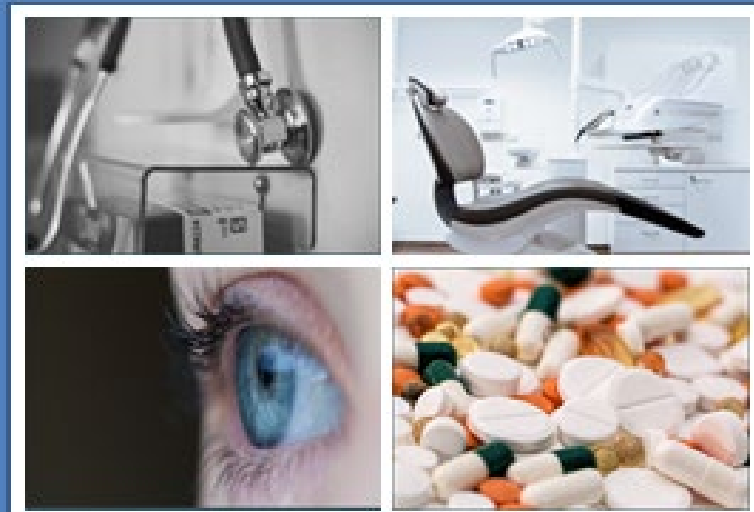


Family Practitioner Services Statistics for Northern Ireland



Key Facts

2020/21

Purpose This is a supplementary document combining key facts from the previously released 2020/21 publications relating to the four main areas within Family Practitioner Services.

They represent a range of general medical, dental, ophthalmic and pharmaceutical services, and the statistics are based on registration activity and claims submitted from within primary care to the Business Services Organisation (BSO). They do not cover secondary and private care.

Data for each of the four service areas detailed in this publication are available in full using the following link:
[Family Practitioner Services](#)

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We want your feedback We welcome any feedback on any aspect of these statistics, which can be provided by email to: Info.BSO@hscni.net

Additional information about these statistics is located at the back of this publication.

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This is an Official Statistics Publication

All official statistics should comply with the UK Statistics Authority's Code of Practice which promotes the production and dissemination of official statistics that inform decision making. They can be formally assessed by the UK Statistics Authority's regulatory arm for National Statistics status.

Find out more about the [Code of Practice](#).

Find out more about [official statistics](#).

Family Practitioner Services Statistics for Northern Ireland 2020/21

Key Facts

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Family Practitioner Services Statistics for Northern Ireland 2020/21

Key Facts

Introduction

This publication provides key facts in relation to general medical, dental, ophthalmic and pharmaceutical services and statistics in Northern Ireland between April 2020 and March 2021. It is a supplementary document summarising each of the standalone reports previously published in June 2021. These full reports are available to download from the [HSC website](#) and provide detail on the definitions and sources of the information presented in this summary compendium. They also highlight the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on activity levels in this most recent year.

This publication is based on payment claims submitted by primary care dentists and opticians, community pharmacists, dispensing doctors and appliance suppliers to Family Practitioner Services (FPS). The information does not include private work and secondary care activity.

General medical information is based on patient records on the National Health Application and Infrastructure Services (NHAIS) system, the Common Practitioner Model (CPM) but does not contain data on the treatment of patients which is not available to BSO.

This publication has been produced by independent statisticians within the FPS Information Unit. They are on secondment from the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA). It has been compiled in accordance with the Code of Practice for Statistics.

Further information about the work of FPS and the manner in which these statistics were produced can be found at the back of this publication.

Family Practitioner Services Statistics for Northern Ireland 2020/21

Key Facts Overview

The complete 2020/21 Family Practitioner Services Statistics reports can be viewed on the [HSC website](#).

General Medical Services



- **There were 321 active GP practices in Northern Ireland on 31 March 2021**
An 8% decrease (or 29 practices) since 2014.
- **There were 1,410 registered GPs (excluding Locums)**
Of these 58% were female and 42% were male, a shift in gender profile from 2014 (46% / 54%).
- **More than 2 million registered patients**
This included 44,000 new patient registrations and approximately 40,000 patients deducted.
- **BSO processed £316.9m of payments towards the cost of GP Services**
The average payment per registered patient was £158, an increase of £15 per patient since 19/20.

