

# HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE: COMPARATIVE DATA FOR NORTHERN IRELAND AND OTHER COUNTRIES

May 2004

## A KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

### Workforce

- As at September 2001, staffing levels for Hospital and Community Health Services direct care staff (Medical, Nursing and Allied Health Professions) per head of population in NI (13.14) were below Scotland (15.35), but higher than England (10.94) and Wales (12.42).
- If whole time equivalent numbers of direct care staff in the four UK countries are compared over time, it is clear that the relative positions of the four countries have been maintained between 1997 and 2001.
- As at September 2001, NI had more medical and dental staff per 1000 population (1.54) than England (1.30) and Wales (1.28) but less than Scotland (1.67).
- As at September 2001, NI had more nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff per 1000 population (8.90) than England (7.29) and Wales (8.53) but less than Scotland (10.31).
- As at September 2001, NI had more Allied Health Professionals, Scientific and Technical staff per 1000 population (2.70) than England (2.35) and Wales (2.62) but less than Scotland (2.96)

- The integrated nature of health and personal social services in NI and its impact on how services are organized means that it is necessary to consider Social Services and Administrative staff together in order to get a like-for-like comparison across the UK. This shows that as at September 2001 NI employed more Social Services and Administrative staff per 1000 population (9.02) than England (8.13), but less than Scotland (10.88) and Wales (10.68).
- As at September 2001, NI had more GPs per 1000 population (0.58). This is similar to Wales (0.57) but more than England (0.53) and less than Scotland (0.78).
- As at September 2001, NI had more hospital consultants per 1000 population (0.52) than England (0.47) and Wales (0.45) but less than Scotland (0.61).

### **GP List Sizes**

- NI has a lower than average General Medical Practitioner list size (1,633) and comes second only to Scotland (1,409), which has the lowest. England has the highest average list size (1,841) and is over 10% higher than the figure for Northern Ireland. The figure for Wales (1,685) is similar to Northern Ireland. Within England figures vary from a low of 1,529 in Somerset and Dorset Strategic Health Authority to a high of 2,080 in North East London Strategic Health Authority. (Figures relate to 2001)

### **Dental Registrations**

- NI has the second highest number of registrations per dentist (1,383). Wales has the highest (1,451). The figures for Scotland (1,299) and England (1,285) are similar. (Within England several English regions exceed the Wales figure for example Leicester, Northamptonshire and Rutland Strategic Health Authority where the average number of registrations per dentists is 1,800.) (Figures relate to 2001)

## Hospital Activity

- In 2000/2001 NI had 5.0 beds per 1000 population compared with 3.7 in England, 4.9 in Wales and 6.5 in Scotland.
- Hospitals in NI treat more persons per head of population than hospitals in the rest of the United Kingdom. In 2000/2001 hospitals in NI treated 196 persons per 1000 population compared with 173 in England, 174 in Wales and 188 in Scotland.
- Hospitals in NI treat more persons per hospital bed than hospitals in Scotland and Wales (but less than those in England). In 2000/2001 hospitals in NI treated 38.8 persons per hospital bed compared with 46.4 in England, 35.3 in Wales and 28.9 in Scotland.
- The total number of A&E attendances (673,000) in NI in 2000/2001 is equivalent to approximately 40% of the NI population. This compares with 29% in England & Wales. In 2000/2001 hospitals in NI had 398 A&E attendances per 1000 population. This compares with 290 in England, 339 in Wales and 312 in Scotland.

## Hospital Waiting Lists

- At the end of September 2003 NI had the highest number of people waiting for admission to hospital per 1,000 population in the United Kingdom (see the table below).

	Ordinary Admissions	Day Cases	Total
Northern Ireland	14	18	32
England	9	11	20
Scotland	-	-	22
Wales	-	-	27

## **Health Promotion**

- In 2002-2003, 88% of children under 2 years in NI had been immunised against measles, mumps and rubella. This compares with 87% in Scotland (in 2002), 82% in England and 78% in Wales.
- 75% of women aged 50-64 in NI had received breast screening in the three years up to 2000-2001. Corresponding figures were 74% for Scotland, 70% for England and 69% for Wales.

