

Prescriptions Dispensed in the Community Statistics for 1996 to 2006: England

This bulletin presents a summary of prescriptions dispensed in the community in England. The statistics cover all prescriptions dispensed by community pharmacists, appliance contractors and dispensing doctors, as well as prescriptions for items personally administered. The bulletin highlights recent changes and the main trends between 1996 and 2006. Detailed definitions of terms used in the bulletin are set out at page 16.

Findings in 2006:

- The net ingredient cost of all prescriptions dispensed increased by 3.3 per cent to £ 8,197 million; an increase of 0.8 per cent in real terms on 2005 and 60.5% in real terms over 1996
- 752 million prescription items were dispensed; an increase of 4.4 per cent on 2005 and 55.1% over 1996
- The average net ingredient cost per prescription item was £10.90; a decrease of 1.1 per cent or 3.5 per cent in real terms on 2005. The net ingredient cost per item in 1996 was £8.26
- The leading BNF Chapter in terms of prescription items dispensed and net ingredient cost is the Cardiovascular System
- 81.8 per cent of all prescription items were written generically
- There were on average 14.8 prescription items per head of population compared to 14.3 in 2005 and 10.0 in 1996
- The elderly received 40.8 items per head in 2006 compared to 21.2 in 1996

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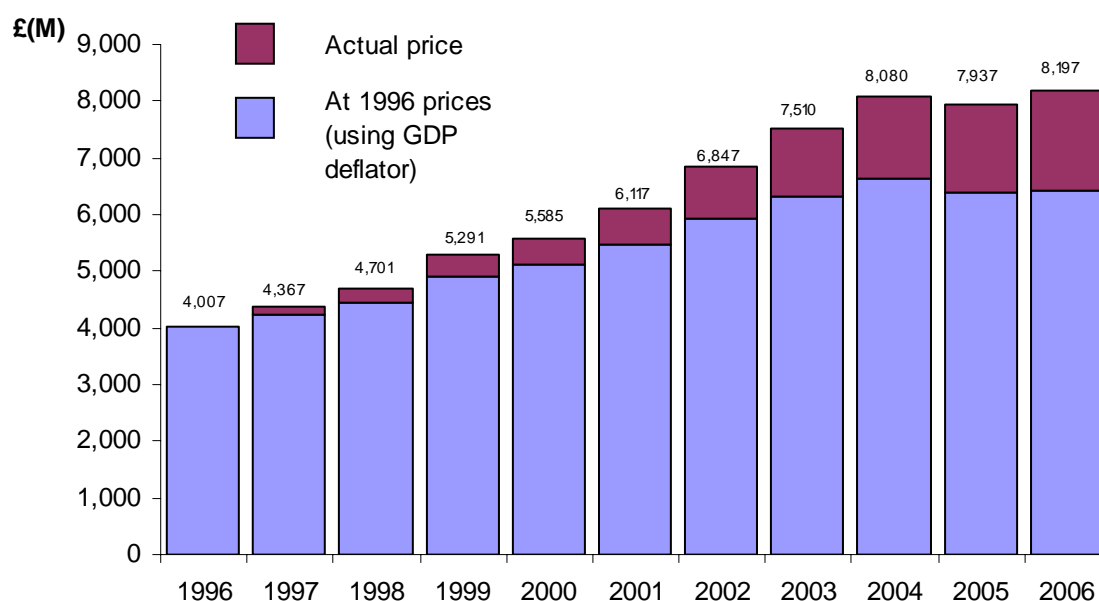
Introduction

1. The statistics included in this bulletin are derived from the NHS Business Services Authority's Prescription Pricing Division (NHSBSA (PPD)) system for reimbursing contractors for dispensing medicines and dressings and appliances in the community. See Sources from paragraph 53 onwards for full details.

Number and net ingredient cost of prescriptions

2. Following the reduction in the year on year expenditure on medicines between 2004 and 2005, this year has seen an increase in cost of 3.3 per cent over 2005. Over the last ten years the annual growth has ranged from -1.8 per cent to 12.5 per cent.
3. **Table 1** gives details of the number of prescriptions, the total net ingredient cost of prescriptions, the average net ingredient cost per prescription item and the number of prescription items per head of population from 1996 to 2006. Net ingredient cost figures are also shown at 1996 prices (calculated by using GDP Deflator - see Definitions, paragraph 59). Percentage increases are shown year-on-year from 1996 to 2006. Trends in net ingredient cost in actual and 1996 terms are shown in **Figure 1**.
4. The main features are:
 - The number of prescription items increased by 32 million from 720 million in 2005 to 752 million in 2006, an increase of 4.4 per cent
 - Between 2005 and 2006, the net ingredient cost of prescription items dispensed rose by £260 million, (3.3 per cent), to £8,197 million. In the previous year, there had been a decrease of 1.8 per cent.
 - The average net ingredient cost per item fell from £11.02 in 2005 to £10.90 in 2006
 - The number of prescription items per head increased from 14.3 in 2005 to 14.8 in 2006, an increase of 3.8 per cent (using revised population estimates based on the 2001 Census)

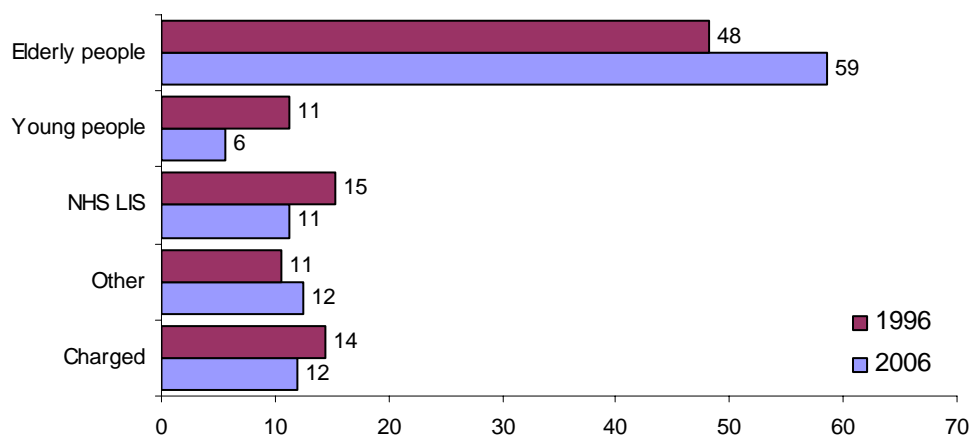
Figure 1 Net ingredient cost (£millions), 1996 to 2006



Free and charged prescriptions

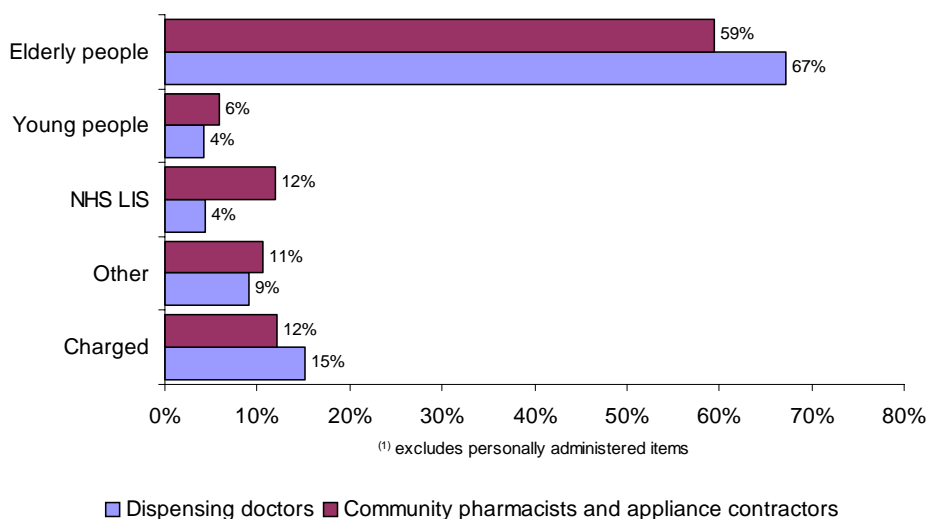
5. Prescriptions are subject to a prescription charge but around 50 per cent of the population are eligible for free prescriptions. The groups eligible for free prescriptions are described in paragraph 78. All items personally administered by doctors and all contraceptives are free.
6. In the past, the analyses of free and charged prescriptions have been available only for prescriptions dispensed by community pharmacists and appliance contractors. These analyses were extended from October 2000 to include prescriptions dispensed by dispensing doctors. From 2001, data is shown on the new basis.
7. In **Figure 2**, percentage shares by patient charge-paying status are shown for 1996 and 2006 for community pharmacists and appliance contractors only. ('Charged' includes those items covered by pre-payment certificates). **Table 2** gives details of numbers of prescription items and net ingredient cost over the period 1996 to 2006 for charged and free prescriptions, showing the main non-charged categories. **Table 3** provides more detail for 2005 and 2006 for all items dispensed to exemption groups.

Figure 2 Percentage shares by charge paying status of all prescription items dispensed by community pharmacists and appliance contractors, 1996 and 2006



8. Between 2005 and 2006, the number of charged prescription items (including those covered by pre-payment certificates) rose from 89.5 million to 90.2 million. The number of free items (including no charge contraceptives and personally administered items) rose from 630.7 million to 661.7 million, an increase of 4.9 per cent. Free items represented 88 per cent of all items dispensed, a slight increase on 2005 (87.6 per cent).
9. **Table 4** and **Figure 3** show the breakdown of prescription items into charged prescriptions and the main categories of exemption for dispensing doctors. (Personally administered items are all free and are excluded). Also shown for comparison purposes are the figures for community pharmacists and appliance contractors. The figures show:
 - Elderly people accounted for 59 per cent of prescription items dispensed by community pharmacists and appliance contractors and 67 per cent of items dispensed by dispensing doctors
 - 12 per cent of items dispensed by community pharmacists and appliance contractors were for patients qualifying for free prescriptions under the NHS low income scheme (NHS LIS); the figure for dispensing doctors was 4 per cent
 - Chargeable prescriptions (including prescriptions for patients with pre-payment certificates) represent 12 per cent of prescription items dispensed by community pharmacists and appliance contractors and 15 per cent of those dispensed by dispensing doctors

Figure 3 Percentage of total prescription items (1) dispensed by community pharmacists and appliance contractors and by dispensing doctors. 2006



Average number of prescription items per head by broad age group

10. **Table 5** shows the average number of prescription items per head of population for elderly people, children and others for the years 1996 to 2006. Revised population estimates and projections have been used based on the 2001 Census. This means that figures may be slightly different from those in previous bulletins. The main features in 2006 are:

- Elderly people received more prescription items per head than any other group – 40.8 items on average were dispensed per head to those aged 60 and over
- 3.9 items on average were dispensed per head for children under 16
- The average number of prescriptions per head for persons aged 16-59 was 9.0

(Personally administered items are not included in these averages)

Generic prescribing and dispensing

11. The definitions of prescriptions written generically, dispensed generically, and the preparation classes of items are given in paragraphs 64 to 68.

