



Business Services
Organisation

Family Practitioner Services

FAMILY PRACTITIONER SERVICES KEY FACTS STATISTICS FOR NORTHERN IRELAND ANNUAL STATISTICS 2024 - 2025

Published July 2025



NISRA

Northern Ireland
Statistics and Research Agency
Gníomhaireacht Thuaisceart Éireann
um Staitistici agus Taighde



Purpose

This is a supplementary document combining key facts from the previously released 2024/25 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:

BSO_PrimaryCare.Statistics@hscni.net

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

Our statistical practice is regulated by the OSR. You are welcome to contact us directly with any comments about how we meet these standards. Alternatively, you can contact OSR by emailing regulation@statistics.gov.uk or via the [OSR website](#).

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Family Practitioner Services Statistics for Northern Ireland 2024/25

Key Facts

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Family Practitioner Services Statistics for Northern Ireland 2024/25

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 2024 and March 2025. It is a supplementary document summarising each of the standalone reports previously published in June 2025. These full reports are available to download from the [BSO FPS website](#) and provide detail on the definitions and sources of the information presented in this summary compendium.

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 or secondary care activity.

General medical information is based on patient records on the National Health Application and Infrastructure Services (NHAIS) system and GP information from 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). 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.



This is an Accredited Official Statistics publication

Accredited official statistics are called National Statistics in the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007. Visit [OSR Accredited Official Statistics](#) for further explanation of this terminology.

These official statistics were independently reviewed by the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) in May 2022. The reports referred to within this publication were also awarded National Statistics status. They comply with the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the Code of Practice for Statistics and should be labelled 'accredited official statistics'. All accredited official statistics should comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for Statistics. The OSR considers whether the statistics meet the highest standards of Code compliance, including the value they add to public decisions and debate.

Family Practitioner Services Statistics for Northern Ireland 2024/25

Key Facts Overview

The complete 2024/25 FPS Statistics reports can be viewed on the [BSO FPS website](#).

General Medical Services



- **There were 305 active GP practices in Northern Ireland on 31 March 2025**
Approximately 13% decrease (or 45 practices) on 2014.
- **There were 1,468 registered GPs (excluding Locums)**
A 24% increase (or 288 GPs) on 2014. In 2025, 60% of GPs were female and 40% were male, a shift in gender profile from 2014 (46% / 54%).
- **Almost 2.07 million registered patients**
This included 46,259 new patient registrations.
- **BSO processed £377.1m of payments towards the cost of GP Services**
The average payment per registered patient was £182, an increase of £13 per patient on the previous year.

Dental Services



- **There were 359 health service dental practices in Northern Ireland on 31 March 2025**
A decrease of 5 practices in comparison to 2024.
- **There were 1,206 registered dentists**
An increase of 14% (or 151 dentists) since 2015.
- **The number of patients registered with a health service dentist was 257,000 lower than in 2024 – a fall of 20%**
This means 54% of NI population were registered (68% in 2024).
- **The gross cost of dental services in 2024/25 was £133.7m**
This included £22.7m in patient contributions.

Ophthalmic Services



- **There were 266 ophthalmic practices carrying out health service sight tests in Northern Ireland on 31 March 2025**
An increase of two practices from 2024. This equates to approximately 13.9 practices per 100,000 population.
- **There were 703 registered ophthalmic practitioners**
An increase of 2% (or 17 practitioners) on the previous year.
- **The total number of health service sight tests carried out was 459,808**
Around 80% of these were for patients aged under 16 or over 60.
- **The total cost for ophthalmic services in 2024/25 was almost £24.7m**
A 3% decrease on 2023/24.