## **Community Care and Social Services**

- In 2002 there were almost 7,000 places in residential homes in NI, representing 5.4 places per 1,000 adult population, compared with 8.9 in England (2001), 8.0 in Wales (2001) and 5.6 in Scotland.
- In 2002 the number of places (over 9,000) in nursing homes in NI was 7.4 per 1,000 adult population, compared with 4.9 in England (2001), 4.8 in Wales (2001) and 6.4 in Scotland.
- The HPSS provides home help services to approximately 26,000 persons. This figure represents 22 per 1,000 of the adult population, compared with 16 per 1,000 in Scotland, 12 per 1,000 in Wales and 10 per 1,000 in England.

## **Child Protection Register**

- In 2002 there were around 1,600 children in NI on the Child Protection Register, a rate of 3.4 per 1,000 children. This compares with 2.3 per 1,000 in England and 3.0 per 1,000 in Wales.
- The number of children on the Child Protection Register aged under 18 per 10,000 has increased from 31.8 in 1999 to 33.9 in 2002 in NI,

compared with a fall from 28.2 to 23.1 respectively in England during the same period.

### **Looked After Children**

- The numbers of looked after children per 10,000 in NI has increased from 50.5 in 1999 to 54.3 in 2002 in NI. The figures for England have shown a slightly higher increase over the same period, from 49.0 to 55.0.
- In 2002 Social Services in NI care for about 2,500 children, representing a rate of 5.5 per 1,000 children under 18. Corresponding figures for England and Wales are 5.4 and 5.5 respectively.
- Looked after children and young people experience more placement stability in NI than in England or Wales. Five per cent of looked after children in NI had 3 or more separate placements during 2001/02 compared to 8% in Wales and 15% in England.
- In 2001/02 the proportion of young people aged 16 or over leaving care with at least one GCSE or a GNVQ is higher in NI (44%) than in England (41%).
- In 2001/02 the proportion of looked after children and young people missing 25 or more days schooling is higher in NI (14%) than in England (12%).

## **B. PRESCRIPTIONS**

### **Overall Volume and Cost**

- The number of items dispensed per head of population during the 2002 calendar year is 18% higher in NI than the UK average. However, the figure for Wales is the highest (30% higher than the UK figure).

- On a gross cost per head of population, NI is 25% higher than the UK average.

### **Drugs for Alzheimer's Disease**

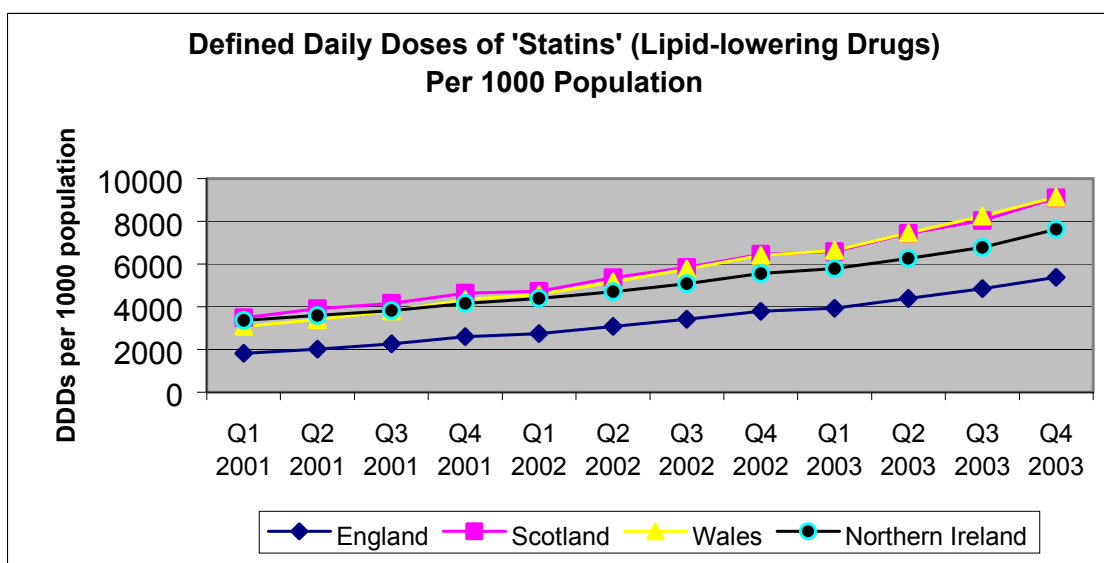
- The average cost per prescription for drugs used in the treatment of Alzheimer's is not substantially different between the four UK countries.
- However, the volume of prescriptions per capita in NI (11.6) is over twice that of England (4.7) or Wales (3.9) and almost twice the figure for Scotland (5.9). (Figures relate to 2002)
- The gross cost per head of population in NI (£1,119) is over twice that of England (£415) or Wales (£341), and almost twice that of Scotland (£573). (Figures relate to 2002)