Dental Services



- **There were 368 health service dental practices in Northern Ireland on 31 March 2021**
A reduction of 4 practices compared to 19/20
- **There were 1,142 registered dentists**
An increase of 19% since 2011.
- **The number of patients registered with a health service dentist was approximately 1.25m**
This was 65% of the Northern Ireland population.
- **The gross cost of dental services in 2020/21 was £131.7m**
This included £51.9m in Covid-19 Support Payments and £7.1m in patient contributions.

Ophthalmic Services



- **There were 271 ophthalmic practices carrying out health service eye tests in Northern Ireland on 31 March 2021**
4.2% higher than in 2014 however this figure has remained stable over the last 4 years.
- **There were 665 registered ophthalmic practitioners**
An increase of 3% on 19/20.
- **The total number of health service eye tests carried out was 311,000**
For every 4 tests, 3 were for patients under 16 or 60 years old and over.
- **The total cost for ophthalmic services in 2020/21 was £24.4m**
A 3% increase on 19/20. This included £7.6m in Covid-19 Support Payments.

Pharmaceutical Services



- **There were 528 pharmacies in Northern Ireland on 31 March 2021**
A reduction of three pharmacies on 19/20.
- **There were 41.7m items dispensed (all contractors)**
A decrease of 3.1% on 19/20.
- **There were 41.4m items dispensed (pharmacies only)**
An average of 78,286 items per pharmacy, a decrease of 2.9% on 19/20.
- **The total ingredient cost for all items dispensed in Northern Ireland was £454.3m**
An increase of 2.3% on 19/20.

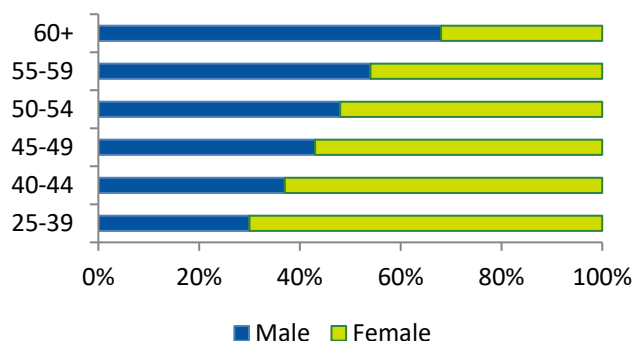
Family Practitioner Services Statistics for Northern Ireland 2020/21

General Medical Services Key Facts

The complete 2020/21 General Medical Services Statistics report can be viewed on the [HSC website](#).

Workforce

GPs in Northern Ireland by Age and Gender, 31st March 2021



Local Government District	GP Practices per 100,000 Registered Patients
Newry, Mourne & Down	18.8
Mid & East Antrim	18.1
Belfast	17.7
Causeway Coast & Glens	16.7
Mid Ulster	16.6
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	15.6
Fermanagh & Omagh	15.4
Ards & North Down	14.7
Derry City & Strabane	13.2
Lisburn & Castlereagh	12.6
Antrim & Newtownabbey	12.1
Northern Ireland	16.0

Patients

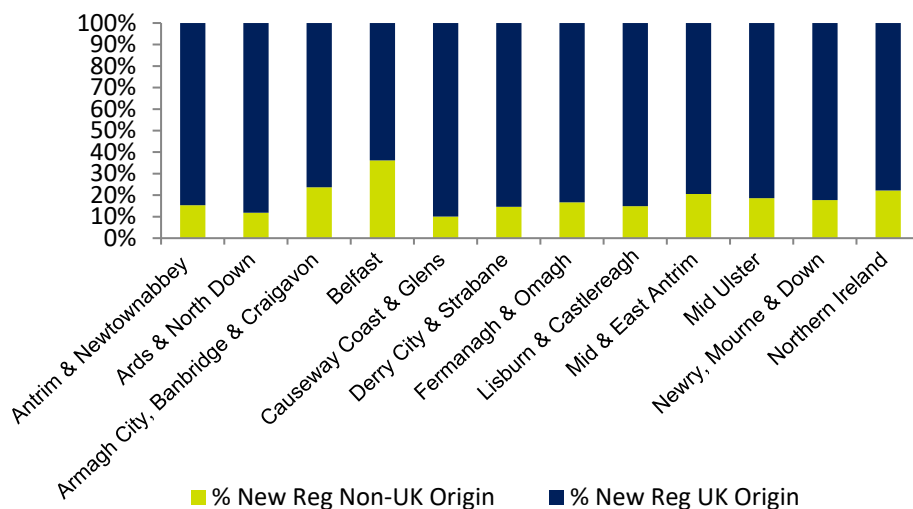
Just under 2,007,000 patients were registered with a GP practice.