Pharmaceutical Services



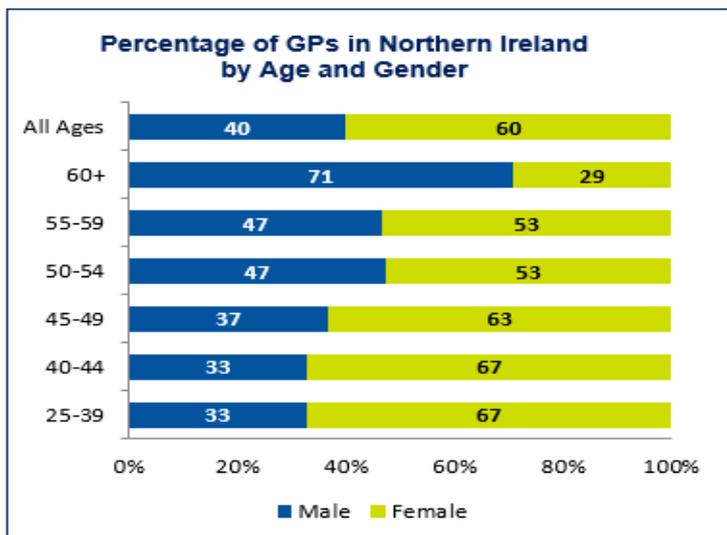
- **There were 508 pharmacies in Northern Ireland on 31 March 2025**
A reduction of 3 pharmacies on 2024 and lowest figure recorded in the last ten years.
- **There were 45.7m items dispensed in 2024/25 (all contractors)**
An increase of 0.7% on 2023/24.
- **BSO processed 26.1m pharmacy forms in 2024/25**
An increase of 2% on the previous year and up 13% since 2017/18.
- **The total ingredient cost for all items dispensed in Northern Ireland before discount was £497.0m**
A decrease of almost 1% on 2023/24.

Family Practitioner Services Statistics for Northern Ireland 2024/25

General Medical Services Key Facts

The complete 2024/25 General Medical Services Statistics report can be viewed on the [BSO FPS website](#).

Work force



Local Government District	GP Practices per 100,000 Registered Patients	Average Distance (miles)
Newry, Mourne and Down	17.3	1.6
Belfast	16.3	0.4
Causeway Coast and Glens	15.7	1.5
Fermanagh and Omagh	15.1	3.1
Mid Ulster	14.9	1.9
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon	14.6	1.4
Ards and North Down	14.3	1.0
Mid and East Antrim	14.2	1.3
Derry City and Strabane	12.3	1.3
Lisburn and Castlereagh	12.1	1.3
Antrim and Newtownabbey	11.6	1.0
Northern Ireland	14.8	1.3

*Patients assigned to LGDs based on practice locations, not their home address

Patients

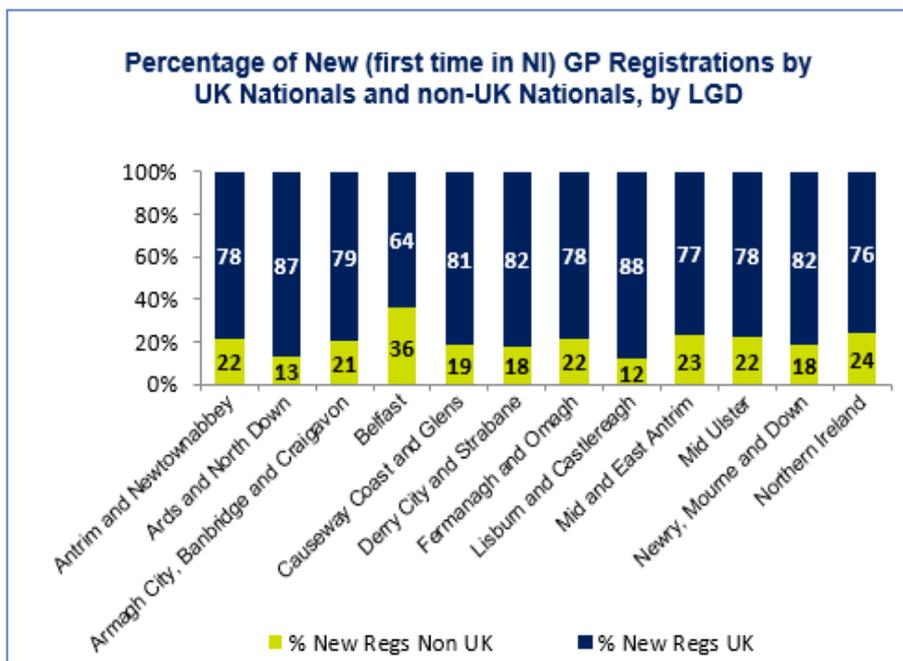
Almost 2,067,000 patients were registered with a GP practice.

There were approximately 46,000 new patient registrations and over 48,000 patients transferred between GP practices.

