Publication Summary

Stroke Statistics Update
Year Ending 31 March 2013
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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, operations, incidence, 30 day survival following first emergency admission, GP prescribing and mortality is included in this release.

Key points

- The number of new cases of cerebrovascular disease (CVD) in Scotland has decreased over the last decade. The incidence rate of CVD in Scotland was 194.1 per 100,000 population in 2003/04 compared to 153.7 per 100,000 in 2012/13, a decrease of 21%. Incidence rates for CVD are consistently higher in males than females.

- Mortality rates for CVD have fallen steadily over the last 10 years. The decrease for men (45.4%) has been greater than for women (39.2%), with a narrowing of the difference between the rates for men and women to almost zero.

- In the last decade, the discharge rate with a stroke diagnosis has shown an overall decrease of 3.6% (4.4% for men and 2.6% for women). However the rate has remained fairly stable for the last 5 years.

- The percentage of people surviving 30 days or more following their first emergency admission to hospital with a stroke has improved slightly over the last 10 years from 80.2% in 2003/04 to 84.0% in 2012/13

- Although the number of prescriptions for drugs to treat cardiovascular disease (all diseases of the circulation, including stroke) increased by 25.8% in the last 10 years, the overall costs of prescriptions dispensed for cardiovascular drugs fell in 2012/13 to £111.7 million, a reduction of 29.1% on the previous year. This is the lowest cost for these drugs over the last ten years (since 2003/04). Costs may continue to reduce as medicines become available in less expensive, non-branded (generic) form.
Background

Cerebrovascular Disease (CVD) is a condition that develops as a result of problems with the blood vessels supplying the brain. Although it is largely a preventable disease, there are approximately 4,500 deaths in Scotland each year (4,479 people in 2012) where CVD is the underlying cause. One of the common types of CVD is stroke. A stroke occurs 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. Stroke is more common in older people over the age of 65.

Scotland has a high prevalence of the risk factors associated with CVD such as smoking, high blood pressure, poor diet, lack of exercise and alcohol consumption above recommended limits. Treating and preventing stroke continues to be a national clinical priority for Scotland (Better Heart Disease and Stroke Care Action Plan). In the Scottish Health Survey 2012, 2.8% of both men and women reported that they had experienced a stroke.

Please note that this publication uses population estimates that have been carried forward from the 2001 census (excluding 2011 onwards, which are based on the 2011 census) and the 1976 version of the European Standard Population (ESP1976) in the calculation of rates. Please refer to Appendix A1 in the publication report for more information on the calculation of rates in future publications.

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Further Information

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