The number of patients registered at a GP practice in NI has increased by 4% from 2014.

Average number of patients per practice was 6,252.

98% of the population lived within 5 miles of a GP practice, 88% live within 3 miles.

New (first time in NI) GP Registrations by UK Nationals and non-UK Nationals, by LGD



Payments

Local Commissioning Group (Health Trust)	BSO payment towards GP services (£m)	Average payment per patient (£)
Northern	73.9	155
Belfast	70.7	161
Southern	63.9	150
Western	57.7	174
South Eastern	50.7	152
Northern Ireland	316.9	158

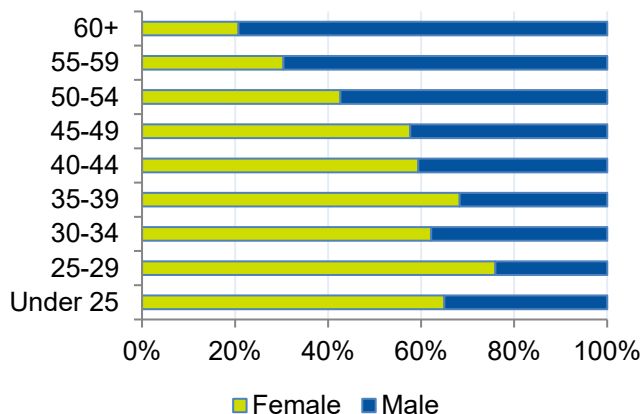
Family Practitioner Services Statistics for Northern Ireland 2020/21

Dental Services Key Facts

The complete 2020/21 Dental Services Statistics report can be viewed on the [HSC website](#).

Workforce

Dentists in Northern Ireland by Age and Gender



Local Government District	Dental Practices per 100,000 Resident Patients
Belfast	25.3
Mid and East Antrim	22.8
Fermanagh & Omagh	22.0
Newry, Mourne & Down	21.8
Ards & North Down	18.4
Derry City & Strabane	17.8
Causeway Coast and Glens	17.2
Mid Ulster	16.5
Lisburn & Castlereagh	16.1
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon	14.5
Antrim & Newtownabbey	13.8
Northern Ireland	19.3

Patients

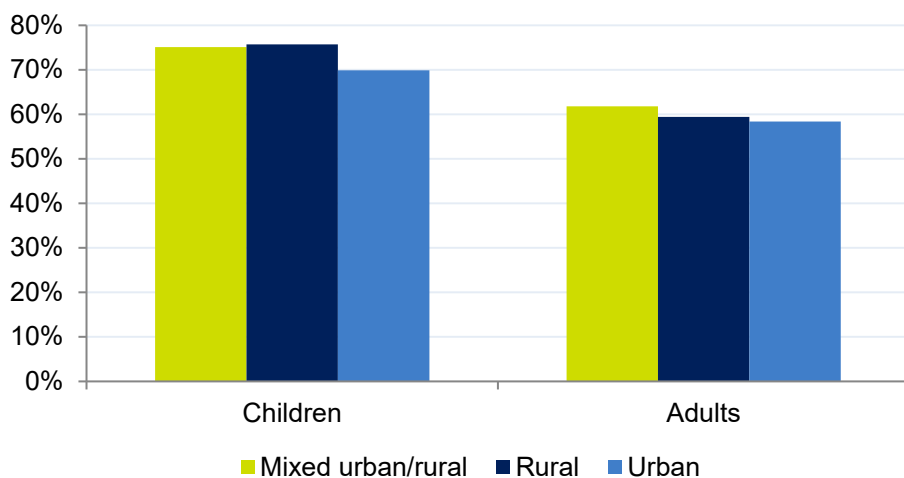
There were 74% of females registered with a dentist compared to 58% of males in the 18-44 age group.

94% of the population lived within 5 miles of a dental practice.