The total number of patients registered at a GP practice in NI has increased by over 7% since 2014.

Average number of patients per practice was 6,777.

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



Payments

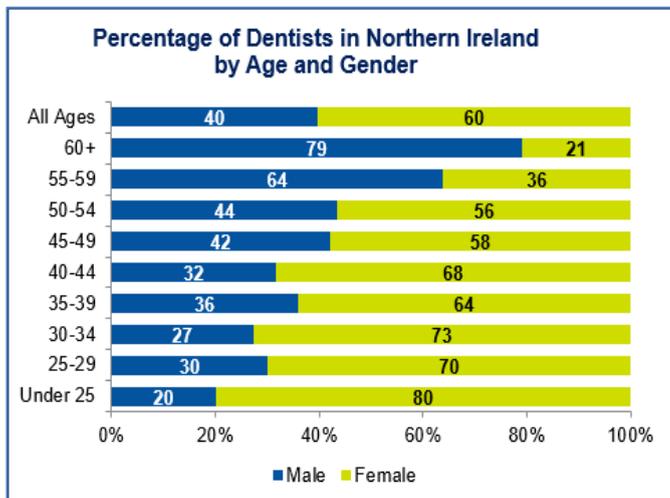
Local Commissioning Group (Health Trust)	BSO payment towards GP services (£m)	Average payment per patient (£)
Northern	90.5	184
Belfast	85.2	189
Southern	75.6	172
Western	63.4	186
South Eastern	62.5	181
Northern Ireland	377.1	182

Family Practitioner Services Statistics for Northern Ireland 2024/25

Dental Services Key Facts

The complete 2024/25 Dental Services Statistics report can be viewed on the [BSO FPS website](#).

Workforce



Local Government District	Dental Practices per 100,000 Resident Population	Average Distance (miles)
Belfast	23.9	0.4
Newry, Mourne and Down	21.9	1.9
Mid and East Antrim	21.6	1.4
Fermanagh and Omagh	21.4	3.6
Causeway Coast and Glens	17.7	2.0
Ards and North Down	17.7	1.2
Derry City and Strabane	17.2	1.6
Lisburn and Castlereagh	16.7	1.1
Mid Ulster	15.9	2.4
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon	15.0	1.5
Antrim and Newtownabbey	13.0	0.9
Northern Ireland	18.8	1.5

Patients

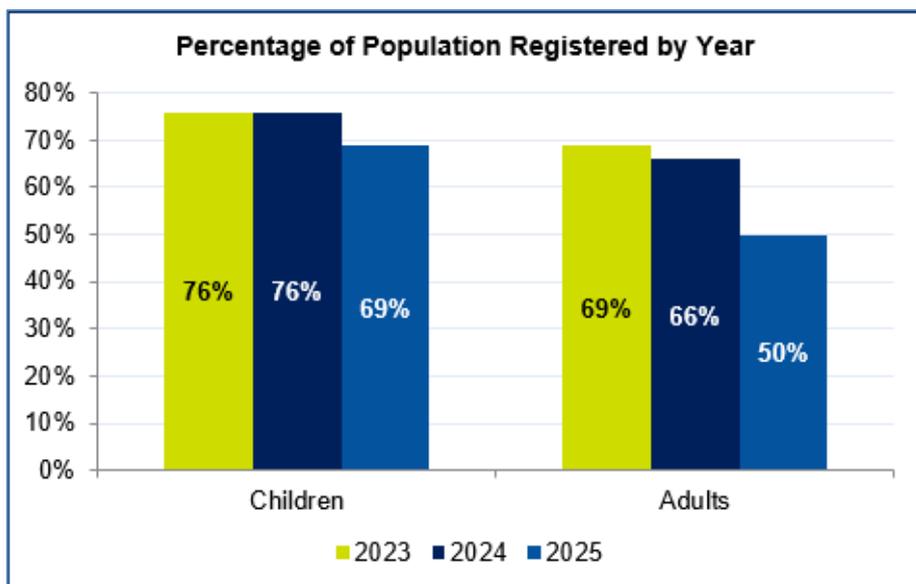
There is an average of 63.1 dentists per 100,000 resident population in Northern Ireland.

57% of females are registered to a dentist compared to 51% of males.

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

Almost 556,000 adults were seen for treatment, down 1% on 23/24.