### **Comparison of Utilisation of Statins in the UK**

- Statins are drugs that are used in both the primary and secondary prevention of coronary heart disease. Statins lower the levels of low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol and raise high-density lipoprotein (HDL) cholesterol and reduce cardiovascular events, and total mortality. They are used in the management of patients at risk of cardiovascular disease such as those with coronary heart disease, occlusive arterial disease and diabetes. Statins are also used for secondary prevention of cardiovascular events in patients, for example in those with a history of acute myocardial infarction, angina, peripheral artery disease or stroke.
- The utilisation of statins has continued to increase year on year since their introduction in 1989. The treatment and prevention of coronary heart disease and diabetes are likely to continue to be important drivers of growth in this area. Coronary heart disease is still receiving particular

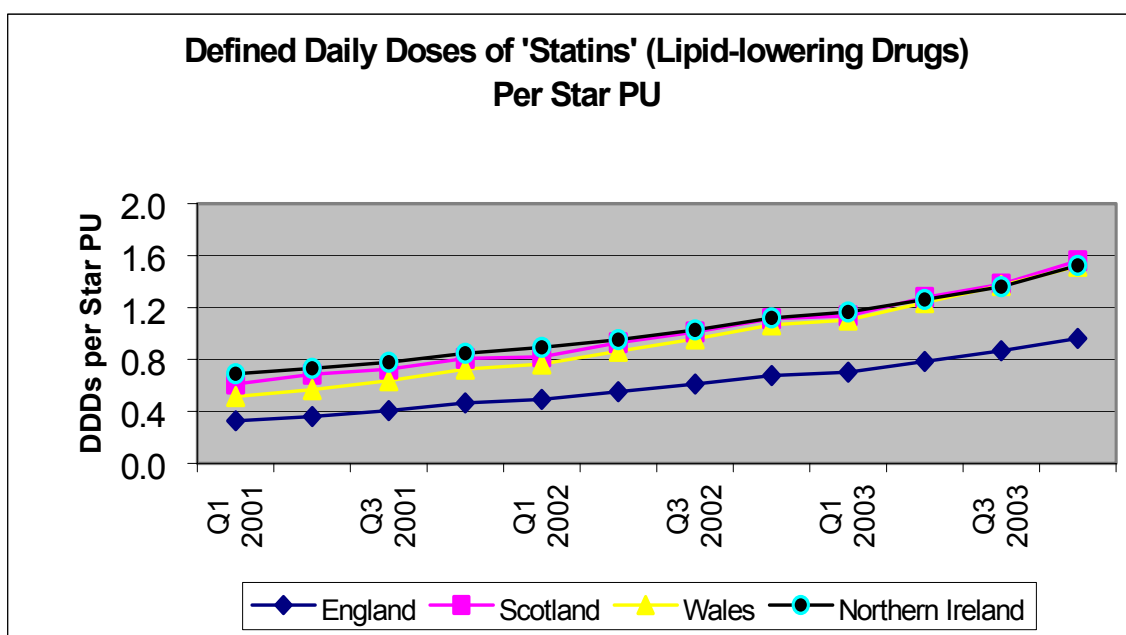
attention as an area where more can be done to improve patient care as highlighted in the Quality and Outcomes section of the new GMS contract.

- In NI the number of items of statins dispensed has increased 24% on the 2002 figures. The equivalent figure for England is 30%, Scotland 22% and Wales 31%. The chart below shows that on a defined daily dose basis the utilisation of these drugs in NI is not as high as Scotland or Wales but is higher than England.



Notes: A Defined Daily Dose (DDD) is a given value that represents the assumed average maintenance dose per day for a drug used for its main indication in adults.