Almost 290,000 adults were seen, a decrease of 60% on 19/20.

Over 51,000 children received dental treatment in excess of the basic treatments covered under capitation, a drop of 57% on 19/20.

Percentage of Population Registered to a Dentist by Area



Payments

Local Commissioning Group (Health Trust)	Gross payment towards dental services (£m)	Average payment (£)
Belfast	30.9	85.70
Northern	29.9	61.90
Southern	25.2	63.90
South Eastern	19.6	53.20
Western	19.0	62.40
Northern Ireland	124.6	65.20

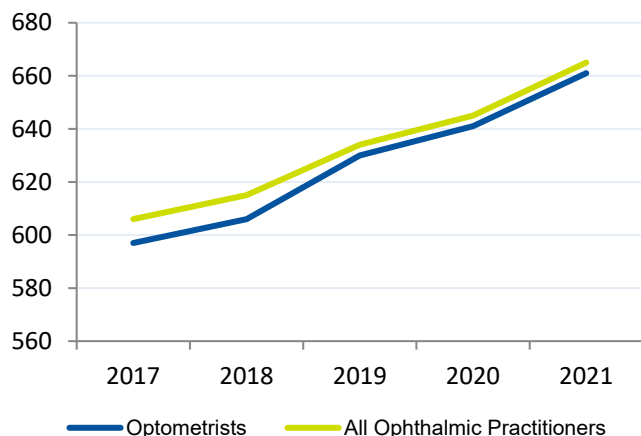
Family Practitioner Services Statistics for Northern Ireland 2020/21

Ophthalmic Services Key Facts

The complete 2020/21 Ophthalmic Services Statistics report can be viewed on the [HSC website](#).

Workforce

Registered Ophthalmic Practitioners



Local Government District	Ophthalmic Practices per 100,000 Population
Fermanagh & Omagh	17.7
Antrim & Newtownabbey	16.6
Causeway Coast & Glens	15.2
Mid Ulster	15.2
Derry City & Strabane	14.5
Mid & East Antrim	14.3
Belfast	13.9
Ards & North Down	13.5
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	12.7
Newry, Mourne & Down	12.5
Lisburn & Castlereagh	12.1
Northern Ireland	14.2

Patients

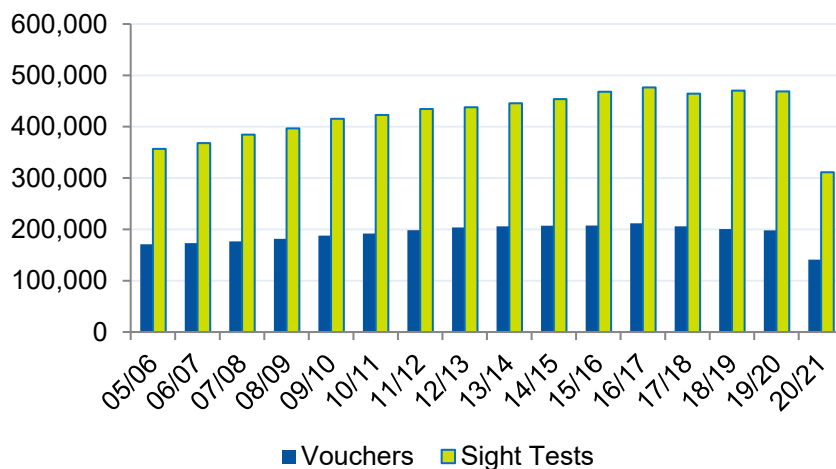
95% of the population lived within 5 miles of an ophthalmic practice.

57% of all sight tests carried out were on female patients.

49% of all sight tests carried out were for patients aged 60 or over.

30,555 unique patient assessments were carried out at NI PEARS, a 22% increase on 19/20. 80% of these were new assessments.

