

April 13th 2018

BY EMAIL

Tel: 028 9536 3863
Email: FOI.BSO@hscni.net

Our Ref: FOI 859

Dear 

Your request for information was received on March 6th 2018 and was dealt with under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Please be advised that the Business Services Organisation (BSO) has now completed its search for the information you requested with regards to anti-depressants prescribed to children.

The requested information has been attached however it should be noted that there are differences in prescription dispensing and processing in Northern Ireland compared to other UK regions and this should be noted if these statistics are to be used for comparative purposes to other parts of the UK.

For example in Northern Ireland there is no outpatient dispensing.

I hope that the information provided assists you. If you are dissatisfied in any way with the handling of your request, you have the right to request a review. You should do this as soon as possible or in any case within two months of the date of issue of this letter.

In the event that you require a review to be undertaken, you can do so by writing to

Information Governance Manager,
2 Franklin Street,
Belfast,
BT2 8DQ

If, following an internal review, carried out by an independent decision making panel, you remain dissatisfied in any way with the handling of the request, you may make a complaint under Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act, to the Information Commissioner's Office and ask that they investigate whether the BSO has complied with the terms of the Freedom of Information Act.

You can contact Information Commissioner at:

Website: www.ico.org.uk

Providing Support to Health and Social Care



Phone: 0303 123 1113
Email: casework@ico.org.uk
Post: Information Commissioner's Office
3rd Floor, 14 Cromac Place
Belfast
BT7 2JB

In most circumstances the Information Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless an internal review procedure has been carried out. However the Commissioner has the option to investigate the matter at his discretion.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Liam McIvor', written over a thin horizontal line.

Liam McIvor
Chief Executive

Number of prescription items dispensed to patients aged under 13 for drugs in the BNF4.3 category from April 2015 to December 2017 by financial quarter

Age Group 0 - 12	2015				2016				2017		
Drugs	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
Amitriptyline	21				16		17		15		16
Fluoxetine	15				12		16	25	27	34	52
Imipramine	16				15				14		
Sertraline	18		16	22	19	19	33	47	53	65	79
Other Drugs in BNF 4.3	11				12				10		

Notes:

Quarters have been merged where

Some drugs requested had very little or no prescribing activity so it was not possible to report on these separately.

It was not possible to report on any drugs for the requested 0-6 age category due to very small, potentially disclosive numbers. The age bands provided are under 13 and 13 to 17.

Not all prescription items will have been dispensed for depressive illness, drugs may be prescribed for other reasons such as neuropathic pain.

A prescription item refers to a single medicine prescribed by a doctor (or dentist/nurse/etc.) on a prescription form. This is different to quantity i.e. if salbutamol inhaler x 2 was prescribed. This is one item with a quantity of two.

Data can only be produced on age splits of patients where the prescription form has been scanned.

It should be noted that there are differences in prescription dispensing and processing in Northern Ireland compared to other UK regions and this should be noted if these statistics are to be used for comparative purposes to other parts of the UK.

For example in Northern Ireland there is no outpatient dispensing.

Number of prescription items dispensed to patients aged 13 to 17 for drugs in the BNF4.3 category from April 2015 to December 2017 by financial quarter

Age Group 13 - 17	2015				2016				2017		
Drugs	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
Amitriptyline	29	29	40	70	67	78	110	119	112	94	126
Citalopram	27	36	53	54	51	49	68	91	120	134	173
Escitalopram	11				22				11	17	22
Fluoxetine	213	242	302	384	451	495	571	604	708	746	908
Fluvoxamine	22		23		20		13	11	11	15	
Imipramine	23		14		18		12		<10		
Mirtazapine	<10				37				30	28	43
Nortriptyline	21				15		14		22		
Paroxetine	-				19				27		
Sertraline	225	274	388	462	533	567	693	911	1096	1081	1356
Venlafaxine					11				11	15	25
Other Drugs in BNF 4.3					16						

Notes:

Quarters have been merged where numbers are small. This is to prevent potential for disclosure of personal information through small numbers.

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