Just over 100,000 children received dental treatment in excess of the basic treatments covered under capitation, up 4% from 23/24.



Payments

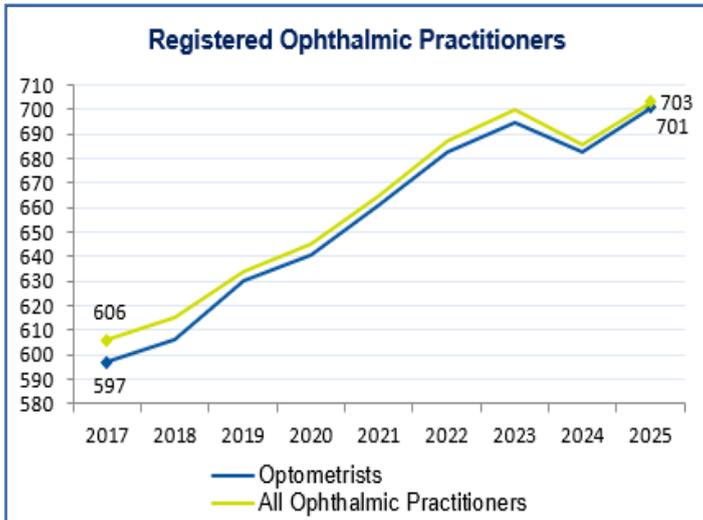
Local Commissioning Group (Health Trust)	HSCNI payment towards dental services (£m)	Average payment per resident (£)
Northern	27.0	56.30
Belfast	26.0	71.20
Southern	22.4	56.90
South Eastern	16.5	44.70
Western	16.0	53.00
Unknown	3.1	-
Northern Ireland	111.1	58.10

Family Practitioner Services Statistics for Northern Ireland 2024/25

Ophthalmic Services Key Facts

The complete 2024/25 Ophthalmic Services Statistics report can be viewed on the [BSO FPS website](#).

Workforce



Local Government District	Ophthalmic Practices per 100,000 Population	Average Distance (miles)
Fermanagh and Omagh	19.7	2.9
Antrim and Newtownabbey	16.4	1.0
Derry City and Strabane	14.6	1.3
Mid Ulster	14.6	2.6
Causeway Coast and Glens	14.2	2.2
Mid and East Antrim	13.6	1.8
Belfast	13.5	0.5
Ards and North Down	12.8	1.4
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon	12.7	1.7
Newry, Mourne and Down	12.6	2.1
Lisburn and Castlereagh	11.3	1.2
Northern Ireland	13.9	1.6

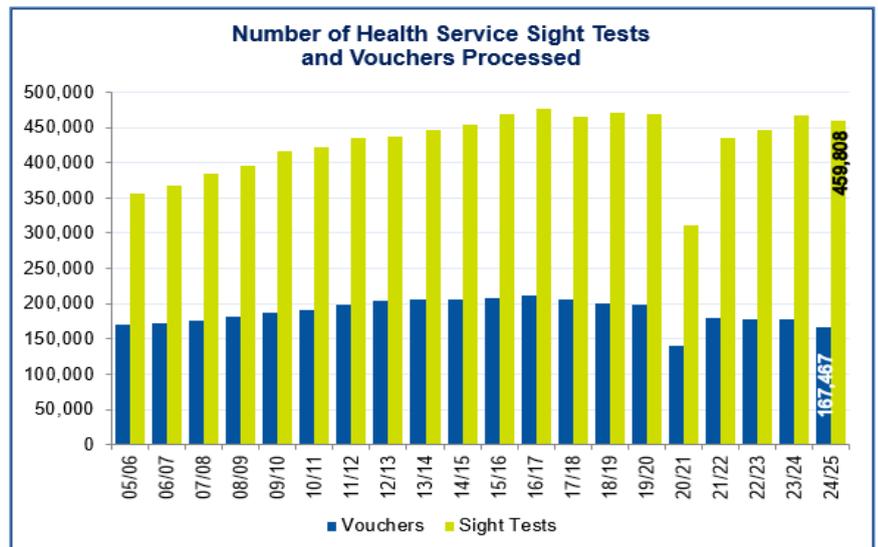
Patients

Just over 94% of the population live within 5 miles of an ophthalmic practice.