Number of Health Service Vouchers and Sight Tests Processed



Payments

Local Commissioning Group (Health Trust)	Payment towards Ophthalmic services (£m)	Average payment per head of population (£)
Northern	6.0	12.40
Southern	4.9	12.40
South Eastern	4.7	12.80
Belfast	4.6	12.70
Western	4.2	13.80
Northern Ireland	24.4	12.80

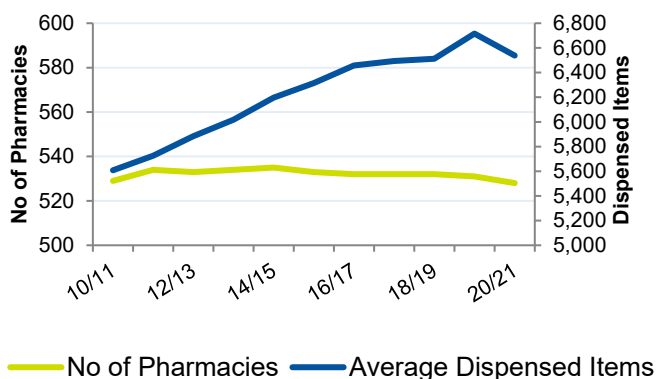
Family Practitioner Services Statistics for Northern Ireland 2020/21

Pharmaceutical Services – Community Pharmacy Key Facts

The complete 2020/21 Pharmaceutical Services Statistics report can be viewed on the [HSC website](#).

Workforce

Number of Pharmacies and Average Monthly Volume of Dispensed Prescription Items



Local Government District	Community Pharmacies per 100,000 Population
Fermanagh & Omagh	39.0
Belfast	37.6
Derry City & Strabane	29.1
Newry, Mourne & Down	29.0
Causeway Coast & Glens	27.6
Mid Ulster	25.3
Ards & North Down	24.0
Antrim & Newtownabbey	22.9
Mid & East Antrim	22.2
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	22.0
Lisburn & Castlereagh	18.3
Northern Ireland	27.8

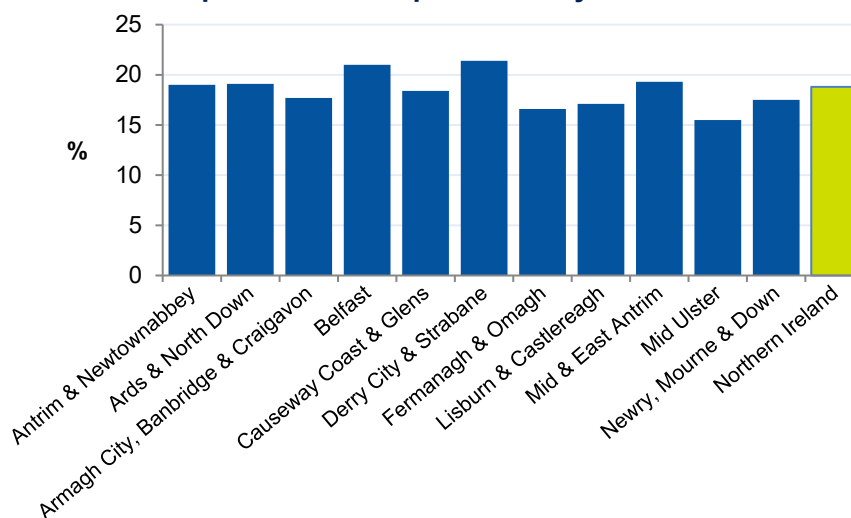
Patients

Over 99% of the population lived within 5 miles of a community pharmacy.

72.5% of all people lived within 1 mile of their nearest pharmacy.

Derry City & Strabane LGD had the highest number of items dispensed per person at 27.2 whilst Lisburn and Castlereagh were the lowest at 16.8 items. The NI average was 21.8 items per person.

Percentage of Population Dispensed Anti-Depressants by LGD in 2020/21



Average Items and Ingredient Cost per Pharmacy

Local Commissioning Group (Health Trust)	Average Total Number of Items per Pharmacy (000's)	Average total ingredient cost (before discount) per pharmacy (£000's)
South Eastern	84.3	961.8
Northern	83.5	898.8
Southern	81.2	822.3
Western	76.3	765.2
Belfast	68.8	733.3
Northern Ireland	78.3	830.0