Overall

12. **Table 6** shows the breakdown of prescription items and net ingredient cost by preparation class. **Table 7** shows the percentage of items prescribed generically, dispensed/reimbursed as a generic and dispensed/reimbursed as a proprietary, for example because the proprietary was still in patent. Net ingredient cost is also shown for these categories.

13. The main features in 2006 compared with 2005 are:

- The share of prescription items **written generically** increased from 80.1 per cent to 81.8 per cent and the share of the associated net ingredient cost increased from 70.8 per cent to 71.9 per cent (see paragraph 64)
- The proportion of prescription items **dispensed generically** increased from 59.3 per cent in 2005 to 62.2 per cent in 2006. The share of the associated net ingredient cost increased from 26.4 per cent to 29.5 per cent.

By BNF chapters

14. **Table 8** shows the level of generic prescribing and dispensing by British National Formulary chapters for 2005 and 2006.

- *Drugs for Infections* had the greatest proportion of prescription items written generically, increasing from 96.5 per cent in 2005 to 97.2 per cent in 2006
- *Immunological products and vaccines* had the lowest proportion of prescription items written generically increasing from 22.0 per cent in 2005 to 26.0 per cent in 2006

Trends by BNF Chapters

Category M

15. Category M is an arrangement where the net ingredient cost for selected generic formulations is controlled, with the aim of reducing costs overall. The drugs subject to the new arrangements are classified as Category M in Part VIII of the Drug Tariff. The majority of these formulations have fallen in price, although some formulations have increased in price. These changing prices have led to the shifts in the relative positions of drug chapters and sections in the tables within this bulletin.

16. The Prescription Cost Analysis system uses the therapeutic classifications defined in the British National Formulary (BNF) September 2005 edition.

17. **Table 9** shows the number of prescription items, net ingredient cost and the average net ingredient cost per prescription item, for each BNF chapter in 2005 and 2006.

18. **Figures 4, 5 and 6** focus on the six leading BNF chapters in 2006 in terms of net ingredient cost. The figures cover the net ingredient cost, the number of prescription items and the average net ingredient cost per prescription item. Numbers for 2005 and 2006 are shown as well as the percentage change.

19. The main features in 2006 compared with 2005 are:

- The six leading BNF chapters (excluding *Dressings and appliances*) in 2006 are the same as in 2005.
- The six leading chapters accounted for 75 per cent of the net ingredient cost and 75 per cent of the number of items of all drugs, dressings and appliances.
- The net ingredient cost of these six chapters combined increased from

£5,949 million in 2005 to £6,124 million in 2006, an increase of £175 million or 3 per cent, the same as the increase in net ingredient cost overall

- The net ingredient cost of the *Gastro-intestinal system* chapter fell by £94 million whilst that of the other five chapters rose by £268 million in total
- The number of prescription items for the six leading chapters increased from 530 million in 2005 to 561 million in 2006, an increase of 31 million or 6 per cent, compared to 4 per cent overall
- Of the six leading chapters, two (*Cardiovascular system*, *Gastro-intestinal system*) show a reduction in the average net ingredient cost per item

Figure 4 Net ingredient cost (£millions) by leading BNF chapters, 2005 and 2006

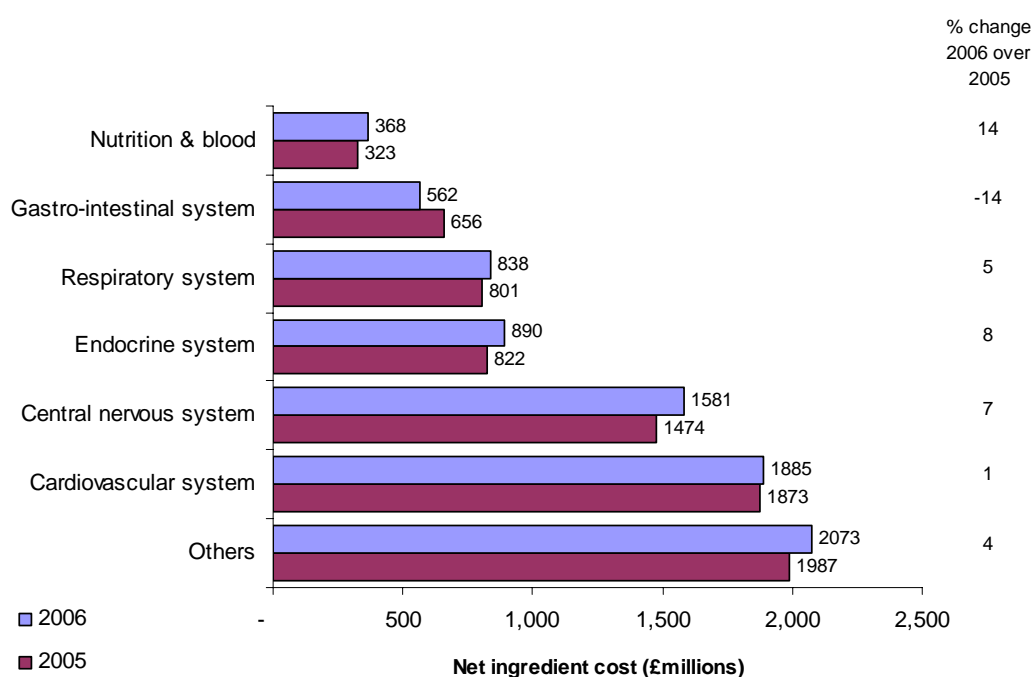


Figure 5 Number of prescription items (millions) by leading BNF chapters, 2005 and 2006

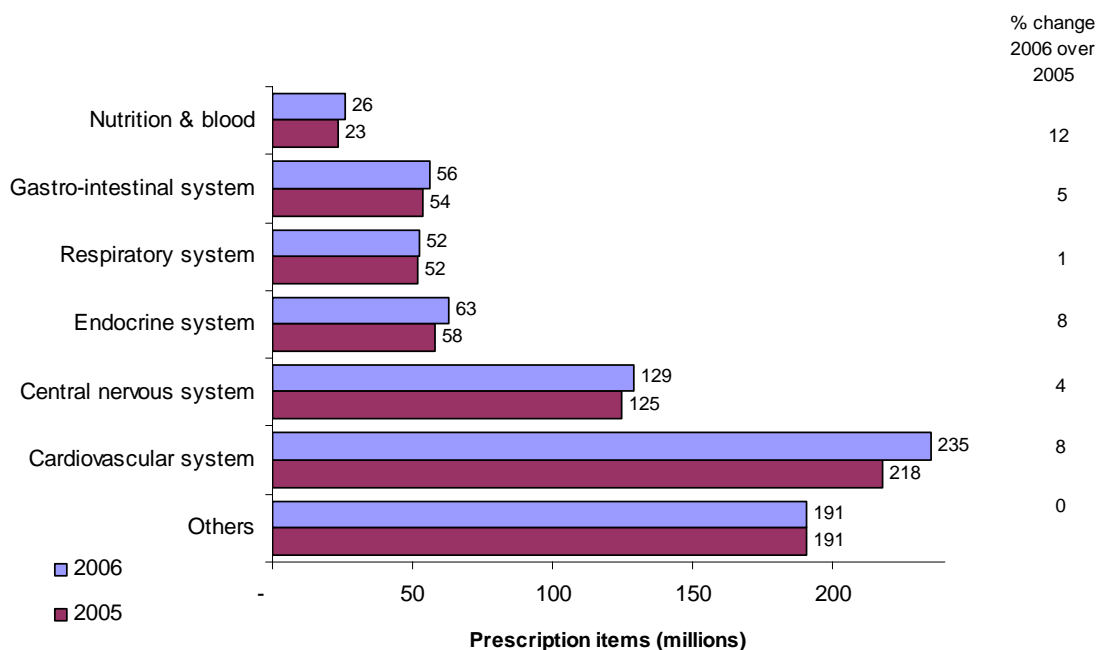
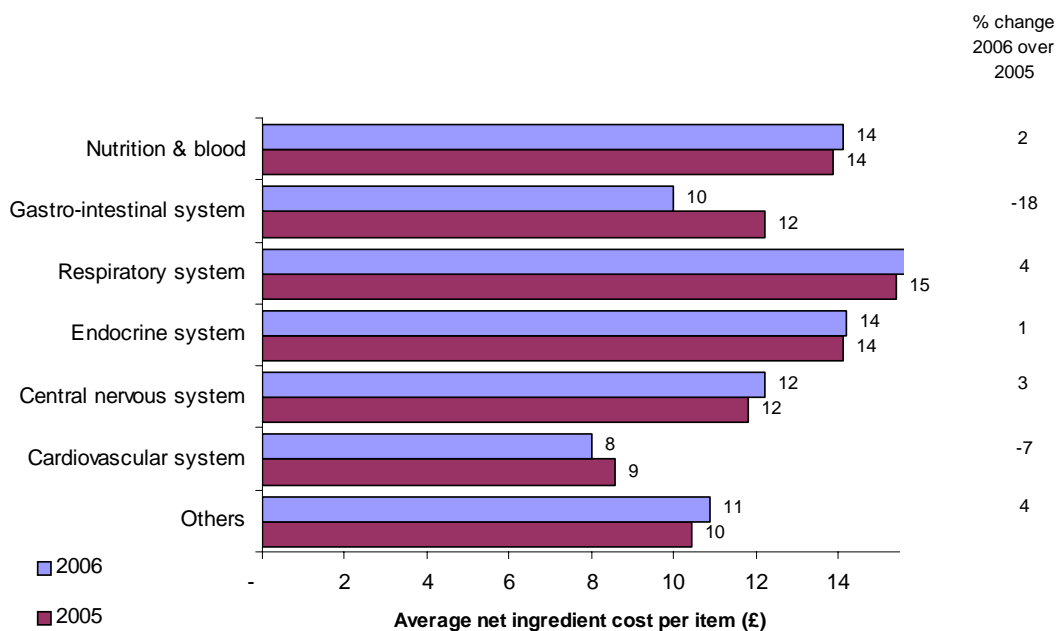


Figure 6 Average net ingredient cost per prescription item (£) by leading BNF chapters, 2005 and 2006