- The chart below shows that when the figures are adjusted to take account of the population age structure the NI figure is similar to the figures for Scotland and Wales and all three are ahead of the equivalent figure for England. The growth and increased volume of prescribing is beneficial to the general health of the population because of the proven benefits of statin therapy in reducing and preventing cardiovascular events.



Notes: A star PU is a prescribing unit that is designed to weight population figures for age and sex within specific therapeutic areas.

- In 2003 Northern Ireland was 29% above the UK average in the volume of statins dispensed per 1000 population (based on DDDs). The equivalent figure for England was -9%, Scotland was 52% and Wales was 53%. The figures are presented in the table below.

#### Dispensing of Statins in the UK in 2003

<u>Region</u>	<b>Total DDDs</b>	<b>DDDs/1000 pop</b>	<b>Indexed to UK DDD/1000 pop</b>
<b>Northern Ireland</b>		26465	1.29
<b>England</b>	44,976,429	18578	0.91
<b>Scotland</b>	923,599,966	31161	1.52
<b>Wales</b>	157,457,293	31478	1.53
<b>UK</b>	92,088,475	20509	1.00
	1,218,122,163		

Notes: A Defined Daily Dose (DDD) is a given value that represents the assumed average maintenance dose per day for a drug used for its main indication in adults.

## Comparison of Utilisation of Antibiotics in the UK

- Despite a 1.2% reduction in items and a 3.2% reduction in cost for antibiotics between 2001 and 2002, the dispensing of antibiotics in primary care has increased by 2.5% (items) and 2.9%(cost) in Northern Ireland between 2002 and 2003. The equivalent figure for England was 1.7% and Wales was 0.9%. The figure for Scotland declined over the same period by 0.8%. In NI there are 40% more antibiotics prescription items per 1,000 population compared to the UK average. The equivalent figure for England is -3%, Wales is 12% and Scotland is 5%. The figures are contained in the table below.

### Dispensing of Antibiotics in the UK in 2003

	Northern Ireland	England	Scotland	Wales
<b>% change 2002 to 2003</b>	2.5%	1.7%	-0.8%	0.9%
<b>Prescription items per 1000</b>	1,090	759	817	871
<b>Items per 1000 – Index – UK=100</b>	140	97	105	112

## C. HEALTH STATUS

### Life Expectancy and Mortality Rates

- Life expectancy in NI is below the UK average by 0.5 years for males and 0.3 years for females.
- The death rate (Standardised Mortality Ratios - SMR) for those aged under 75, in NI is 4% above the UK average.

- In comparison with England and Wales, NI has higher mortality rates for circulatory diseases (9% higher), respiratory diseases (28% higher), and injuries/poisonings (23% higher).

## **Cancer**

- In NI in 2000 lung cancer accounted for 11.9% of all new cases of cancers in males and 7.7% in females. The corresponding figures in Scotland were 20.5% and 14.8%. In NI the most recent estimate of the 5-year relative survival rate for lung cancer patients, based on persons diagnosed in 1993-1996, is 9%. This compares with 6% in Wales (based on persons diagnosed between 1994 and 1998) and 7.5% in Scotland (based on persons diagnosed between 1996 and 1999).
- In NI there were 964 new cases of female breast cancer registered in 2000. The corresponding figure for Scotland was 3,624. In NI the most recent estimate of the five-year relative survival rate for breast cancer, based on persons diagnosed in 1993-1996, is 78%. This compares with 77% in Wales (for patients diagnosed between 1994 and 1998) and 80% in Scotland (for patients diagnosed between 1996 and 1999).
- In 2000 there were 542 new cases of prostate cancer in NI and 1,892 in Scotland. In NI the most recent estimate of the 5-year relative survival rate for prostate cancer patients, based on persons diagnosed in 1993-1996, is 58%. This compares with 61% in Wales (based on persons diagnosed between 1994 and 1998) and 70% in Scotland (based on persons diagnosed between 1996 and 1999).
- In comparison with the rest of the UK, Northern Ireland has the highest female incidence rate for colorectal cancer (19% above the UK average) and the second highest male incidence rates for lung cancer (1% above UK average) and colorectal cancer (14% above the UK average).

## **Congenital Malformations**

- The rate of births with a congenital malformation in NI is over twice the level in England and Wales.