Family Practitioner Services Statistics for Northern Ireland 2020/21

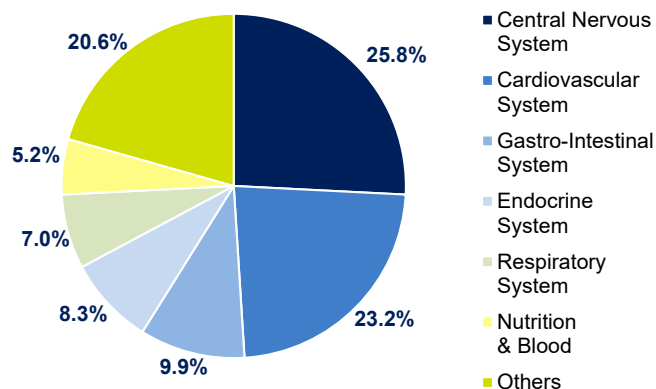
Pharmaceutical Services – Dispensing Key Facts

Dispensing

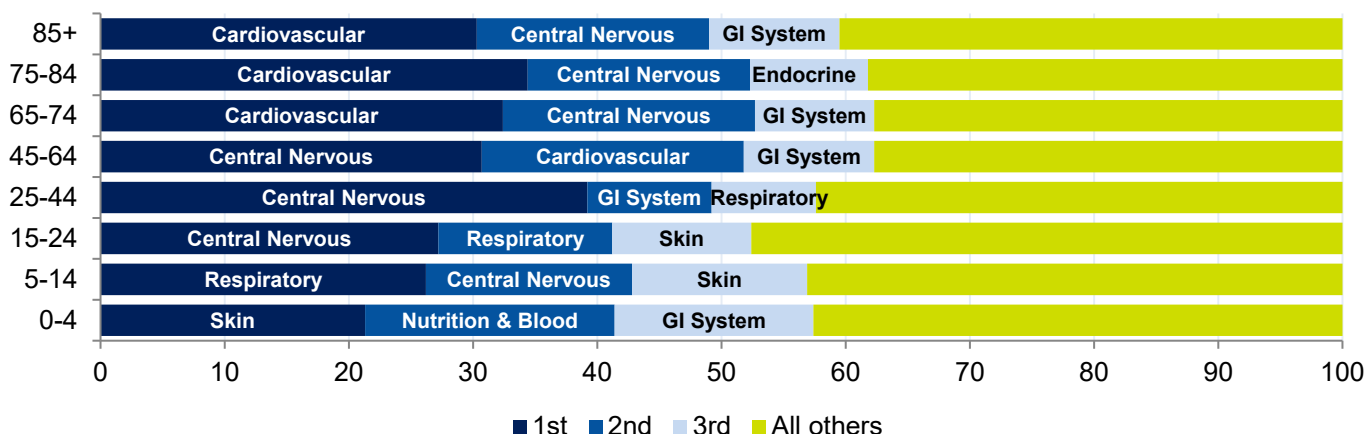
Top 10 most commonly dispensed medications

Medication	Items Dispensed (000s)	Typical Use
Omeprazole	1,377	Treatment of excess stomach acid
Atorvastatin	1,372	Treatment of high blood cholesterol
Co-codamol	1,242	Pain relief
Levothyroxine	1,059	Treatment for thyroid hormone deficiency
Sertraline	813	Treatment for depression & anxiety
Aspirin	809	Pain relief/heart attack prevention
Bisoprolol	806	Treatment for hypertension
Salbutamol	784	Treatment for respiratory conditions
Lansoprazole	765	Treatment of excess stomach acid
Amlodipine	694	Treatment for hypertension/angina

Items Dispensed by BNF Chapter



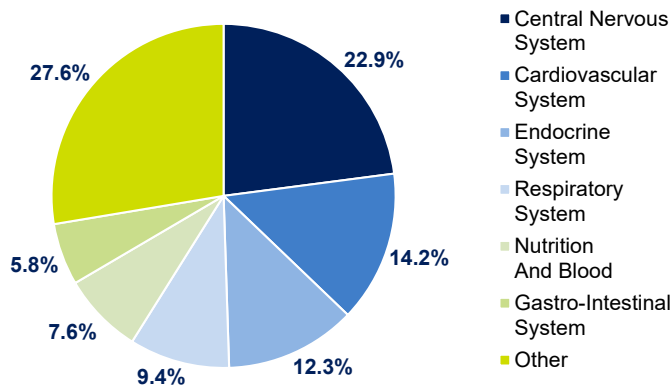
Three Most Commonly Dispensed Chapters by Age Group