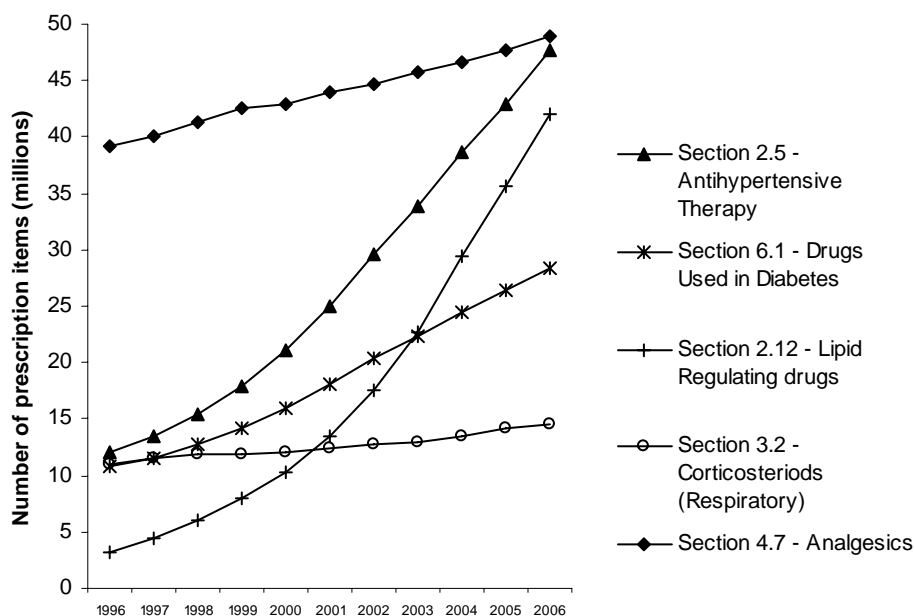


Trends by BNF Sections

20. **Table 10** shows for 2005 and 2006 the number of prescription items and the net ingredient cost for the 20 BNF sections that showed the greatest increase in net ingredient cost between 2005 and 2006.
21. Three of the top four BNF sections in Table 10 are the same as in last year's bulletin. BNF section 2.9 (*Antiplatelet Drugs*) has been replaced by BNF section 9.4 (*Oral Nutrition*).
22. BNF section 4.2 (*Drugs used in Psychoses & Rel. Disorders*) has seen the fifth largest increase in NIC, £21.3 million (9.5 per cent), and has moved from twentieth place in 2005. Items dispensed have increased by 5.5 per cent to 7.2 million. Increased use of *quetiapine* and *ariprazole* accounts for £15 million.
23. There are eight new sections in the top 20 this year. BNF section 8.3 (*Sex Hormones & Antag in Malign Disease*) has seen a rise in NIC of £19.5 million (10.5 per cent) with items dispensed rising by 4.2 per cent. *Anastrozole* and *letrozole* show the greatest increases and account for over £10m of the increase.
24. BNF section 2.5 (*Hypertension and Heart failure*) has seen a rise of 11.4 per cent in items dispensed with costs rising by £17.5 million (3.6 per cent). (see paragraph 43)
25. BNF section 4.1 (*Hypnotics and Anxiolytics*) saw an increase in NIC of £11.3 million (29.4 per cent) although the number of items dispensed fell by 2.1 per cent. (see paragraph 15)
26. BNF section 1.5 (*Chronic bowel disorders*) saw an increase in NIC of 18.6 per cent while items dispensed rose by 3.6 per cent. (see paragraph 15)
27. BNF sections 13.4 (*Topical Corticosteroids*), 5.1 (*Antibacterial drugs*) and 2.4 (*Beta-Adrenoceptor Blocking drugs*) all saw rises in NIC of at least £8 million while the number of items dispensed fell. (see paragraph 15)
28. BNF section 4.9 (*Drugs Used in Parkinsonism & Related disorders*) saw costs rise £7.6 million (7.6 per cent) and items by 3.4 per cent.
29. The BNF section with the largest increase in the number of items dispensed was 4.5 (*Drugs used in the Treatment of Obesity*) where items rose to 1.1 million (21.7 per cent) and NIC rose by £9.6 million (25.2 per cent). BNF section 4.11 (*Drugs for Dementia*) saw an increase of 20.6 per cent in items dispensed and a 19.7 per cent increase in NIC.
30. **Table 11** shows for 2005 and 2006 the number of prescription items, net ingredient cost and average net ingredient cost per item of the 20 BNF sections in 2006 which had the greatest net ingredient cost.
31. BNF section 2.12 (*Lipid - Regulating drugs*) remains as the leading section in terms of NIC, £622.3 million, although this is a slight drop from last year. The number of items dispensed rose by 18.4 per cent. (see paragraph 40)

32. BNF section 3.2 (*Corticosteroids (Respiratory)*) has replaced BNF section 1.3 (*Ulcer-healing drugs*) in the top four as the latter has seen a fall in NIC of 25 per cent, to £352.9 million. This is largely due to *lansoprazole* coming off patent and, as part of Category M, falling in price. The cost of *lansoprazole* has fallen from £222.6 million in 2005 to £106.0 million in 2006 (52.4 per cent). There has also been a fall of 6.9 per cent in the number of items of ranitidine dispensed to 3.1 million. The price of *ranitidine* has also fallen under Category M resulting in a 45.6 per cent fall in net ingredient cost of £8.5 million (see paragraph 15).
33. BNF section 4.7 (*Analgesics*) saw the greatest increase in NIC, 21.9 per cent, to £411.2 million (see paragraph 35) followed by BNF section 6.1 (*Drugs used in diabetes*) which saw an increase of 13.6 per cent to £562.5 million.
34. **Figure 7** shows the growth in number of prescription items for the top five BNF sections, by net ingredient cost from **Table 11**, over the last eleven years.

Figure 7 Ten-year trends in number of prescription items dispensed for the five BNF sections that had the greatest net ingredient cost in 2006:



BNF section 4.7 (*Analgesics*)

35. As with last year this is the section with the largest increase in net ingredient cost. The increase was £73.8 million (21.9 per cent), taking the total cost for 2006 to £411.2 million. The number of prescription items dispensed increased from 47.6 million in 2005 to 48.9 million (2.7 per cent) in 2006.

36. The increase in net ingredient cost is mainly due to price rises under the Category M scheme (see paragraph 15) and increased use of two drugs, *co-codamol* and *paracetamol*, following the planned withdrawal of *co-proxamol*. The net ingredient cost per item for *co-codamol* has risen by £1.01 between 2005 and 2006. Net ingredient cost per item for *paracetamol* rose by £0.90 over the same period. These two drugs alone account for a rise of £34m. In addition there has been increased use of *buprenorphine* patches and *fentanyl* patches which account for £14m.

BNF section 14.4 (Vaccines and antisera)

37. In this section, in 2006, prescription items decreased by 15.5 per cent to 13.6 million with costs falling by 12.1 per cent to £126.2 million, after rising significantly the year before.

38. The vaccine showing the greatest change is *pneumococcal vaccine*, where items dispensed fell by 63.2 per cent to 1.0 million and costs fell by £8.8 million (63.2 per cent). In 2003, *pneumococcal vaccine* was recommended for all those aged over 65. As the vaccine is a single dose immunisation, the increases seen from 2003 to 2005 reflect vaccination of this group of patients. The fall for 2006 suggests that this cohort is now immunised.

39. There was also a fall of 7.4 per cent in the number of *influenza vaccine* items prescribed to 8.9 million. The cost also fell by 4.1 per cent to £53.5 million. Influenza vaccination is required each year.

BNF section 2.12 (Lipid-regulating drugs)

40. BNF section 2.12, (*Lipid-Regulating drugs*) remains the leading section in terms of cost although there was a slight decrease this year to £622.3 million (0.4 per cent). Items dispensed rose to 42.1 million (18.4 per cent). The average net ingredient cost per item decreased by 15.9 per cent to £14.78.

41. The reduction in cost is largely due to Category M price changes to *simvastatin* and *pravastatin* (see paragraph 15). Net ingredient cost for *simvastatin* fell by £13.7 million (12.6 per cent) while the number of items dispensed increased by 6 million (36 per cent). *Pravastatin* costs fell by £20.7 million (70.1 per cent) and the number of items dispensed fell by 11.9 per cent.

42. The proportion of use of low cost statins is a national indicator in the Better Care, Better Value set. *Simvastatin* has seen increased prescribing due to switching from the higher cost *atorvastatin*. The net ingredient cost per item for *simvastatin* is £4.21 compared to £30.48 for *atorvastatin*.

BNF section 2.5 (Hypertension and Heart failure)

43. This section has seen both a rise in the number of items dispensed and their cost. *Ramipril* dispensing rose by 1.8 million items (17.7 per cent) although costs fell by £11.9 million (20.1 per cent) under the Category M scheme. There was increased dispensing of *angiotensin-II receptor antagonists*, notably *candesartan*, where items rose by 25.5 per cent and *olmesartan* where items increased by 62.3 per cent to 0.6 million. *Perindopril* has seen an increase of 20 per cent in the number of items dispensed with a rise of 16.9 per cent in costs to £80.7 million.

BNF section 9.4 (Oral Nutrition).

44. This section has seen an 11.1 per cent increase in the number of items dispensed and a 13.3 per cent increase in cost. Much of the increase can be attributed to increased prescribing of *enteral nutrition products*, by 16 per cent, with costs rising by £17 million (13.5 per cent) to £143 million. There has also been increased prescribing of *other preparations*, which are specialist food products. Items dispensed have increased by 10 per cent to 0.8 million, with costs rising by 16.1 per cent to £34.2 million.

Prescribers

45. The vast majority of the prescription items covered by the analyses in this Bulletin are prescribed by General Medical Practitioners in England. However, prescriptions written by dentists account for 0.6 per cent of items. Prescriptions written in hospitals and dispensed in the community accounted for 0.7 per cent of items. The data used for this report does not distinguish between GPs and other prescribers. Assuming that the proportions of prescriptions written by doctors and nurses are the same as in the ePACT system (an alternative system for analysing prescription data provided by the Prescription Pricing Division which only includes prescriptions written in England and excludes dentists and hospital prescriptions) then 97.9% of prescriptions were written by GPs and 0.8% by nurses or other non-medical prescribers.

46. Items written by dentists and dispensed in the community totalled 4.5 million in 2006. Ninety-three percent of these prescription items are from two BNF sections, BNF 5.1 (*Antibacterial drugs*) (82 per cent) and BNF 12.3 (*Drugs acting on the oropharynx*) (11 per cent).

47. Prescriptions written in hospitals (including mental health trusts and drug addiction clinics) and dispensed in the community numbered 5.2 million. The largest proportion of items is from BNF section 4.10 *Drugs used in substance dependence* (18.9 per cent) and from BNF section 4.1 *Hypnotics and Anxiolytics* (7.1 per cent). BNF section 4.3 *Antidepressant drugs* (7.0 per cent), BNF section 5.1 *Antibacterial drugs* (6.0 per cent) and BNF section 4.2 *Drugs used in psychoses and related disorders* (6.0 per cent), are also significant.

