



Date: 10 March 2026
Our ref: K: FOI/Ref: 2026-3273
Email: NSS.DevServicesFOI@nhs.scot

Freedom of Information Reference: FOI-2026-3273 – Defined Daily Doses (DDD) for antibiotic prescribing.

I refer to your freedom of information request that we received on 05 February 2026 requesting the following information.

I would like to request under freedom of information, antibiotic consumption data expressed as WHO Defined Daily Doses (DDD) for antibiotic prescribing in Scotland broken down by the following 10 antibiotic classes: tetracyclines, sulphonamides, quinolones, macrolides, glycopeptides, diaminopyrimidines, polymyxins, amphenicols, beta-lactamases and aminoglycosides and by NHS region or centre.

I would be grateful of data from (and inclusive of) 2016 to the end of 2025 and to include:

- **Total DDDs per 1000 inhabitants per day (DDD/1000/day) by the antibiotic classes specified above and by NHS region.**
- **If the DDD measure is not available for the antibiotic classes prescribed, or for an NHS region, please provide the data in the alternative recording method.**

If this data is available as a spreadsheet or database extract rather than as published tables, please provide that format.

If this information is held by another organisation, I would be grateful if you could point me in the right direction of who to contact.

We have now completed the search of our records and can provide you with the following information:

Please find attached Appendix 1 – Daily Defined Doses, which shows the total Daily Defined Doses (DDD), per 1000 inhabitants, per day (DDD/1000/day) by the antibiotic classes specified in your request and broken down by NHS Board region. This data is for the period 01 January 2016 to 30 September 2025.

Under Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Scotland Act, 2002 (FOISA), an organisation does not have to provide that information if it does not hold it. NHS National Services Scotland (NSS) does not hold some of the information you have requested. Quarter 4 (October–December) 2025 data is not yet available.

Please note that under Section 38(1)(b) of FOISA, NSS has redacted DDD values and DDD rates where patient numbers are five or fewer. This measure is applied to protect patient confidentiality in accordance with GDPR and the Caldicott Principles.



Chair Keith Redpath
Chief Executive Mary Morgan

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Common Services Agency for the Scottish Health Service*

The DDD data provided in this response is sourced from the following Public Health Scotland (PHS) datasets:

- Primary Care: Prescribing Information System (PIS)
- Secondary Care: Hospital Medicines Utilisation Database (HMUD)

Please note the following caveats regarding the data provided:

- Some secondary care submissions are incomplete for specific NHS boards as this has not been received by NSS, these include:
 - NHS Dumfries & Galloway (September 2025 onwards)
 - NHS Golden Jubilee (from May 2025 onwards)
- Population-based indicators cannot be produced for the NHS Boards listed below, as they do not have a defined population denominator. Consequently, metrics such as DDDs per 1,000 population per day are not available:
 - NHS Golden Jubilee
 - NHS Louisa Jordan (operational April 2020–March 2021)
 - Scottish Ambulance Service
 - State Hospital
- Antibiotic group data has been taken from the antibiotics listed in the “Antibiotic Replist” (located at the bottom of the attached appendix) based on extracts held by NSS. Therefore, this data may not fully represent all prescribing within each antibiotic class. Additional information can be requested from Public Health Scotland (PHS) who may hold more comprehensive information via phs.foi@phs.scot.
- Co-trimoxazole DDDs are counted in both the sulphonamide (sulphamethoxazole) and diaminopyrimidine (trimethoprim) groups, as it is a combination antibiotic.
- Where negative values appear, these are stock returns recorded by pharmacies within HMUD.
- A mapping issue affecting tobramycin was identified for aminoglycoside figures in 2023 Q2.

I trust you will find the information of assistance and if you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

If you are unhappy with any aspect of how we have dealt with your request, you can make representations to us asking us to review the handling of your request. Please write to the Associate Director Governance and Board Services (Board Secretary) at the email address nss.foi@nhs.scot within 40 working days of the date of this correspondence.

If after a review you are still unhappy, you also have the right to apply to the Scottish Information Commissioner, who can be contacted at Kinburn Castle, St Andrews, Fife, KY16 9DS, or via their [online application form](#).



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If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me at the above address.

Yours sincerely,



Chair Keith Redpath
Chief Executive Mary Morgan

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