Top 10 Medications with the Highest Ingredient Cost

Medication	Ingredient Cost (£m)	Typical Use
Apixaban	17.0	Treatment for the prevention of blood clots
Sertraline	8.0	Treatment for depression & anxiety
Budesonide + Formoterol	6.3	Treatment for asthma
Fluticasone + Salmeterol	5.6	Treatment for asthma
Co-codamol	5.2	Pain relief
Lamotrigine	4.8	Treatment for epilepsy
Melatonin	4.6	Treatment for insomnia
Buprenorphine	4.4	Pain relief
Mesalazine	4.1	Treatment for inflammatory bowel disease
Tramadol	4.0	Pain relief

Ingredient Cost by BNF Chapter



Family Practitioner Services Statistics for Northern Ireland 2020/21

Key Facts

Publication Notes

Family Practitioner Services

Family Practitioner Services (FPS) is part of the Business Services Organisation's (BSO) Operations Directorate. It provides a range of essential services to Health and Social Care organisations, primary care contractors and patients.

FPS calculates payments to health professionals in the dental, pharmacy, general medical and ophthalmic sectors through Northern Ireland. It also maintains the central register of patients registered with GP Practices in Northern Ireland, issuing medical cards and processing changes such as name, address and doctor.

It provides professional advice, support and information to customers and members of the public and maintains the pharmaceutical, dental and the Northern Ireland Primary Medical Performers lists. FPS also provides the call and recall services for breast, cervical and bowel cancer screening in Northern Ireland.

About this publication

This report has been produced by independent statisticians within the FPS Information Unit. They are on secondment from the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA). This publication has been compiled in accordance with the Code of Practice for Statistics. For detailed tables relating to this report visit the [HSC website](#) to select the relevant service area and annual statistics tables required.

Next edition

This compendium publication is issued annually. It is expected that the next edition shall be published end-June/early-July following the next release of the individual annual reports in June 2022. In the interim, quarterly tables are published separately on the [HSC website](#), accessible via the relevant services area. The quarterly figures are provisional until the annual publication for that year issues, at which point they are finalised. A [publication timetable](#) for future statistical publications is also available.

Family Practitioner Services Statistics for Northern Ireland 2020/21

Key Facts

Technical Notes

Target Audience

The target audience for this publication has been defined as: the Department of Health, HSC Board and Trusts in Northern Ireland, health professionals, academics, HSC Stakeholders, the media and the general public.

Main usages

This publication contains official statistics on general medical, dental, ophthalmic and pharmaceutical activity for the most recent financial year (and earlier years where available on a comparable basis). It provides a board overview of activity across the service areas, highlighting where more details breakdowns, can be obtained.

The detailed information underpinning this summary can be used to support decision making, inform policy, provide advice to ministers, answer a wide range of Assembly Questions and Freedom of Information requests, for national and local press articles and, where appropriate, for international comparison.

Data Quality Summary

The data has been primary sourced from the Family Practitioner Payment System (FPPS) in respect of FPS activity and payment information. Resident population data has been sourced from official NISRA demographic statistics.

The FPPS is a business critical payment system which is subject to periodic audit. The data quality is assessed as very good based on the low percentage of claims which have to be adjusted following payment.

As an administrative data system, there will inevitably be some manual entry errors and, even for automated processes, there may be errors within the claims submitted by primary care contractors.

The extensive validation that occurs prior to payments being made, coupled with the consistency and variance checks carried out during the compilation of this publication means that the data provides a good representation of FPS activity for the years covered by the report.

Further information in relation to the background data quality report and the FPS Quality Assurance of Administrative Data Report can be found on the [HSC website](#).

Further Information

This is a supplementary document combining summary information from the previously released 2020/21 annual publications relating to the four main areas within FPS: general medical, dental, ophthalmic and pharmaceutical services.

Detailed information on **data sources, definitions and coverage** can be found within the relevant annual reports using the following links:

[General Medical Services](#)

[Dental Services](#)

[Ophthalmic Services](#)

[Pharmaceutical Services](#)

Or by visiting the [HSC website](#).

Further information about Northern Ireland and its health services which may assist readers in interpreting this publication is available from [Family Practitioner Services](#).

Family Practitioner Services Statistics for Northern Ireland 2020/21 Key Facts

This statistical bulletin, the full annual FPS reports and others published by Information Unit within BSO are available to download from the [BSO Internet site](#).