48. The number of qualified non-medical prescribers is increasing steadily. Since 1999, PCT and practice nurses have trained to become what are now known as Community Practitioner Nurse Prescribers, and are permitted to prescribe from a specific formulary. An extended formulary was introduced in 2002 and expanded over time, until it was discontinued in 2006. Since May 2006, qualified Nurse Independent Prescribers have been able to prescribe any medicine for any medical condition within their competence, including some Controlled Drugs. Since 2003, nurses have also been able to train as supplementary prescribers, where they can prescribe any medicine in partnership with a doctor (or dentist), within an agreed patient-specific clinical management plan.

49. Since 2004 pharmacists have trained and qualified as supplementary prescribers, and more recently, since late 2006, as Pharmacist Independent Prescribers.

50. Details of prescribing by non-medical prescribers is available in a prescribing monitoring report produced by the Information Centre. This is available at

<http://www.ic.nhs.uk/our-services/prescribing-support/reports-and-references/reports/psu-prescribing-monitoring-documents>

Detailed data by individual preparations

51. Information on individual preparations is available in a separate publication, see paragraph 82.

Sources and definitions

Sources

52. Statistics in this bulletin are for calendar years. All prescription statistics in this bulletin are based on information systems at the NHS Business Services Authority Prescription Pricing Division (NHSBSA (PPD)). The system used is the Prescription Cost Analysis (PCA), which was introduced in January 1991. This system is based on an analysis of all prescriptions dispensed in the community, i.e. by community pharmacists and appliance contractors, dispensing doctors, and prescriptions submitted by doctors for items personally administered.
53. The analyses are based on all prescriptions dispensed in the community in England. The vast majority are written by General Medical Practitioners in England; however, prescriptions written by nurses, dentists, other non-medical prescribers and hospital doctors are also included provided they were dispensed in the community. Also included are prescriptions written in Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Isle of Man provided they were dispensed in England. The analyses do not include prescriptions dispensed in hospitals, private prescriptions or prescriptions written in England but dispensed outside England.
54. Statistics relating to prescriptions where charges are not paid are based on a sample of 1 in 20 exempt prescription forms. Every 20th form is sampled and the exemption category ticked on the back of the form is recorded. Until September 2000, only patients having their prescriptions dispensed by community pharmacists and appliance contractors were required to complete the back of the prescription form, but from October 2000, this requirement was extended to patients of dispensing doctors. The analyses of non-charged prescriptions in this bulletin include those dispensed by dispensing doctors from 2001 onwards. Table 4 provides a comparison of community pharmacist and appliance contractor prescriptions with those of dispensing doctors (excluding personally administered items which are always free of charge).
55. The resident population, estimated by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), has been used to determine the average number of prescriptions and the average net ingredient cost per head of population. This bulletin uses mid-year resident population estimates and projections based on the 2001 Census which have been revised slightly since last year's bulletin and

therefore some figures for prescription items per head in Tables 1 and 5 for the years 1996 to 2005 are different from those published in last year's bulletin.

Definitions

56. Prescribers write prescriptions on a **prescription form**. Each single item written on the form is counted as a **prescription item**.
57. All prescription items attract a professional fee for the dispensing contractor and prior to the introduction of the revised PCA system the number of fees paid was counted rather than the number of items. From 1991, the revised PCA system counts actual items. There are minor differences between the two figures because some prescription items attract more than one fee.
58. The **net ingredient cost** (NIC) refers to the cost (which the dispenser is reimbursed) of the drug before discounts and does not include any dispensing costs or fees. It does not include any adjustment for income obtained where a prescription charge is paid at the time the prescription is dispensed or where the patient has purchased a pre-payment certificate.
59. The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is a measure of the total flow of goods and services produced by the economy over a specified period. The implied **GDP Deflator** is an index that reflects changes in the general level of prices of goods and services produced in the UK economy. It can be used to deflate a series expressed in current prices such as net ingredient cost in order to strip out the effect of general price movements. This bulletin uses the Treasury GDP deflator.
60. National Service Frameworks (NSFs) are part of a range of measures to raise quality and decrease variations in service. They:
- set standards and define service models for a defined service or care group
 - put in place strategies to support implementation
 - establish performance milestones against which progress within an agreed time-scale will be measured

Further information on the NSF programme can be found at:

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Policyandguidance/Healthandsocialcaretopics/DH_4070951

61. PCA uses the therapeutic classifications defined in the British National Formulary (September 2005 edition in this bulletin). The NHSBSA (PPD) has created pseudo BNF chapters, which do not appear in the BNF, for items not included in BNF chapters 1 to 15. The majority of such items are dressings and appliances, which the (HSBSA (PPD) has classified into four pseudo BNF chapters (20 to 23). The NHSBSA (PPD) has produced a booklet on BNF classifications and the pseudo classifications used. This is available on the internet at:

http://www.ppa.org.uk/pdfs/bnf_class_booklet_2005d.pdf

62. The classification of drugs and appliances used by the NHSBSA (PPD) for PCA does not always equate exactly with the BNF. For example, the

NHSBSA (PPD) does not include stoma appliances in BNF section 1.8 but classifies them under a pseudo BNF chapter 23.

63. European Community law requires the use of international names for medicinal substances. The Medicines Commission recommended that names of medicinal substances be changed from the **British Approved Name (BAN)** to the **recommended International Non-proprietary Name (rINN)**, where the BAN and rINN differ, by June 2004. A full list of the name changes appears in the introductory pages of the British National Formulary. The Prescription Cost Analysis system has reflected these changes from 2003 onwards.
64. A **generically written prescription** is one that has been written using the recommended International Non-proprietary Name, the British Approved Name, or the scientific name of the active ingredient rather than the brand name. Recommended International Non-proprietary Names are used for most ingredient names since systematic chemical names or other scientific names are too complex or inconvenient for general use.
65. For the purpose of these statistics, **generic dispensing** is defined as occurring where a drug is prescribed **and** available generically and the dispenser is reimbursed at the Drug Tariff price or the price of the generic. **The Drug Tariff (Part VIII)** shows the amount that will be reimbursed by the Department for most generic drugs dispensed against a prescription written generically.
66. Generic prescribing is encouraged and many drugs are now prescribed generically even when they are not available in generic form (principally because the branded product is still in patent). Because of this within the PCA system prescriptions for drugs are classified in four ways:
- **Class 1** - Drugs prescribed **and** available generically and the dispenser is reimbursed at the Drug Tariff price or the price of the generic. It is possible in such circumstances for a branded drug or a parallel import to be dispensed against the prescription
 - **Class 2** - Drugs prescribed generically but because a generic is not available (for example the proprietary is still under patent) a proprietary product or a parallel import has been dispensed
 - **Class 3** - Drugs prescribed and dispensed by proprietary brand name
 - **Class 4** - Dressings and appliances
67. Where a pharmacist has dispensed the generic form of the drug and has been reimbursed at the generic price, the data for the drug dispensed will be recorded against the class 1 (generic) form of the drug in PCA. Where a generic is not available and hence a pharmacist has been reimbursed at proprietary prices for dispensing the proprietary form, the data will be defined as class 2 and recorded in PCA against the class 3 (proprietary) form of the drug.
68. Where a drug is defined as class 2, the prescription items, NIC, etc for it are allocated across the items for all equivalent proprietaries. This is done pro rata on the basis of the number of proprietary prescription items dispensed. "Of which class 2" (Owc2) gives the number of prescription items resulting from this apportionment. There are a small number of preparations that are not linked to equivalent proprietaries that appear separately with a class of 2.

69. Part VIII of the Drug Tariff, published by The Stationery Office and available from the Stationery Office Bookshops, lists the basis for reimbursement for most commonly prescribed generic drugs which are (in most cases) available generically.
70. In some cases, although a generic is available and the pharmacist has been reimbursed at the Drug Tariff price, the pharmacist may have chosen to dispense the equivalent proprietary product. This will, none the less, be recorded against the class 1 form of the drug.
71. For drugs dispensed by doctors, class 2 is not normally used in the PCA system; if a drug is prescribed generically but dispensed by a doctor as a proprietary because the generic is not available, it is recorded as a class 3 - prescribed and dispensed as a proprietary.
72. Reimbursement arrangements allowed a drug to be classified as "Category D" within the drug tariff where there was a problem of availability. This enabled pharmacies to be reimbursed at the price they paid. Traditionally less than 1 per cent of prescription items were Category D (around 400,000 per month). However, because of generic drug supply problems, the volume of prescription items that fell within Category D of the Drug Tariff increased substantially in 1999. For example, for October 1999 around 7 million (17 per cent) prescription items were affected. In response to continued high Drug Tariff prices, a statutory maximum price scheme for the main generics was introduced and the Category D arrangement in the Drug Tariff was abolished with effect from August 2000 dispensed prescriptions.
73. When the drug was in Category D and a pharmacist dispensed its equivalent proprietary product against a generically written script, then the pharmacist was reimbursed at the branded price and the item was recorded as class 3. This also applied to drugs not included in the Drug Tariff.
74. The procedure used to count no charge contraceptive prescription data was changed from 2000. Previously the information was obtained from those prescription forms endorsed on the back of the form as a contraceptive. The new method counts all the items defined as a contraceptive irrespective of what is ticked.
75. The Pharmaceutical Price Regulation Scheme is a voluntary agreement made between the Department of Health and the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry. The scheme places some control on the costs of medicines to the NHS, and applies to all branded licensed NHS medicines.
76. The groups eligible for free prescriptions and the interpretation of charged prescriptions are shown below for 2006. It is important to note that from October 1995 "elderly people" covers men and women aged 60 and over. Prior to this the category covered men aged 65 and over and women aged 60 and over. A major change in prescription forms was introduced from 1 April 1995 highlighting the need for a signed declaration by the patient.

Charged prescriptions

These include all prescriptions where:

- a prescription charge is payable at the time the prescription is dispensed
- the patient holds a valid prescription pre-payment certificate purchased in

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advance from the Prescription Pricing Division and no further charge is paid at the point of dispensing

Free prescriptions

These are in the following categories

- **Elderly people**, men and women aged 60 and over.
- **Young people**, children under age 16, young people aged 16, 17 and 18 in full time education;
- **Exemption certificate holders**, these are:
 - Pregnant women and women who have given birth in the previous 12 months
 - People with specified medical conditions

These certificates are issued by the NHSBSA. Prior to 1 October 2002, Health Authorities issued them.

