

Prevalence of Treatment With Glaucoma Medication in Scotland, 2010-2017

Alan P Rotchford (1) , John Hughes (2) , Pankaj Kumar Agarwal (3) , Andrew J Tatham (3)

1. Ophthalmology, Tennent Institute of Ophthalmology, Gartnavel Hospital, Glasgow, UK
rotchford@doctors.org.uk.
2. International Glaucoma Association, Ashford, Kent, UK.
3. Ophthalmology, Princess Alexandra Eye Pavilion, Edinburgh, UK.

AIMS: To report the number and demographic distribution of patients receiving intraocular pressure (IOP)-lowering medications across the whole population of Scotland for the years 2010-2017 and, using national census data, show how the observed changes compare with those predicted by the increasing age of the population structure over this period.

METHODS: Data were sourced from the Prescribing Information System of the NHS Information and Statistics Division for Scotland. The number of patients dispensed any IOP-lowering medication from a community pharmacy during each calendar year was collected by gender and by 5-year age bands. National census data were used to model the expected annual increase in treatment numbers due to population ageing.

RESULTS: The number of treated patients in 2017 was 61 249 which represents 1.13% of the whole population (or 2.16% over 40 years of age) . The number increased from 48 178 in 2010-an increase over this period of 27.13% (3.88% per year) .Prevalence increased with age, reaching 10.67% in those over 90 years. After age adjustment, more men were treated than women (OR 1.26) .The expected number treated in 2017 based on census predictions was 54 075 (an increase of 5897 (12.24%) from 2010) . The observed growth of 27.13% was 2.22-fold greater than the rate expected by population changes over the period 2010-2017.

CONCLUSION: The number of patients on medication for glaucoma and ocular hypertension in Scotland is increasing. The rate of increase cannot be explained by changes in the size and age structure of the population alone.

Br J Ophthalmol. 2020 Mar;104(3) :381-385. doi: 10.1136/bjophthalmol-2019-314206. Epub 2019 May 16.

PMID: 31097436