

30th September 2013

BSO launches new GP prescribing data resource

The Business Services Organisation (BSO) has published a summary of GP Prescribing data for GP practices in Northern Ireland.

In Northern Ireland the expenditure on GP prescribed products is in the region of £400million annually relating to over 20m prescription forms. This newly published data covers the period April 2013 to June 2013 Quarterly updates to this data will be published every 3 months from this point onwards.

The availability of prescribing data at GP Practice level is in the interests of good governance and public accountability.

The dataset will allow interested parties to analyse GP prescribing in a timely manner and may in time, help to improve prescribing and dispensing practice.

The published data includes all prescriptions that have been prescribed by a GP or nurse (within a GP practice) that have been dispensed by a community pharmacy or dispensing doctor, been submitted to the BSO for payment and subsequently been paid.

For each GP practice in Northern Ireland, and for each medicine (by presentation), dressing and appliance, the following information is provided:

- The number of prescribed items that are dispensed;
- The quantity of tablets, capsules, liquid etcetera dispensed;
- The gross cost; and
- The actual cost.

Each dataset will be available on or before the last working day of each quarter and will cover dispensing information from the previous quarter.

The data will be hosted at <http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/>

NOTE FOR EDITORS

1. The dataset is available on the BSO website at:
<http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/>
2. The dataset conforms to the UK Government's Transparency Agenda and Open Data Initiative.
3. GP prescribing data are compiled from prescription forms received and paid through the FPS Pharmaceutical Payment System. The system records details of all prescribed and dispensed items, and automates much of the payment process. The system is designed to be a payment system rather than an information system however the published prescribing data has been produced and enhanced by the BSO from the monthly payment data.
4. All data relates to the month the pharmacist dispensed the item and subsequently submitted the prescription for payment rather than the prescribed date.
5. Data includes only payments directly related to dispensed items and will not include any post payment adjustments, dispensing fees, levies or any training fees.
6. Data excludes hospice items and items that cannot be associated to a GP practice e.g., items prescribed by a dental practitioner.
7. GP practices are identified in the Prescribing data file by their Practice Code.
8. A quarterly Practice reference file will be available containing Practice Code, address information and population numbers for each practice. Practice population data relates to the number of people registered with the practice at the start of each quarter.
9. An explanatory notes document will be available from the BSO website. This will contain information on data sources, file formats and descriptions of fields. A FAQ document will also be available from the BSO website.
10. Further information on prescriptions in Northern Ireland, including the relevant drug tariffs, can be found at: www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/1944.htm
11. The information published is classed as Open Data. This means it is accessible, is in a digital, machine readable format and is free of restriction of use or redistribution. This data is published under the Open Government Licence.
12. This dataset is not an Official Statistic, but has been prepared using recognised statistical practices and in line with the UK Code of Practice for Official Statistics.
13. Media enquiries about this press release should be directed to the DHSSPS Press Office on 02890520571, or out of office hours contact to Duty Press Officer via pager number 07699 715 440 and your call will be returned.

14. Further information on the dataset can be obtained from the BSO Information and Registration Unit:
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