- **War pensioners**, but only in respect of prescriptions for their accepted disablement and if an exemption certificate is held. These certificates are issued by the Veterans Agency.
- **No declaration / declaration not specific:** If a patient is entitled to free prescriptions, they must tick the appropriate box on the back of the prescription form to say why they do not have to pay and sign the declaration on the prescription form. From April 2005 if they are age exempt and their date of birth is printed on the prescription form, they do not need to sign the declaration. If it is not clear what category applies, the group is shown as **no declaration**. Where the patient has claimed two or more categories, they are classified as **declaration not specific**. The latter includes bulk prescriptions for schools or institutions. From 1 April 1995, the distinction between the categories "no declaration" and "declaration not specific" was not made. In 1998, prescription forms were revised to show separately the different benefits that gave income related entitlement. Prior to this, patients receiving any of the qualifying benefits, all ticked the same box (conditions of entitlement were not changed; only the prescription form). The small number of items prescribed on pre 1998 forms have been recorded as "no declaration /declaration not specific".
- **NHS Low Income Scheme entitlement in respect of:**
 - People and their partners receiving **Income Support**
 - People and their partners receiving **Income Based Jobseeker's Allowance**
 - Partners aged under 60 of recipients of **Pension Credit Guarantee Credit**

- People and their partners with gross annual income of £15,050 or less receiving from 6 April 2005 (remains at £15,050 from 6 April 2006):
 - Working tax credit with child tax credit
 - Working tax credit which includes a disability or severe disability element
 - Child tax credit and not eligible for Working Tax Credit
- People and their partners who are named on a valid HC2 charges certificate for full help.

Previously the groups included the following which are now included in the above:

- Partners aged under 60 of recipients of Minimum Income Guarantee – up to September 2003.
 - People and their partners receiving Family Credit up to September 1999
 - People and their partners receiving full working families tax credit or maximum credit reduced by a specified amount from October 1999 to 5 April 2004
 - People and their partners receiving Disability Working Allowance up to September 1999
 - People and their partners receiving full Disabled Person's Tax Credit or maximum credit reduced by a specified amount from October 1999 to 5 April 2004
- **Contraceptives:** prescriptions for contraceptives are free and do not attract a prescription charge.
 - **Personally administered Items:** these are free of charge. Unlike prescribing doctors who submit claims to the NHSBSA (PPD) only in respect of personally administered items, Dispensing Doctors submit claims for all items dispensed. It is, therefore, not known whether a dispensing doctor has personally administered an item. Items personally administered by dispensing doctors are therefore defined as all items for products that are indicated on the NHSBSA (PPD) drug database as products that **can** be personally administered.

Further information

77. Press enquiries should be made to:

Media Office,
The Information Centre for health and social care,
1, Trevelyan Square,
Boar Lane,
Leeds, LS1 6AE
Telephone: 0113 2547000 or 07771 996095. Email: media@ic.nhs.uk

78. If you require further details about the statistics in this bulletin, or have comments about the content, contact:

Mr. Glen Scrivener
Prescribing Support Unit,
The Information Centre for health and social care,
1, Trevelyan Square, Boar Lane,
Leeds LS1 6AE
Telephone: 0113 254 7041
Email: glen.scrivener@ic.nhs.uk

79. Further copies of this bulletin are available free on the Internet at:

<http://www.ic.nhs.uk/pubs/presdisp>

80. For enquiries about distribution of this publication please contact the address above:

81. The material in this bulletin is Crown copyright but may be reproduced without formal permission or charge for personal or in-house use.

82. A publication listing individual preparations alphabetically within therapeutic class is published annually and provides details of the number of items, the net ingredient cost and the quantity of individual preparations dispensed in the community in England. The latest publication is titled "**Prescription Cost Analysis : England 2006**" and is available free from the Internet at:

<http://www.ic.nhs.uk/statistics-and-data-collections/primary-care/prescriptions/prescription-cost-analysis-2006>

83. A bulletin describing prescribing taking place within hospitals in England, at both national and Strategic Health Authority level is published annually and is available free from the Internet at:

<http://www.ic.nhs.uk/statistics-and-data-collections/primary-care/prescribing/report-of-hospital-prescribing-2005>

84. Information on other Statistical Publications together with other statistical information can be found at:

<http://www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/fs/en>

and

<http://www.ic.nhs.uk/pubs>

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Table 1 Number and total net ingredient cost (NIC) of prescription items, average NIC per prescription item and average number of prescription items per head of population, 1996 - 2006

England

Year	Number (million)	Total NIC (£million)		Average NIC per prescription item (£)		Average number of prescription items per head of population
		Actual	At 1996 prices	Actual	At 1996 prices	
1996	484.9	4,007.0	4,007.0	8.26	8.26	10.0
1997	500.2	4,367.5	4,244.1	8.73	8.49	10.3
1998	513.2	4,701.5	4,455.4	9.16	8.68	10.5
1999	529.8	5,291.2	4,914.9	9.99	9.28	10.8
2000	551.8	5,584.6	5,115.5	10.12	9.27	11.2
2001	587.0	6,116.6	5,472.9	10.42	9.32	11.9
2002	617.0	6,846.7	5,942.3	11.10	9.63	12.4
2003	649.7	7,510.1	6,329.9	11.56	9.74	13.0
2004	686.1	8,079.6	6,627.1	11.78	9.66	13.7
2005	720.3	7,936.6	6,382.7	11.02	8.86	14.3
2006	752.0	8,196.8	6,432.5	10.90	8.55	14.8

Average annual increase (%)

1996 to 1997	3.1%	9.0%	5.9%	5.7%	2.7%	2.8%
1997 to 1998	2.6%	7.6%	5.0%	4.9%	2.3%	2.3%
1998 to 1999	3.2%	12.5%	10.3%	9.0%	6.9%	2.8%
1999 to 2000	4.2%	5.5%	4.1%	1.3%	-0.1%	3.7%
2000 to 2001	6.4%	9.5%	7.0%	3.0%	0.6%	5.9%
2001 to 2002	5.1%	11.9%	8.6%	6.5%	3.3%	4.7%
2002 to 2003	5.3%	9.7%	6.5%	4.2%	1.2%	4.9%
2003 to 2004	5.6%	7.6%	4.7%	1.9%	-0.9%	5.1%
2004 to 2005	5.0%	-1.8%	-3.7%	-6.4%	-8.3%	4.3%
2005 to 2006	4.4%	3.3%	0.8%	-1.1%	-3.5%	3.8%
1996 to 2006	4.5%	7.4%	4.8%	2.8%	0.3%	4.0%

Notes :

1. The data are from the PCA system and cover prescription items dispensed by community pharmacists, appliance contractors, dispensing doctors and items personally administered.
2. Figures at 1996 prices are calculated using the GDP Deflator (see paragraph 59).
3. Revised ONS mid-year resident population estimates for 1996 to 2005, based on the 2001 Census and mid-year resident projections for 2006, based on 2004 mid year population estimates, have been used.

Table 2 Number of prescription items⁽¹⁾ and percentage of total items dispensed in the community by charged prescriptions and those categories where no prescription charge is made, 1996 - 2006

England

Year	Charged Prescriptions											
	Charge at point of dispensing		Pre-payment certificate		Total Charged		Elderly		Young		Maternity/ Medical	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Number of prescription items (millions)												
Community pharmacists and appliance contractors only												
1996	44.6	10.1	18.8	4.3	63.4	14.4	212.9	48.3	50.0	11.3	26.1	5.9
1997	46.7	10.3	19.4	4.3	66.1	14.6	223.9	49.3	49.4	10.9	23.4	5.2
1998	48.6	10.4	19.4	4.2	68.0	14.6	234.0	50.1	46.7	10.0	26.8	5.7
1999	51.4	10.7	20.1	4.2	71.6	14.9	252.2	52.3	43.7	9.1	30.4	6.3
2000	53.0	10.6	21.6	4.3	74.6	14.9	270.2	54.0	41.6	8.3	32.4	6.5
2001	54.6	10.2	23.8	4.5	78.4	14.7	293.8	55.1	42.1	7.9	36.5	6.8
All dispensed items												
2001(a)	58.8	10.0	26.7	4.6	85.5	14.6	317.5	54.1	44.2	7.5	39.1	6.7
2002(a)	59.6	9.7	28.8	4.7	88.4	14.3	339.7	55.0	42.8	6.9	42.2	6.8
2003(a)	58.9	9.1	30.6	4.7	89.5	13.8	363.5	55.9	42.4	6.5	45.9	7.1
2004(a)	57.8	8.4	32.2	4.7	90.0	13.1	391.4	57.0	41.1	6.0	50.1	7.3
2005(a)	56.5	7.8	33.1	4.6	89.5	12.4	409.5	56.9	42.5	5.9	52.6	7.3
2006(a)	55.8	7.4	34.4	4.6	90.2	12.0	440.8	58.6	42.7	5.7	55.0	7.3
Net ingredient cost (£millions)												
Community pharmacists and appliance contractors only												
1996	492.5	13.5	220.5	6.0	713.1	19.5	1,723.6	47.2	266.2	7.3	280.9	7.7
1997	540.7	13.6	243.9	6.1	784.7	19.7	1,905.9	47.9	277.0	7.0	267.1	6.7
1998	585.8	13.7	254.2	5.9	840.0	19.6	2,060.1	48.1	281.9	6.6	321.9	7.5
1999	666.0	13.8	280.9	5.8	946.9	19.6	2,419.6	50.0	288.0	6.0	402.6	8.3
2000	682.4	13.4	300.6	5.9	983.0	19.3	2,621.0	51.4	283.6	5.6	441.1	8.7
2001	712.5	12.7	336.3	6.0	1,048.8	18.8	2,923.5	52.3	298.1	5.3	517.2	9.2
All dispensed items												
2001(a)	759.9	12.4	370.7	6.1	1,130.6	18.5	3,120.3	51.0	312.6	5.1	543.5	8.9
2002(a)	811.2	11.8	415.0	6.1	1,226.2	17.9	3,560.7	52.0	325.1	4.7	621.4	9.1
2003(a)	816.2	10.9	454.7	6.1	1,270.9	16.9	3,988.45	53.1	338.8	4.5	696.8	9.3
2004(a)	808.9	10.0	479.9	5.9	1,288.80	16.0	4,334.00	53.6	353.7	4.4	775.8	9.6
2005(a)	727.0	9.2	453.1	5.7	1,180.10	14.9	4,180.30	52.7	379.7	4.8	779.5	9.8
2006(a)	687.1	8.4	462.7	5.6	1,149.80	14.0	4,401.80	53.7	412.9	5.0	814.9	9.9
Average net ingredient cost per prescription item (£)												
Community pharmacists and appliance contractors only												
1996	11.04		11.75		11.25		8.10		5.33		10.74	
1997	11.57		12.57		11.86		8.51		5.61		11.39	
1998	12.07		13.07		12.35		8.80		6.04		11.99	
1999	12.95		13.96		13.23		9.59		6.59		13.23	
2000	12.88		13.91		13.18		9.70		6.82		13.61	
2001	13.06		14.13		13.38		9.95		7.08		14.16	
All dispensed items												
2001(a)	12.93		13.88		13.23		9.83		7.07		13.92	
2002(a)	13.60		14.41		13.87		10.48		7.59		14.71	
2003(a)	13.86		14.86		14.20		10.97		7.99		15.19	
2004(a)	14.00		14.89		14.32		11.07		8.61		15.47	
2005(a)	12.87		13.71		13.18		10.21		8.93		14.81	
2006(a)	12.30		13.47		12.75		9.99		9.66		14.81	

Notes :

1. The analysis of 1993 to 2001 data for non-charged categories is based on a 1 in 20 sample of all exempt prescriptions submitted to the PPA by community pharmacists and appliance contractors only. Items dispensed by dispensing doctors and personal administration prescriptions are excluded. Data for 2001(a) - 2006(a) also includes prescription items dispensed by dispensing doctors and items personally administered by prescribing and dispensing doctors. Personally administered items are free of charge.

