

Statistics on Alcohol: England 2012: Data Quality Statement

Background

Statistics on Alcohol: England is a compendium report which has been produced by the Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC) since 2006. These annual reports present a range of information on drinking habits and behaviours among adults (aged 16 and over) and school children (aged 11 to 15), knowledge and attitudes to alcohol as well as drinking related costs, ill health and mortality. The report also include up to date information on the latest alcohol related government policies and targets and contains links to further sources of useful information.

The report contains previously published information from reports such as the Smoking Drinking and Drug use among Young People in England, the Adult Psychiatric Morbidity Survey as well as new analysis from the Hospital Episode Statistics database and Prescription data.

The data in this report relates to England unless otherwise specified. Where figures for England are not available, figures for England and Wales, Great Britain or the United Kingdom are provided.

Data Collection and Burden

There is minimum burden placed on data providers. Hospital Episode Statistics (HES) and Prescribing data is already collected by the NHS IC whilst all other sources are already published.

Timeliness

This compendia report is published annually and presents or signposts to the most up to date information available and anything that has not been updated is considered for inclusion based on what value repeating any previous statements would add to the current publication.

Accessibility

The report is published online and is available free of charge with accompanying Excel tables (in .xls and .csv format) covering data presented in Chapters 2 – 4. All sources used in the publication are referenced with links to where they can be found online and the major contributing sources are also explained in further detail within the appendices.

Confidentiality

No personal information is contained in the report and any potentially disclosive figures are suppressed in line with the NHS IC's small numbers policy to ensure confidentiality is upheld.

Accuracy

Some of the information in this report is previously published. The majority of these sources are National or Official Statistics. The UK Statistics Authority assesses all National Statistics for compliance with the Code of Practice. National Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. Those which are Official Statistics should still conform to the Code of Practice for Official Statistics, although this is not a statutory requirement.

Some of the statistics referred to in this publication are not National or Official Statistics so may not conform to the Code of Practice for Official Statistics but are included here to provide a fuller picture.

A brief explanation and a short review of the quality of each of the sets of statistics used in this publication have been included in [Appendix A](#) of this publication.

The Lifestyles team work closely with the Prescribing and Hospital Episode Statistics (HES) teams to ensure accuracy of the data produced for this report.

HES figures are available from 1989-90 onwards. The quality and coverage of the data have improved over time. These improvements in information submitted by the NHS have been particularly marked in the earlier years and need to be borne in mind when analysing time series. Some of the increase in figures for later years (particularly 2006-07 onwards) may be due to the improvement in the coverage of independent sector activity. Changes in NHS practice also need to be borne in mind when analysing time series. This may be particularly relevant for admissions with a primary or secondary diagnosis where some of the increases may be attributable to changes in recording practice.

For the first time this year the report contains analyses to attempt to quantify the effect of changes in recording practices in order to assist in the interpretation of the primary and secondary alcohol related admission estimates over time. We have therefore produced estimates of what the alcohol related admission numbers in previous years would have been had the current level of recording of secondary diagnoses existed in those years.

These figures are provided in Chapter 4 and a detailed technical annex describing the analyses in detail is provided in [Appendix G](#).

Data on the number of prescription items and Net Ingredient Cost (NIC) for drugs prescribed for obesity give a measure of how often a prescriber writes a prescription and it is not an ideal measure of the volume of drugs prescribed as different practices may use different durations of supply. The NIC is the basic cost of a drug as listed in the Drug Tariff or price lists; it does not include discounts, prescription charges or fees.

Please note the methodology used to calculate alcohol related NHS hospital admissions is subject to a public consultation, led by the NWPHO working with the Department of Health and the Health and Social Care Information Centre. The consultation was launched on 31 May 2012, and will run for 12 weeks. Full details can be found on the NWPHO website: www.lape.org.uk

Comparability

The 2006 - 2010 compendia reports were also published by HSCIC and can be found at: <http://www.ic.nhs.uk/statistics-and-data-collections/health-and-lifestyles/alcohol>