## **Teenage Births**

- NI has the lowest teenage birth rate in the UK at 26 births per 1,000 women (under 20). The UK average is 29 births per 1,000 women.

## **Self Reported General Health**

- The proportion of people in NI in 2001 who reported 'good general health' (54%) was much lower in England (in 2000, 76%), Scotland (in 1998, 77%), Wales (in 1998, 80%), and the RoI (in 1998, 87.5%).
- In terms of reporting 'poor health', NI is the worst in the UK: 16% compared with 6% in both England and Scotland, 5% in Wales and less than 2% in the RoI.

## **Self Reported Limiting Long-standing Illness**

- Approximately one quarter of people in NI (in 2001), considered that they had a long-standing illness. This is similar to the position in England (in 2000) and in Scotland (in 1998), but lower than in Wales (in 1998, 30%) and twice the proportion in RoI (12% in 1998).
- The proportion of people in NI who said they did not have a long-standing illness was 64%. This compares favourably with the figures for England and Scotland (58% and 59% respectively).
- In NI in 2001 almost half of all those aged 65 to 74 reported a long standing sickness that limited their activity: 47% of men and 48% of women. The equivalent GB figures are 36% of men and 39% of women.

## **Mental Health**

- The proportion of people in NI in 2001 who showed signs of a possible mental health problem was higher than in both England (in 2000, 15%) and Scotland (in 1998, 16%).

## **Social Support**

- In NI (in 2001) four out of ten people experienced a lack of support from family and friends, with men lacking social support more than women. This is similar to the position in England (in 2000).
- 26% of people in NI aged 75 years and over experienced a lack of support compared to 42% in England.

## **D. LIFESTYLE**

### **Alcohol Use**

#### Adults

- In 2002/03, one-fifth of all adults aged 18 and over in NI drank in excess of recommended sensible weekly drinking levels (21 units per week for men; 14 for women). This figure is similar to that found in England for those aged 16 and over in 2001 (21%). The proportion of people who do not drink is much higher in NI – 24% reported not taking a drink in the previous week which is twice the proportion found in England.

#### Young people

- In 2000, more than half of young people aged 11-16 in NI reported ever having taken an alcoholic drink (56% of boys; 52% of girls). These figures are lower than the corresponding 2002 English figures for 11-15 year olds which are 62% for boys and 60% for girls.

- Nearly one in five young people (19%) reported that they are currently drinking weekly or more frequently. This compares to 24% in England who reported having taken a drink in the past week. More than two in five young people (43%) reported having been drunk on more than one occasion.

## **Illegal Drug Use**

### Adults

- In 2002/03, one fifth of adults aged 15-64 in NI, compared to 36% of 16-59 year olds in GB in 2001, reported having ever used an illegal drug. This figure rises to 29% for those aged 15-24 and 33% for those aged 25-34.
- 3% of the adult population in NI have used illegal drugs “in the last month”. This was approximately half the corresponding figure for England and Wales in 2001 (7%). The figure for 15-24 year olds is almost one in ten (9%).
- Cannabis is the main illegal drug used in NI with 17% of the adult population 15-64 reporting ever having used it. This compares with 29% for England and Wales.

### Young People

- In 2000, a quarter of young people aged 11-16 in NI reported ever having used an illegal drug. This is similar to the position in England in 2002 (26% of 11-15 year olds).

### Problem Drug Users

- In 2002/3 more than 1,400 people were reported as having presented to treatment for problem drug use. The most common main drug of misuse was cannabis (47% of those presenting), followed by heroin (15%). This is in contrast to England where almost three-quarters (73%) of those presenting in 2001/02 had heroin as their main drug of misuse.

## **Smoking**

- In NI in 2001, almost a third (31%) of people said that they smoked cigarettes. This was higher than the corresponding figure for England (in 2000, 28%), but lower than in Scotland (in 1998, 34%). In 1998 32.5% of people in the RoI said that they were regular or occasional cigarette smokers, as did 28% of people in Wales.

## **Physical Activity**

- In 2001 in NI, 30% of adults had taken the recommended level of physical activity. This was lower than the corresponding figure for Scotland (32%) but higher than the figure for Wales (17%).
- In NI 22% of people were classed as sedentary, the same proportion as in Scotland but higher than in the RoI (19%).

***Information and Analysis Directorate***

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