2. NHS LIS : NHS Low Income Scheme

Table 2 Continued from previous page

Free Prescriptions											
NHS LIS		No charge contraceptives		Personally administered		Other		Total Free		Grand total	
Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
67.8	15.4	6.8	1.5	n/a	n/a	14.0	3.2	377.6	85.6	441.0	100.0
69.6	15.3	6.5	1.4	n/a	n/a	15.4	3.4	388.2	85.4	454.3	100.0
69.0	14.8	6.4	1.4	n/a	n/a	16.2	3.5	399.1	85.4	467.1	100.0
66.5	13.8	6.6	1.4	n/a	n/a	10.8	2.2	410.3	85.1	481.9	100.0
66.0	13.2	7.9	1.6	n/a	n/a	8.0	1.6	426.0	85.1	500.5	100.0
68.3	12.8	7.8	1.5	n/a	n/a	6.2	1.2	454.8	85.3	533.1	100.0
70.1	11.9	8.4	1.4	15.8	2.7	6.6	1.1	501.6	85.4	587.0	100.0
73.3	11.9	8.3	1.3	15.6	2.5	6.6	1.1	528.6	85.7	617.0	100.0
77.2	11.9	8.3	1.3	16.2	2.5	6.7	1.0	560.2	86.2	649.7	100.0
81.3	11.8	8.2	1.2	17.0	2.5	7.0	1.0	596.1	86.9	686.1	100.0
82.6	11.5	8.1	1.1	19.4	2.7	15.9	2.2	630.7	87.6	720.3	100.0
84.5	11.2	8.2	1.1	17.0	2.3	13.5	1.8	661.7	88.0	751.9	100.0
523.7	14.3	36.5	1.0	n/a	n/a	109.9	3.0	2,940.8	80.5	3,653.8	100.0
573.6	14.4	36.7	0.9	n/a	n/a	130.8	3.3	3,191.1	80.3	3,975.8	100.0
601.2	14.0	37.8	0.9	n/a	n/a	142.2	3.3	3,445.1	80.4	4,285.1	100.0
633.7	13.1	40.5	0.8	n/a	n/a	104.2	2.2	3,888.8	80.4	4,835.7	100.0
638.1	12.5	49.0	1.0	n/a	n/a	81.9	1.6	4,114.7	80.7	5,097.7	100.0
686.5	12.3	51.3	0.9	n/a	n/a	66.5	1.2	4,543.1	81.2	5,591.9	100.0
704.3	11.5	54.3	0.9	180.6	3.0	70.4	1.2	4,986.0	81.5	6,116.6	100.0
791.5	11.6	57.5	0.8	190.1	2.8	74.1	1.1	5,620.4	82.1	6,846.7	100.0
871.2	11.6	59.7	0.8	204.2	2.7	80.1	1.1	6,239.3	83.1	7,510.2	100.0
951.2	11.8	62.1	0.8	224.8	2.8	89.1	1.1	6,790.8	84.0	8,079.6	100.0
938.2	11.8	62.7	0.8	235.5	3.0	180.6	2.3	6,756.4	85.1	7,936.6	100.0
961.5	11.7	67.1	0.8	222.6	2.7	166.2	2.0	7,047.1	86.0	8,196.8	100.0
7.73		5.35		n/a		7.85		7.79		8.28	
8.24		5.68		n/a		8.48		8.22		8.75	
8.72		5.87		n/a		8.80		8.63		9.17	
9.53		6.14		n/a		9.66		9.48		10.04	
9.67		6.21		n/a		10.26		9.66		10.18	
10.05		6.59		n/a		10.67		9.99		10.49	
10.05		6.49		11.44		10.63		9.94		10.42	
10.79		6.91		12.18		11.25		10.63		11.10	
11.28		7.21		12.61		11.86		11.14		11.56	
11.70		7.56		13.22		12.69		11.39		11.78	
11.36		7.69		12.13		11.38		10.71		11.02	
11.38		8.22		13.06		12.32		10.65		10.90	

3. "Other" includes war pensioners and no declaration/declaration not specific.

4. See paragraph 76 for full explanation of categories.

5. See paragraphs 74 for explanation of the change of procedure to count "no charge contraceptives" and for items personally administered.

6. "n/a": not appropriate - only GP practices can be reimbursed for personally administered items.

7. "Free prescriptions" here includes both those to exempt patients and free items.

Table 3 Number of exempt prescription items and percentage of total items dispensed in the community by category of exemption, 2005 and 2006

England

	2005		2006	
	Number	%	Number	%
<u>Number of prescription items (millions)</u>	603.2	83.7	636.5	84.7
Children under 16	37.2	5.2	37.6	5.0
Young people 16,17 or 18 in full time education	5.3	0.7	5.2	0.7
Elderly people	409.5	56.9	440.8	58.6
Maternity exemption	4.8	0.7	4.7	0.6
Medical exemption	47.8	6.6	50.3	6.7
Income support	53.7	7.4	53.8	7.2
Working Families Tax Credit/Working Tax Credit	16.6	2.3	17.6	2.3
Minimum Income Guarantee/Pension Credit	0.7	0.1	0.9	0.1
Disabled Person's Tax Credit/Disability working allowar	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Holders of an HC2 certificate	4.1	0.6	4.0	0.5
Income based Jobseekers allowance	7.5	1.0	8.1	1.1
War pension	0.6	0.1	0.6	0.1
No declaration / declaration not specific	15.3	2.1	12.9	1.7
<u>Net ingredient cost (£millions)</u>	6,458.3	81.4	6,757.3	82.4
Children under 16	322.1	4.1	353.8	4.3
Young people 16,17 or 18 in full time education	57.6	0.7	59.1	0.7
Elderly people	4,180.3	52.7	4,401.8	53.7
Maternity exemption	39.7	0.5	39.7	0.5
Medical exemption	739.8	9.3	775.2	9.5
Income support	631.0	8.0	638.5	7.8
Working Families Tax Credit/Working Tax Credit	173.0	2.2	182.1	2.2
Minimum Income Guarantee/Pension Credit	8.1	0.1	10.1	0.1
Disabled Person's Tax Credit/Disability working allowar	0.4	0.0	0.4	0.0
Holders of an HC2 certificate	49.4	0.6	48.2	0.6
Income based Jobseekers allowance	76.2	1.0	82.2	1.0
War pension	9.3	0.1	8.9	0.1
No declaration / declaration not specific	171.3	2.2	157.2	1.9
<u>Average net ingredient cost per prescription item</u>	10.71		10.62	
Children under 16	8.65		9.41	
Young people 16,17 or 18 in full time education	10.86		11.45	
Elderly people	10.21		9.99	
Maternity exemption	8.18		8.49	
Medical exemption	15.48		15.40	
Income support	11.76		11.86	
Working Families Tax Credit/Working Tax Credit/Family	10.42		10.32	
Minimum Income Guarantee/Pension Credit	11.26		11.18	
Disabled Person's Tax Credit/Disability working allowar	13.66		14.14	
Holders of an HC2 certificate	12.17		12.14	
Income based Jobseekers allowance	10.12		10.13	
War pension	15.02		14.30	
No declaration / declaration not specific	11.23		12.22	

Notes :

1. The analysis of 2005 and 2006 data for non-charged categories is based on a 1 in 20 sample of all exempt prescriptions submitted to the PPA by dispensing doctors as well as chemists and appliance contractors. Contraceptives and items personally administered by prescribing and dispensing doctors are free and are not shown in the table but are included in the totals used to calculate percentages.
2. See paragraph 76 for definition of exemption categories.
3. Information for Medical and Maternity exemption categories is shown separately. A very small number of items was recorded on "old" forms under the HA exemption category which included both medical and maternity exemption. These have been pro-rated to the Medical and Maternity categories.
4. No charge contraceptives and personally administered items are excluded from this analysis.

Table 4 Number of prescription items⁽¹⁾ and percentage of total items dispensed by community pharmacists and appliance contractors and dispensing doctors, by charged and non-charged categories, 2006

England	Total 2006		Community pharmacists and appliance contractors		Dispensing doctors	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Number of prescription items (millions):						
Charged at point of dispensing	55.8	7.6	52.0	7.6	3.9	7.4
Pre-payment certificates	34.4	4.7	30.3	4.4	4.1	7.8
No charge contraceptives	8.2	1.1	7.6	1.1	0.6	1.1
Exempt prescription items	636.5	86.6	592.6	86.8	43.9	83.7
Of Which: ⁽⁵⁾						
Children under 16	37.6	5.9	35.8	6.0	1.8	4.1
Young people 16,17 or 18 in full time education	5.2	0.8	4.8	0.8	0.4	0.8
Elderly people	440.8	69.2	405.5	68.4	35.2	80.2
Maternity exemption	4.7	0.7	4.4	0.7	0.2	0.5
Medical exemption	50.3	7.9	46.9	7.9	3.5	7.9
Income support	53.8	8.5	52.6	8.9	1.2	2.8
Working Families Tax Credit/Working Tax Credit	17.6	2.8	16.9	2.8	0.8	1.7
Minimum Income Guarantee/Pension Credit	0.9	0.1	0.9	0.1	0.0	0.1
Disabled Person's Tax Credit	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Holder of an HC2 certificate	4.0	0.6	3.8	0.6	0.2	0.4
Income based Jobseekers allowance	8.1	1.3	8.0	1.3	0.2	0.4
War pension	0.6	0.1	0.6	0.1	0.0	0.1
No declaration / declaration not specific	12.9	2.0	12.4	2.1	0.4	1.0
Net ingredient cost (£millions):						
Charged at point of dispensing	687.1	8.6	647.0	8.6	40.0	8.6
Pre-payment certificates	462.7	5.8	418.7	5.6	44.0	9.4
No charge contraceptives	67.1	0.8	63.0	0.8	4.1	0.9
Exempt prescription items	6,757.5	84.7	6,378.7	85.0	378.8	81.1
Of Which: ⁽⁵⁾						
Children under 16	353.8	5.2	339.2	5.3	14.6	3.9
Young people 16,17 or 18 in full time education	59.1	0.9	55.6	0.9	3.5	0.9
Elderly people	4,401.8	65.1	4,109.1	64.4	292.6	77.3
Maternity exemption	39.7	0.6	38.0	0.6	1.7	0.5
Medical exemption	775.2	11.5	739.2	11.6	36.0	9.5
Income support	638.5	9.4	625.0	9.8	13.4	3.5
Working Families Tax Credit/Working Tax Credit	182.1	2.7	174.4	2.7	7.7	2.0
Minimum Income Guarantee/Pension Credit	10.3	0.2	9.7	0.2	0.6	0.1
Disabled Person's Tax Credit	0.4	0.0	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0
Holder of an HC2 certificate	48.2	0.7	46.4	0.7	1.8	0.5
Income based Jobseekers allowance	82.2	1.2	80.7	1.3	1.6	0.4
War pension	8.9	0.1	8.4	0.1	0.6	0.1
No declaration / declaration not specific	157.3	2.3	152.6	2.4	4.7	1.2
Average net ingredient cost per prescription item (£):						
Charged at point of dispensing	12.30		12.45		10.29	
Pre-payment certificates	13.47		13.83		10.76	
No charge contraceptives	8.22		8.31		6.99	
Exempt prescription items	10.62		10.76		8.62	
Of Which: ⁽⁵⁾						
Children under 16	9.41		9.48		8.09	
Young people 16,17 or 18 in full time education	11.45		11.61		9.46	
Elderly people	9.99		10.13		8.30	
Maternity exemption	8.49		8.56		7.17	
Medical exemption	15.40		15.77		10.41	
Income support	11.86		11.88		11.05	
Working Families Tax Credit/Working Tax Credit	10.32		10.32		10.18	
Minimum Income Guarantee/Pension Credit	11.30		11.25		12.28	
Disabled Person's Tax Credit	14.14		14.28		6.38	
Holder of an HC2 certificate	12.14		12.17		11.33	
Income based Jobseekers allowance	10.13		10.14		9.73	
War pension	14.30		14.46		12.28	
No declaration / declaration not specific	12.22		12.28		10.72	

