year until free prescriptions were introduced in Wales on 1 April 2007. Before 2007 prescriptions were free for those people under 25 or over 60, or who had certain medical conditions.

Generic Prescribing

A prescription item prescribed generically refers to a prescription which has been written using the British Approved Name (BAN), International Non-proprietary Name (INN) or the scientific name of the active ingredient rather than the proprietary name.

Registered population

This is the number of people registered with a GP in Wales. In 2009 this was at 1 October, otherwise this is at 30 September. The source is the annual [GP Census](#).

Prescribing units (PUs)

PUs are calculated by giving a greater weight (by a factor of three) to the population aged 65 or over (used as the denominator). They have been adopted here to take account of the greater need of elderly patients for medication and so to make more meaningful comparisons between Health Boards.

As an example for 2014-15:

Total prescription items: 78,512,726

Total population age 0-64, 2014 population registered with a GP: 2,555,500

Total population aged 65 or over: 617,494

PUs: $4,407,982 (2,555,500 + (3 * 617,494))$

Items per PU: 17.81

BNF

The British National Formulary (BNF) is a joint publication of the British Medical Association and the Royal Pharmaceutical Society. It is published biannually under the authority of a Joint Formulary Committee which comprises representatives of the two professional bodies and of the UK Health Departments.

Therapeutic classification

PCA data are based on the therapeutic grouping used in the British National Formulary. The classification in this report is based on the September 2014 BNF.

NHS Prescription Services have created pseudo-BNF chapters, for items that cannot be found in BNF chapters 1 to 15. The majority of these items are dressings and appliances, which NHS Prescription Services have classified into four pseudo-BNF chapters (20 to 23). However some gel and colloid dressings that are classified as drugs are included in a pseudo section within BNF 13 (13.13). NHS Prescription Services have produced a booklet on [BNF classifications](#) and the pseudo classifications used.

Examples of the conditions covered by each group (unless group is self-explanatory) are given below:

- ♦ **Gastro-intestinal system:** including preparations for the management of indigestion, diarrhoea, constipation, haemorrhoids, ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease
- ♦ **Cardiovascular system:** including preparations for the management of arrhythmia (irregular heart rhythm), hypertension (high blood pressure), heart failure and high cholesterol
- ♦ **Respiratory system:** including preparations for the management of asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), cystic fibrosis, allergies, cough and congestion
- ♦ **Central nervous system:** including preparations for the management of anxiety, sleeplessness, depression, pain, epilepsy, substance misuse, Parkinson's disease and Alzheimer's disease
- ♦ **Infections:** including preparations for the treatment of infection
- ♦ **Endocrine system:** including preparations for the management of diabetes, an under or over active thyroid gland and other hormonal conditions
- ♦ **Obstetrics, gynaecology and urinary tract disorders:** including contraceptives and preparations used in obstetrics
- ♦ **Malignant disease and immunosuppression:** including preparations for the treatment and management of cancer and conditions affecting the immune system
- ♦ **Nutrition and blood:** vitamins, minerals and prescribed foods
- ♦ **Musculoskeletal and joint disorders:** including preparations for the management of rheumatoid arthritis and gout, myasthenia gravis, spasticity and topical treatments for pain
- ♦ **Eye:** including preparations for the treatment and management of eye infections and glaucoma
- ♦ **Ear, nose and oropharynx:** including preparations for the treatment and management of conditions affecting the ear, nose and throat
- ♦ **Skin:** including preparations for the treatment and management of eczema, psoriasis, acne, warts and verrucae
- ♦ **Immunological products and vaccines:** including preparations for the treatment of anaemia, vitamin preparations and supplements
- ♦ **Anaesthesia**
- ♦ **Preparations used in diagnosis**
- ♦ **Other drugs and preparations**
- ♦ **Dressings**
- ♦ **Appliances**
- ♦ **Incontinence supplies**
- ♦ **Stoma appliances**

A full list of the therapeutic classes (BNF chapters) and their sub groups are shown in the following table.