The number of optical vouchers paid for in 24/25 was 167,467 a decrease of almost 19% on 13/14.

25% of the female population received a sight test in 24/25 compared to 20% of males.

51,517 unique patient assessments were carried out at NI PEARS, 4% more than in 23/24. 46,035 (or 89%) of these were first assessments.



Payments

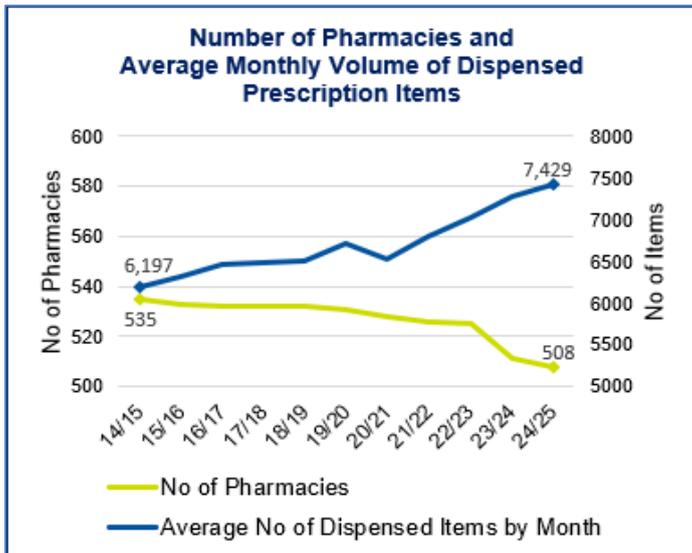
Local Commissioning Group (Health Trust)	Payment towards Ophthalmic services (£m)	Average payment per head of population (£)
Northern	6.0	12.50
Southern	4.9	12.30
South Eastern	4.7	12.80
Belfast	4.4	12.10
Western	4.1	13.50
Unknown	0.6	-
Northern Ireland	24.7	12.90

Family Practitioner Services Statistics for Northern Ireland 2024/25

Pharmaceutical Services – Community Pharmacy Key Facts

The complete 2024/25 Pharmaceutical Services Statistics report can be viewed on the [BSO FPS website](#).

Workforce



Local Government District	Community Pharmacies per 100,000 Population	Average Distance (miles)
Fermanagh & Omagh	39.3	1.6
Belfast	35.3	0.3
Derry City & Strabane	28.5	0.8
Newry, Mourne & Down	27.9	1.2
Causeway Coast & Glens	26.9	1.3
Mid Ulster	24.5	1.5
Ards & North Down	23.1	0.6
Mid & East Antrim	21.6	1.0
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	20.9	1.2
Antrim & Newtownabbey	20.5	0.8
Lisburn & Castlereagh	17.3	0.8
Northern Ireland	26.6	0.9

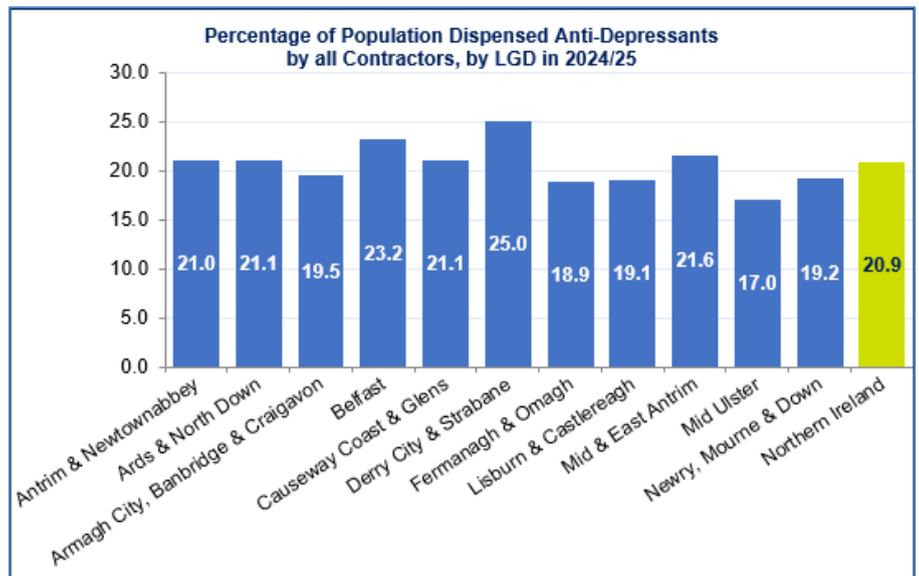
Patients

Almost 125,000 people were dispensed diabetes medication and/or products in 2024/25. An increase of 30% since 2019/20.