Notes :

1. Personally administered items are excluded from this analysis.
2. The analysis of 2006 data for non-charged categories is based on a 1 in 20 sample of all exempt prescriptions submitted to the NHSBSA(PPD) by community pharmacists and appliance contractors and dispensing doctors.
3. See paragraph 76 for definition of exemption categories.
4. Information for Medical and Maternity exemption categories is shown separately. A very small number of items was recorded on "old" forms under the HA exemption category which included both medical and maternity exemption. These have been pro-rated to both categories.
5. For bulletins prior to 2005 these figures were expressed as a percentage of total items; from 2005 they are expressed as a percentage of all exempt items

Table 5 Average number of prescription items dispensed in the community per head of population by broad age group, 1996 - 2006

England

Year	Children aged 0-15 years	Others aged 16-59/64 years	Elderly people	All ages
Community pharmacists and appliance contractors only ⁽¹⁾				
1996	5.0	6.2	21.2	10.0
1997	4.9	6.3	22.3	10.3
1998	4.7	6.5	23.2	10.5
1999	4.4	6.4	24.8	10.8
2000	4.2	6.5	26.5	11.2
2001	4.2	6.7	28.7	11.9
All dispensed items				
2001(a)	4.5	7.2	31.0	11.9
2002(a)	4.3	7.4	33.0	12.4
2003(a)	4.3	7.7	35.0	13.0
2004(a)	4.2	7.9	37.3	13.7
2005(a)	3.8	9.1	38.4	14.3
2006(a)	3.9	9	40.8	14.8

Notes :

1. The analysis of 1996 to 2001 data for non-charged categories is based on a 1 in 20 sample of all exempt prescriptions submitted to the NHSBSA(PPD) by community pharmacists and appliance contractors only. Items dispensed by dispensing doctors and personal administration prescriptions are excluded. Data for 2001(a) to 2006(a) also includes prescription items dispensed by dispensing doctors. Items personally administered by prescribing and dispensing doctors are not included in the broad age groups, but are included in the "All ages" group.

2. The calculation of the average number of prescriptions per head for children includes prescriptions of persons under 19 in full time education, although the population figure used is for children and young people aged 15 years and under only.

3. All no charge contraceptives items have been included under "others aged 16-59/64 years"

4. Revised ONS mid-year resident population estimates for 1996 to 2005, based on the 2001 Census and mid-year resident projections for 2006, based on 2004 mid year population estimates, have been used.

5. Prescription items per head for all dispensers from 1996 to 2006 are shown on Table 1.

Table 6 Number, net ingredient cost (NIC) and average NIC per prescription item by class of preparation, 1996 - 2006

England

Year	Class of preparation				All classes
	Prescribed and dispensed generically ⁽²⁾ (class 1)	Prescribed generically, dispensed and reimbursed as proprietary ⁽³⁾ (class 2)	Prescribed and dispensed as proprietary (class 3)	Dressings and appliances (class 4)	
Number of prescription items (million)					
1996	210.2	60.4	199.6	14.7	484.9
1997	226.6	65.8	192.9	14.9	500.2
1998	237.9	75.7	184.7	14.9	513.2
1999	248.4	90.9	175.4	15.1	529.8
2000	277.6	103.2	155.4	15.5	551.8
2001	297.5	125.1	147.8	16.6	587.0
2002	317.9	138.1	144.0	17.0	617.0
2003	350.1	141.5	140.1	17.9	649.7
2004	385.6	142.3	139.6	18.5	686.1
2005	415.3	145.8	139.6	19.6	720.3
2006	454.2	142.9	133.2	21.7	752.0
Net ingredient cost (£million)					
1996	500.2	1,161.0	2,119.5	226.3	4,007.0
1997	624.1	1,319.9	2,186.7	236.8	4,367.5
1998	685.1	1,547.5	2,221.3	247.5	4,701.5
1999	917.1	1,937.3	2,171.9	264.9	5,291.2
2000	1,143.0	2,167.0	1,990.1	284.5	5,584.6
2001	1,035.4	2,747.6	2,021.4	312.3	6,116.6
2002	1,297.0	3,132.5	2,079.9	337.2	6,846.7
2003	1,694.6	3,325.2	2,119.6	370.6	7,510.1
2004	2,021.8	3,435.2	2,220.6	402.0	8,079.6
2005	1,978.8	3,331.9	2,189.9	436.0	7,936.6
2006	2276.5	3274.7	2172.8	472.8	8196.8
Average net ingredient cost per prescription item (£)					
1996	2.38	19.21	10.62	15.39	8.26
1997	2.75	20.07	11.34	15.94	8.73
1998	2.88	20.45	12.02	16.58	9.16
1999	3.69	21.32	12.38	17.52	9.99
2000	4.12	20.99	12.80	18.31	10.12
2001	3.48	21.96	13.67	18.83	10.42
2002	4.08	22.69	14.44	19.83	11.10
2003	4.84	23.50	15.13	20.67	11.56
2004	5.24	24.13	15.91	21.67	11.78
2005	4.77	22.85	15.68	22.24	11.02
2006	5.01	22.92	16.31	21.81	10.90

Notes :

1. The data are from the PCA system and cover prescription items dispensed by community pharmacists, appliance contractors, dispensing doctors and items personally administered.
2. Prescriptions which were written generically, are available generically and reimbursed at the Drug Tariff or generic price.
3. Drug is not available generically.
4. Preparation classes are defined in paragraph 66.
5. Some drugs were incorrectly allocated to OWC2 (see paragraph 65) in the years 2000 and 2001. As a result figures for 2000 are unreliable for classes 2 and 3; figures for 2001 have been corrected.

**Table 7 Generic prescribing and dispensing, 1996 - 2006: all items excluding dressings and appliances
England**

Year	All items excluding dressings and appliances			Total
	Prescribed generically (class 1 and 2)	Prescribed and dispensed generically(2) (class 1)	Prescribed generically, dispensed and reimbursed as proprietary(3) (class 2)	
Prescription items				Millions
1996	57.5%	44.7%	12.9%	470.2
1997	60.3%	46.7%	13.6%	485.3
1998	62.9%	47.7%	15.2%	498.3
1999	65.9%	48.3%	17.7%	514.7
2000	71.0%	51.8%	19.2%	536.3
2001	74.1%	52.2%	21.9%	570.5
2002	76.0%	53.0%	23.0%	600.0
2003	77.8%	55.4%	22.4%	631.8
2004	79.1%	57.8%	21.3%	667.6
2005	80.1%	59.3%	20.8%	700.7
2006	81.8%	62.2%	19.6%	730.3
Net ingredient cost				£ millions
1996	43.9%	13.2%	30.7%	3,780.6
1997	47.1%	15.1%	32.0%	4,130.7
1998	50.1%	15.4%	34.7%	4,454.0
1999	56.8%	18.2%	38.5%	5,026.4
2000	62.5%	21.6%	40.9%	5,300.1
2001	65.2%	17.8%	47.3%	5,804.3
2002	68.0%	19.9%	48.1%	6,509.4
2003	70.3%	23.7%	46.6%	7,139.5
2004	71.1%	26.3%	44.7%	7,677.6
2005	70.8%	26.4%	44.4%	7,500.6
2006	71.9%	29.5%	42.4%	7,724.0

Notes :

1. The data are from the PCA system and cover prescription items dispensed by community pharmacists, appliance contractors, dispensing doctors and items personally administered.
2. Prescriptions which were written generically, are available generically and reimbursed at the Drug Tariff or generic price.
3. Drug is not available generically.
4. Some drugs were incorrectly allocated to "Of Which Class 2" (see paragraph 68) in the years 2000 and 2001. As a result "prescribed generically" figures for 2000 are unreliable; figures for 2001 have been corrected.

Table 8 Generic prescribing and dispensing, based on items, by British National Formulary chapters, 2005 and 2006

England

BNF chapter	% Prescribed generically		% Dispensed generically ⁽⁵⁾	
	2005	2006	2005	2006
1 : Gastro-intestinal system	78.2	80.1	46.4	62.5
2 : Cardiovascular system	92.6	93.7	69.7	71.4
3 : Respiratory system	73.4	74.3	45.8	44.7
4 : Central nervous system	90.4	90.9	72.8	74.3
5 : Infections	96.5	97.2	90.7	91.9
6 : Endocrine system	75.3	77.1	61.3	62.9
7 : Obstetrics, gynaecology, & urinary-tract disorders	43.5	47.2	6.2	12.5
8 : Malignant disease & immunosuppression	80.0	80.9	46.3	43.3
9 : Nutrition & blood	51.9	52.6	45.5	45.6
10 : Musculoskeletal & joint diseases	81.9	83.4	58.8	64.7
11 : Eye	66.1	66.4	34.9	32.8
12 : Ear, nose & oropharynx	54.4	56.4	21.8	20.7
13 : Skin	44.7	47.1	21.6	21.8
14 : Immunological products & vaccines	22.0	26.0	21.4	25.5
15 : Anaesthesia	51.0	51.7	46.6	45.5
Other	32.0	48.3	31.8	48.0
Total (excluding dressings and appliances)	80.1	81.8	59.3	62.2

Notes:

1. BNF chapters are based on the British National Formulary (September 2005).
2. The data are from the PCA system and cover all prescription items dispensed by community pharmacists and appliance contractors, dispensing doctors and personal administration.
3. The table covers BNF chapters 1 to 15 and "others" - see note 4 below. Dressings and appliances are excluded.
4. The "Other" category covers drugs contained in pseudo British National Formulary chapters used by the NHSBSA (PPD), eg homeopathic preparations.
5. Prescriptions which were written generically, are available generically and reimbursed at the Drug Tariff or generic price.