Therapeutic class

Gastro-intestinal System

- Antacids
- Antispasmodic and other drugs altering gut motility
- Ulcer healing drugs
- Antidiarrhoeal drugs
- Treatment of chronic diarrhoeas
- Laxatives
- Preparations for haemorrhoids
- Stoma care
- Drugs affecting intestinal secretions

Cardiovascular System

- Positive inotropic drugs
- Diuretics
- Anti-arrhythmic drugs
- Beta-adrenoceptor blocking drugs
- Antihypertensive therapy
- Nitrates and other vasodilators, and calcium channel blockers
- Sympathomimetics
- Anticoagulants and protamine
- Antiplatelet drugs
- Antifibrinolytic drugs and haemostatics
- Lipid-lowering drugs
- Local sclerosants

Respiratory System

- Bronchodilators
- Corticosteroids
- Cromoglycate and related therapy
- Allergic disorders
- Oxygen
- Mucolytics
- Aromatic inhalations
- Cough preparations
- Systemic nasal decongestants

Central Nervous System

- Hypnotics and anxiolytics
- drugs used in psychoses and related disorders
- Antidepressant drugs
- Central nervous system stimulants
- Appetite suppressants
- Drugs used in nausea and vertigo
- Analgesics
- Antiepileptics
- Drugs used in parkinsonism and related disorders
- Drugs used in substance dependence
- Drugs used in Alzheimer's disease

Infections

- Antibacterial drugs
- Antifungal drugs
- Antiviral drugs
- Antiprotozoal drugs
- Anthelmintics

Endocrine System

- Drugs used in diabetes
- Thyroid and antithyroid drugs
- Corticosteroids
- Sex hormones
- Hypothalamic and pituitary hormones and antioestrogens
- Other endocrine drugs

Obstetrics, Gynaecology and Urinary Tract Disorders

- Drugs used in obstetrics
- Treatment of vaginal and vulval conditions
- Contraceptives
- Drugs used for genito-urinary disorders

Malignant Disease and Immunosuppression

- Cytotoxic drugs
- Drugs affecting the immune response
- Sex hormones and hormone antagonists in malignant disease

Nutrition and Blood

- Anaemias and other blood disorders
- Fluids and electrolytes
- Oral nutrition
- Minerals
- Vitamins
- Bitters and tonics
- Metabolic disorders
- Foods
- Compound vitamin / mineral formulations
- Health supplements
- Other health supplements

Musculoskeletal and Joint Disorders

- Drugs used in rheumatic diseases and gout
- Drugs used in neuromuscular disorders
- Drugs used for relief of soft tissue inflammation

Eye

- Anti-infective eye preparations
- Corticosteroids and other anti-inflammatory preparations
- Mydriatics and cycloplegics
- Treatment of glaucoma
- Local anaesthetics
- Miscellaneous ophthalmic preparations
- Contact lenses

Ear, Nose and Oropharynx

- Drugs acting on the ear
- Drugs acting on the nose
- Drugs acting on the oropharynx

Skin

- Vehicles and emulsifying agents
- Emollient and barrier preparations
- Local anaesthetics and antipruritics
- Topical corticosteroids
- Preparations for eczema and psoriasis
- Preparations for acne
- Preparations for warts and calluses
- Sunscreens and camouflagers
- Shampoos and some other scalp preparations
- Anti-infective skin preparations
- Disinfectants and cleansers
- Antiperspirants
- Wound management products
- Topical circulatory preparations
- Miscellaneous topical preparations

Immunological Products and Vaccines

- Vaccines and antisera
- Immunoglobulins

Anaesthesia

- General anaesthesia
- Local anaesthesia

Preparations used in Diagnosis

- X-ray contrast media

Other Drugs and Preparations

Dressings

Appliances

Incontinence Supplies

Stoma Appliances

NOTE: some preparations have multiple indications and may therefore be classified under more than one therapeutic class.

Our statistics take into account our disclosure control guidance and follow ONS confidentiality guidelines for Health statistics available from [ONS best-practice guidelines](#)

Notes

Pharmacy and appliance contractor dispensing data

Data on Pharmacy and Appliance Contractor Dispensing Data in Wales is available from [NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership, Primary Care Services](#).

Data for other UK countries

Prescribing patterns for the four UK countries are presented in the annual '[Prescriptions dispensed in the community](#)' statistical release. Data for other UK countries can be accessed via the following webpages:

England

Prescriptions dispensed in the community

[Web page: Prescriptions Dispensed in the Community, Statistics for England, 2005-2015](#)

[Report: Prescriptions dispensed in the community, England 2005-2015](#)

Prescription Cost Analysis (PCA)

[Web page: Prescription Cost Analysis - England, 2015](#)

[Report: Prescription Cost Analysis - England, 2015](#)

Scotland

Prescription Cost Analysis (PCA)

[Web page: Prescription Cost Analysis - Scotland, 2015-16](#)

[Report: Prescription Cost Analysis - Scotland, 2015-16](#)

Northern Ireland

Prescription Cost Analysis (PCA)

[Web page: Prescription Cost Analysis - Northern Ireland, 2014](#)

[Data: Prescription Cost Analysis - Northern Ireland, 2014](#)

Note that varying prescribing practice may affect the interpretation of UK country comparisons.