Over 99% of the population live within 5 miles of a community pharmacy and over 72% of all people live within 1 mile of their nearest pharmacy.

Average dispensing volumes were highest in Mid & East Antrim, where pharmacies dispensed an average of 9,033 items per month.

Fermanagh & Omagh had the lowest average at 5,430 items.



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)
Northern	97.8	1,028.6
South Eastern	95.2	1,082.0
Southern	93.2	938.6
Western	85.8	851.7
Belfast	76.9	818.0
Northern Ireland	89.1	936.5

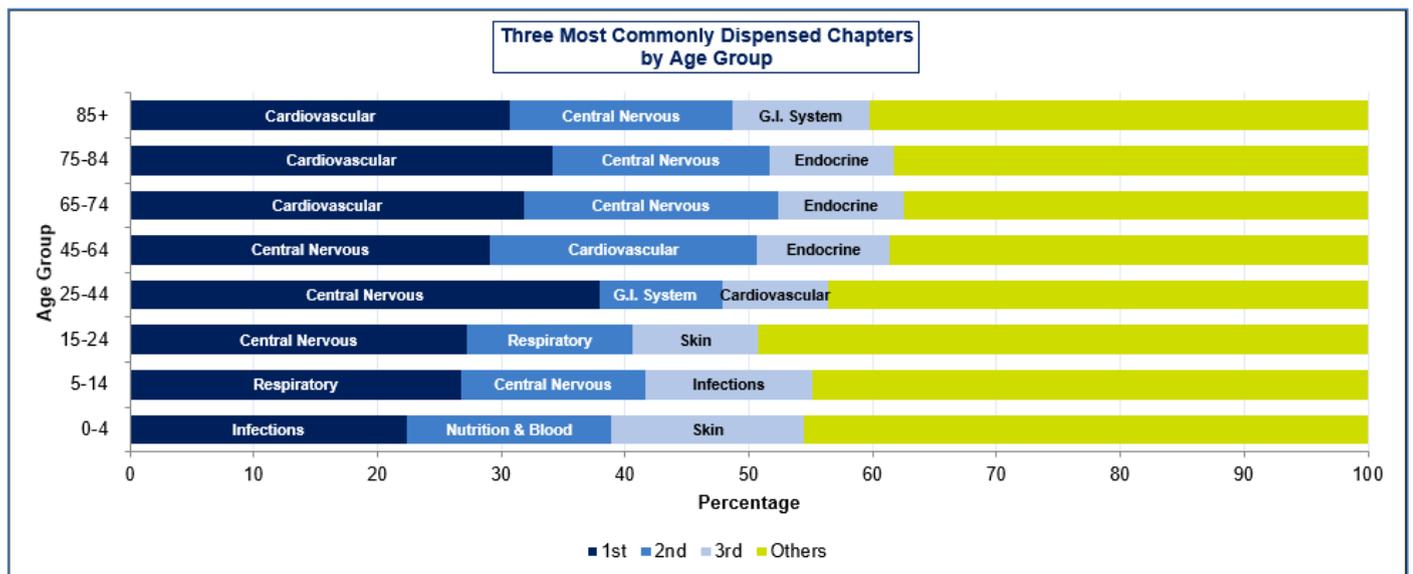
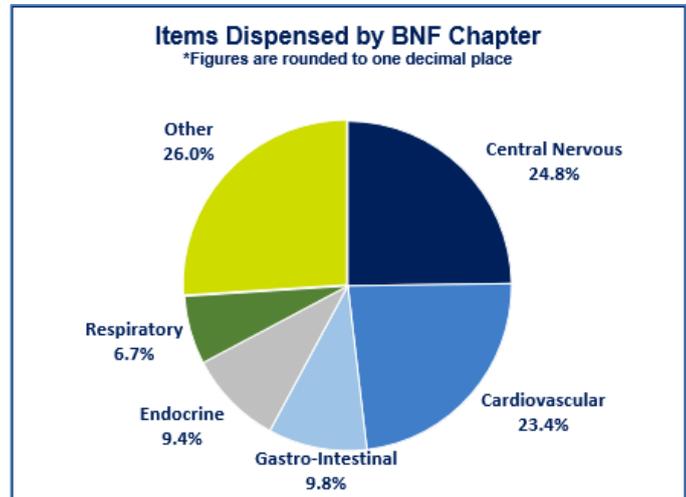
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Pharmaceutical Services – Dispensing Key Facts