Table 9 Number, net ingredient cost (NIC) and average NIC per prescription item by British National Formulary chapters, 2005 and 2006**England**

BNF Chapter	Prescription items (millions)			Net ingredient cost (£ millions)				Average net ingredient cost per prescription item (£)		
	2005	2006	% Change	2005	2006	% Change	Increase	2005	2006	% Change
1 : Gastro-intestinal system	53.6	56.3	5.0%	656.1	562.2	-14.3%	-93.9	12.24	9.99	-18.4%
2 : Cardiovascular system	218.0	234.8	7.7%	1,872.7	1,885.1	0.7%	12.4	8.59	8.03	-6.5%
3 : Respiratory system	52.0	52.3	0.6%	801.4	837.8	4.5%	36.4	15.42	16.02	3.9%
4 : Central nervous system	124.6	129.1	3.6%	1,473.8	1,580.6	7.2%	106.8	11.83	12.24	3.5%
5 : Infections	42.5	42.6	0.3%	231.5	226.2	-2.3%	-5.3	5.45	5.31	-2.5%
6 : Endocrine system	58.2	62.6	7.6%	821.7	890.1	8.3%	68.4	14.11	14.21	0.7%
7 : Obstetrics, gynaecology & urinary-tract disor	16.8	17.5	4.0%	247.8	251.2	1.3%	3.3	14.77	14.38	-2.6%
8 : Malignant disease & immunosuppression	3.2	3.3	4.6%	272.8	300.5	10.2%	27.7	85.14	89.70	5.4%
9 : Nutrition & blood	23.3	26.1	11.7%	323.4	367.9	13.7%	44.4	13.86	14.11	1.8%
10: Musculoskeletal & joint diseases	28.6	28.2	-1.3%	216.0	214.1	-0.9%	-1.9	7.56	7.59	0.4%
11: Eye	16.1	16.5	2.3%	120.2	130.2	8.3%	10.0	7.45	7.89	5.9%
12: Ear, nose & oropharynx	9.7	9.7	0.8%	57.7	62.4	8.1%	4.7	5.98	6.41	7.3%
13: Skin	35.2	34.8	-1.1%	212.3	224.2	5.6%	11.9	6.03	6.43	6.7%
14: Immunological products and vaccines	16.1	13.6	-15.5%	146.4	129.1	-11.8%	-17.3	9.07	9.47	4.4%
15: Anaesthesia	0.9	0.9	6.2%	3.8	4.2	11.5%	0.4	4.44	4.66	5.0%
Other	1.9	1.8	-1.4%	42.9	58.3	36.0%	15.4	23.06	31.80	37.9%
Dressings & appliances	19.6	21.7	10.6%	436.0	472.8	8.4%	36.8	22.24	21.81	-1.9%
Overall Total	720.3	752.0	4.4%	7,936.6	8,196.8	3.3%	260.3	11.02	10.90	-1.1%

Notes:

1. Therapeutic classes are based on the British National Formulary (September 2005).
2. The data are from the PCA system and cover all prescription items dispensed by community pharmacists and appliance contractors, dispensing doctors, and personal administration.
3. The "Other" category covers drugs contained in pseudo British National Formulary chapters used by the NHSBSA (PPD), eg homeopathic preparations.

Table 10 Number and net ingredient cost (NIC) in 2005 and 2006 for the 20 British National Formulary sections which had the greatest increase in NIC between 2005 and 2006

England

BNF Section	Prescription items (millions)			Net ingredient cost (£millions)				% of the overall increase in 2005
	2005	2006	% Change	2005	2006	Increase	% Change	
4.7 : Analgesics	47.6	48.9	2.7%	337.4	411.2	73.8	21.9%	35.5%
6.1 : Drugs Used In Diabetes	26.5	28.4	7.4%	495.3	562.5	67.2	13.6%	32.3%
3.2 : Corticosteroids (Respiratory)	14.1	14.6	3.2%	436.1	473.3	37.2	8.5%	17.9%
9.4 : Oral Nutrition	4.2	4.7	11.1%	177.2	200.8	23.6	13.3%	11.3%
4.2 : Drugs Used In Psychoses & Rel.Disorders	6.9	7.2	5.5%	223.6	244.9	21.3	9.5%	10.3%
2.9 : Antiplatelet Drugs	30.2	32.8	8.5%	174.7	194.9	20.3	11.6%	9.7%
8.3 : Sex Hormones & Antag In Malig Disease	2.0	2.1	4.2%	186.7	206.2	19.5	10.5%	9.4%
2.5 : Hypertension and Heart Failure	42.9	47.7	11.4%	484.1	501.5	17.5	3.6%	8.4%
4.8 : Antiepileptics	9.2	9.8	7.1%	226.7	239.6	12.9	5.7%	6.2%
2.2 : Diuretics	37.6	37.6	-0.1%	75.9	88.5	12.7	16.7%	6.1%
4.1 : Hypnotics And Anxiolytics	16.2	15.9	-2.1%	38.3	49.5	11.3	29.4%	5.4%
1.5 : Chronic Bowel Disorders	1.7	1.7	3.6%	57.4	68.1	10.7	18.6%	5.1%
4.11 : Drugs for Dementia	0.6	0.8	20.6%	49.3	59.0	9.7	19.7%	4.7%
4.5 : Drugs used in the Treatment of Obesity	0.9	1.1	21.7%	38.2	47.8	9.6	25.2%	4.6%
13.4 : Topical Corticosteroids	12.2	12.2	-0.2%	48.2	57.5	9.3	19.3%	4.5%
5.1 : Antibacterial Drugs	37.2	37.2	-0.2%	162.0	171.0	9.0	5.5%	4.3%
9.6 : Vitamins	8.9	10.2	14.7%	40.2	48.9	8.8	21.8%	4.2%
2.4 : Beta-Adrenoceptor Blocking Drugs	27.5	27.4	-0.3%	93.4	101.8	8.4	9.0%	4.1%
4.9 : Drugs Used In Park'ism/Related Disorders	2.9	3.0	3.4%	86.4	94.0	7.6	8.8%	3.6%
1.6 : Laxatives	13.4	13.6	1.5%	50.2	57.6	7.4	14.8%	3.6%

Notes:

1. The data are from the PCA system and cover prescription items dispensed by community pharmacists, appliance contractors, dispensing doctors and items personally administered.
2. BNF sections are based on the British National Formulary (September 2005). Only those therapeutic areas in the BNF, ie Chapters 1 to 15, are included in the analysis. Dressings and appliances and other items in the NHSBSA (PPD) pseudo classifications are excluded.

Table 11 Number, net ingredient cost (NIC) and average NIC per item in 2005 and 2006 for the 20 British National Formulary sections which had the greatest NIC in 2006**England**

BNF Section	Prescription items (millions)			Net ingredient cost (£millions)			Average net ingredient cost per item (£)		
	2005	2006	% Change	2005	2006	% Change	2005	2006	% Change
2.12 : Lipid-Regulating Drugs	35.6	42.1	18.4%	625.0	622.3	-0.4%	17.57	14.78	-15.9%
6.1 : Drugs Used In Diabetes	26.5	28.4	7.4%	495.3	562.5	13.6%	18.70	19.78	5.8%
2.5 : Hypertension and Heart Failure	42.9	47.7	11.4%	484.1	501.5	3.6%	11.29	10.51	-7.0%
3.2 : Corticosteroids (Respiratory)	14.1	14.6	3.2%	436.1	473.3	8.5%	30.84	32.43	5.1%
4.7 : Analgesics	47.6	48.9	2.7%	337.4	411.2	21.9%	7.08	8.40	18.6%
1.3 : Ulcer-Healing Drugs	26.9	29.6	9.7%	470.8	352.9	-25.0%	17.47	11.93	-31.7%
2.6 : Nit,Calc Block & Other Antianginal Drugs	32.3	34.7	7.4%	369.0	313.5	-15.0%	11.42	9.03	-20.9%
4.3 : Antidepressant Drugs	29.4	31.0	5.6%	338.5	291.5	-13.9%	11.52	9.39	-18.5%
3.1 : Bronchodilators	24.9	24.9	0.1%	261.0	266.3	2.0%	10.49	10.69	2.0%
4.2 : Drugs Used In Psychoses & Rel.Disorders	6.9	7.2	5.5%	223.6	244.9	9.5%	32.60	33.84	3.8%
4.8 : Antiepileptics	9.2	9.8	7.1%	226.7	239.6	5.7%	24.68	24.35	-1.3%
8.3 : Sex Hormones & Antag In Malig Disease	2.0	2.1	4.2%	186.7	206.2	10.5%	91.46	96.99	6.0%
9.4 : Oral Nutrition	4.2	4.7	11.1%	177.2	200.8	13.3%	42.12	42.96	2.0%
2.9 : Antiplatelet Drugs	30.2	32.8	8.5%	174.7	194.9	11.6%	5.78	5.95	2.9%
10.1 : Drugs Used In Rheumatic Diseases & Gou	23.2	22.7	-2.2%	177.6	175.0	-1.5%	7.66	7.71	0.7%
5.1 : Antibacterial Drugs	37.2	37.2	-0.2%	162.0	171.0	5.5%	4.35	4.60	5.7%
7.4 : Drugs For Genito-Urinary Disorders	6.6	7.2	9.7%	173.0	170.1	-1.6%	26.20	23.50	-10.3%
6.6 : Drugs Affecting Bone Metabolism	4.6	5.5	18.5%	142.3	136.6	-4.0%	30.63	24.81	-19.0%
14.4 : Vaccines And Antisera	16.1	13.6	-15.5%	143.5	126.2	-12.1%	8.90	9.26	4.1%
2.4 : Beta-Adrenoceptor Blocking Drugs	27.5	27.4	-0.3%	93.4	101.8	9.0%	3.40	3.72	9.4%

Notes:

1. The data are from the PCA system and cover prescription items dispensed by community pharmacists, appliance contractors, dispensing doctors and items personally administered.
2. BNF sections are based on the British National Formulary (September 2005). Only those therapeutic areas in the BNF, ie Chapters 1 to 15, are included in the analysis. Dressings and appliances and other items in the NHSBSA (PPD) pseudo classifications are excluded.