The figures supplied in this release cover items dispensed in Wales.

Below are summary details for England, Northern Ireland and Scotland PCA publications, taken from the details on their websites which existed at the time of this publication. These details represent our interpretation of what is available and should be taken as a guide only. Queries should be addressed to the responsible organisation - links to their websites are included above.

PCA in England published by NHS Digital

PCA in England is published by calendar year. NHS Digital publishes the data together with a statistical bulletin which provides analysis and comment on patterns and trends; both are available from the NHS Digital website.

Coverage is similar to PCA in Wales in terms of type of dispensers and prescribers included and that all prescriptions included are those dispensed in England only.

The data fields published are:

- cost in NIC (equivalent to NIC in Wales);
- items; and
- quantity together with standard quantity unit and preparation class.

All individual preparations are listed in the Excel version of the PCA data– no suppression of preparations which are rarely dispensed.

Figures are published at the following levels of aggregation:

- Overall total;
- BNF Chapter;
- BNF Section;
- BNF Paragraph;
- BNF Sub – paragraph;
- chemical; and
- individual preparations.

PCA in Northern Ireland (NI) published by Business Services Organisation

PCA in Northern Ireland is published by calendar year.

Coverage is assumed to be similar to PCA in England and Wales in terms of type of dispensers and prescribers included and that all prescriptions included are those dispensed in NI only.

Fields are:

- ingredient cost before discount;
- items; and
- quantity.

All individual preparations are listed – no suppression of preparations which are rarely dispensed.

Figures are published at the following levels of aggregation:

- BNF Chapter;
- BNF Section; and
- individual preparations

PCA in Scotland published by ISD Scotland

PCA in Scotland is published by financial year.

Coverage is similar to PCA in England and Wales in terms of type of dispensers and prescribers included and that all prescriptions included are those dispensed in Scotland only.

Fields are:

- Paid gross ingredient cost (equivalent to NIC, in Wales);
- items; and
- quantity

Only individual preparations where more than 10 items were dispensed are listed.

Figures are published at the following levels of aggregation:

- BNF Chapter;
- BNF Section;
- BNF Sub – section;
- chemical; and
- individual preparations

Users and uses of these statistics

We believe the key users of prescription statistics are:

- Ministers and the Members Research Service in the National Assembly for Wales;
- policy makers of the Welsh Government;
- other government departments;
- National Health Service and Public Health Wales;
- students, academics and universities;
- General Medical Council and other professional organisations; and
- individual citizens and private companies.
- The statistics are used in a variety of ways. Some examples of the uses include:
- advice to Ministers; and.
- to inform debate in the National Assembly for Wales and beyond.

National Statistics status

The [United Kingdom Statistics Authority](#) has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the [Code of Practice for Official Statistics](#).

National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value.

All official statistics should comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They are awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the UK Statistics Authority's regulatory arm. The Authority considers whether the statistics meet the highest standards of Code compliance, including the value they add to public decisions and debate.

It is Welsh Government's responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected of National Statistics. If we become concerned about whether these statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards,

we will discuss any concerns with the Authority promptly. National Statistics status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when standards are restored.

Well-being of Future Generations Act

The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act puts in place seven well-being goals for Wales. These are for a more equal, prosperous, resilient, healthier and globally responsible Wales, with cohesive communities and a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. Under section (10)(1) of the Act, the Welsh Ministers must (a) publish indicators (“national indicators”) that must be applied for the purpose of measuring progress towards the achievement of the Well-being goals, and (b) lay a copy of the national indicators before the National Assembly. The 46 national indicators were laid in March 2016.

Information on indicators and associated technical information - [How do you measure a nation's progress? - National Indicators](#)

Further information on the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#)

The statistics included in this release could also provide supporting narrative to the national indicators and be used by public services boards in relation to their local well-being assessments and local well-being plans.

Further details

This release is available at:

<http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/prescriptions-general-medical-practitioners/?lang=en>

Further information on methods and quality can be found in the [Quality Report](#).

Next update

The next release covering 2016-17 will be published in September 2017.

We want your feedback

We welcome any feedback on any aspect of these statistics, which can be provided by email to stats.healthinfo@wales.gsi.gov.uk

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