Dispensing

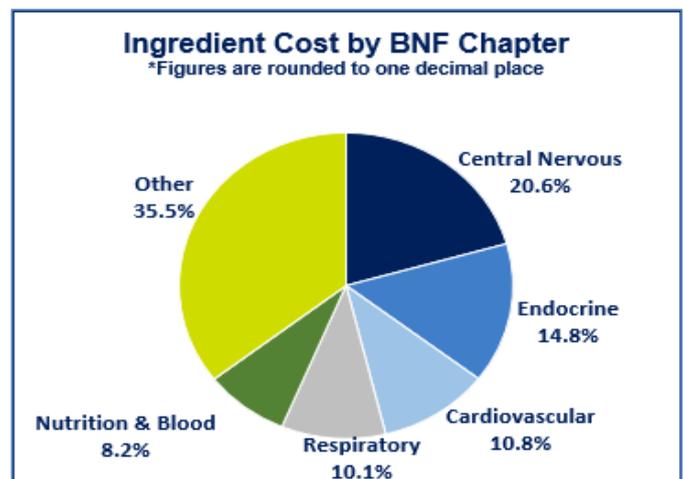
Top 10 most commonly dispensed medications

Medication	Items Dispensed (000s)	Typical Use
Atorvastatin	1,793	Treatment of high blood cholesterol
Omeprazole	1,490	Treatment of excess stomach acid
Co-codamol	1,255	Pain relief
Levothyroxine	1,118	Treatment for thyroid hormone deficiency
Sertraline	1,046	Treatment for depression and anxiety
Bisoprolol	885	Treatment for hypertension
Amlodipine	845	Treatment for hypertension / angina
Lansoprazole	839	Treatment of excess stomach acid
Salbutamol	800	Treatment for respiratory conditions
Ramipril	785	Treatment for hypertension



Top 10 Medications with the Highest Total Ingredient Cost

Medication	Ingredient Cost (£ millions)	Typical Use
Dapagliflozin	11.3	Treatment for type 2 diabetes mellitus
Sacubitril + Valsartan	9.5	Treatment for heart failure
Empagliflozin	7.9	Treatment for type 2 diabetes mellitus
Semaglutide	7.5	Treatment for type 2 diabetes / obesity
Budesonide + Formoterol	7.0	Treatment for asthma
Beclometasone + Formoterol + Glycopyrronium bromide	5.0	Treatment for asthma
Insulin aspart	4.8	Treatment for diabetes mellitus
Omeprazole	4.8	Treatment for excess stomach acid
Fluticasone + Umeclidinium bromide + Vilanterol	4.7	Treatment for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
Quetiapine	4.6	Treatment for schizophrenia / mood disorders associated with bipolar disorder



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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 throughout 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, ophthalmic and the Northern Ireland Primary Medical Performers lists. FPS also provides the call and recall services for 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 [BSO FPS 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 early July 2026 following the next release of the individual annual reports in June 2026. In the interim, quarterly tables are published separately on the [BSO FPS website](#), accessible via the relevant service 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 2024/25

Key Facts

Technical Notes

Target Audience

The target audience for this publication has been defined as: The Department of Health, Strategic Planning and Performance Group, HSC 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 broad overview of activity across the service areas, highlighting where more detailed 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 primarily 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 reports and the Quality Assurance of Administrative Data Reports for the four service areas can be found on the relevant service area page of the [BSO FPS website](#).

Further Information

This is a supplementary document combining summary information from the previously released 2024/25 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 [BSO FPS 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 2024/25 Key Facts

This statistical bulletin, the full annual Family Practitioner Services reports and others published by Information Unit within BSO are available to download from the [Business Services Organisation's Family Practitioner Services Internet site](#).