



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

STATISTICS

# Community pharmacy services: April 2020 to March 2021

Data on pharmacies, prescriptions dispensed and pharmaceutical services offered for April 2020 to March 2021.

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# Contents

[Introduction](#)

---

[Pharmacies](#)

---

[Prescriptions](#)

---

[Discharge medicine reviews](#)

---

[Emergency contraception](#)

---

[Seasonal flu vaccine \(SFV\)](#)

---

[Common ailments service](#)

---

[Medicine use reviews](#)

---

[Quality and methodology information](#)

---

[Contact details](#)

---

## Introduction

This annual statistical release presents information about community pharmacies in Wales in contract with health boards. New data is presented for the financial year 2020-21, so covers the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Community pharmacies are those found in cities, towns and villages across the country, for example on high streets, in supermarkets or within GP surgeries.

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While essential services such as dispensing prescriptions remain the primary role of community pharmacies, most offer a range of additional NHS services, including emergency contraception, seasonal flu vaccine, medicine use reviews, discharge medicines reviews, and common ailments service. Data for these services are summarised for 2020-21.

The COVID-19 pandemic will have impacted on the provision of pharmacy services in 2020-21, including the need for community pharmacies to introduce infection control procedures, comply with social distancing requirements, and the impact of pharmacy staff self-isolating.

The data is provided by NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (Pharmacy Services). Further information is available in the [quality report](#).

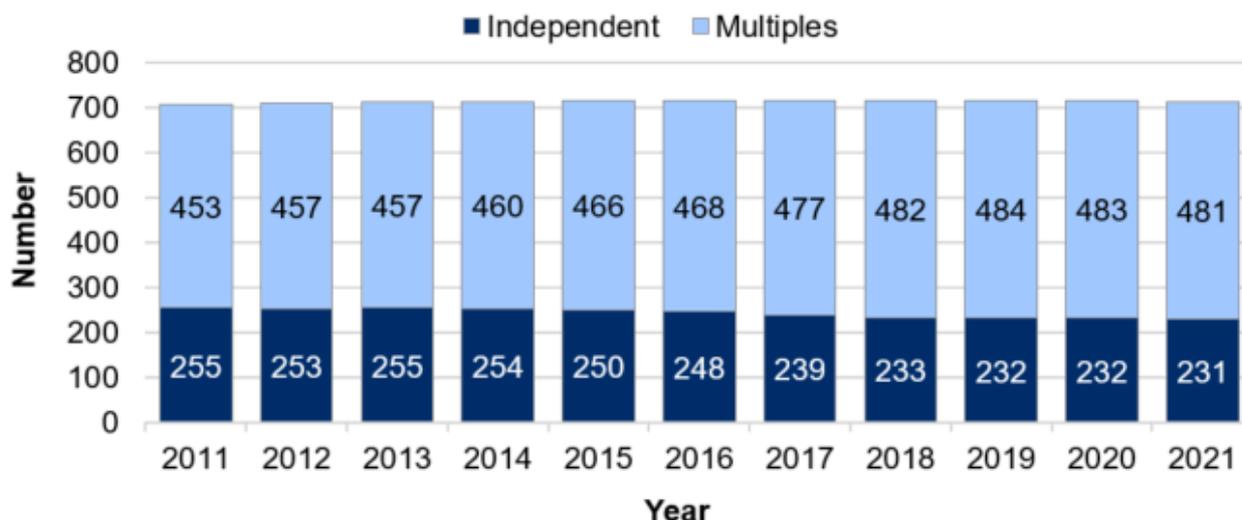
Data included in this release is published on [StatsWales](#).

## Pharmacies

There has been little change in the number of community pharmacies in Wales over the past 10 years. At 31 March 2021 there were 712, compared to 708 at 31 March 2011.

At 31 March 2021, 231 (32%) were independents with the rest being chains / multiples.

### Chart 1: Pharmacies by type, 2010-11 to 2020-21



Source: NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (Pharmacy Services)

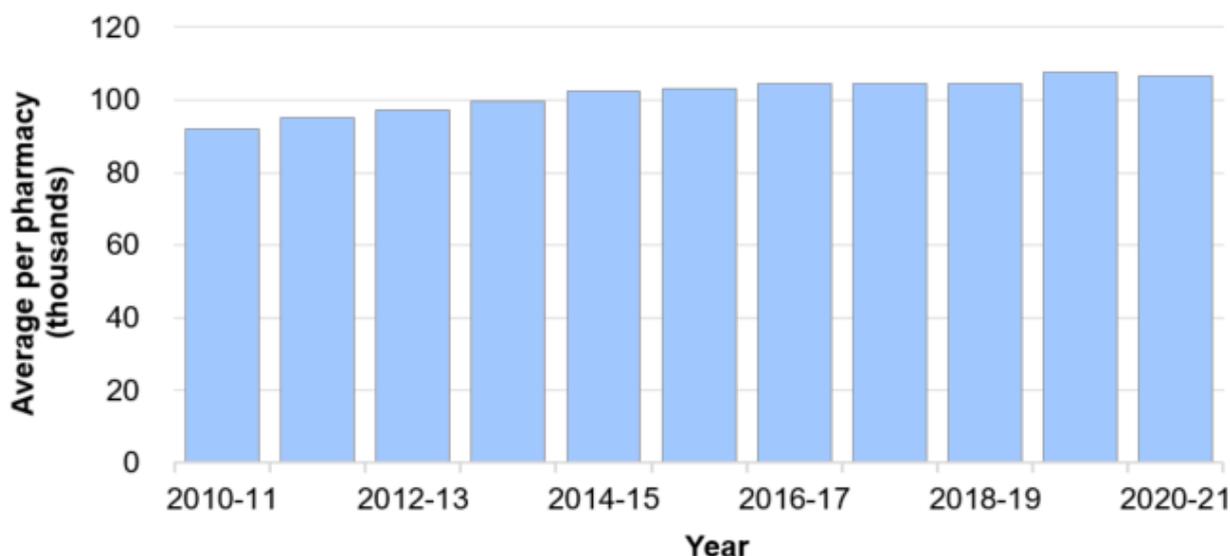
## Prescriptions

The main source of data on prescriptions is in the annual [Prescriptions in Wales](#) release.

75.9 million prescriptions were dispensed in community pharmacies in 2020-21. This excludes items dispensed by dispensing doctors and personally administered items prescribed and administered by a member of the practice, which are included in the dispensed data shown in the [Prescriptions in Wales](#) release.

This is an average (mean) of 106,596 per pharmacy, and a 16% increase since 2010-11.

**Chart 2: Average number of prescriptions dispensed by community pharmacies, 2010-11 to 2020-21**



Source: NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (Pharmacy Services)

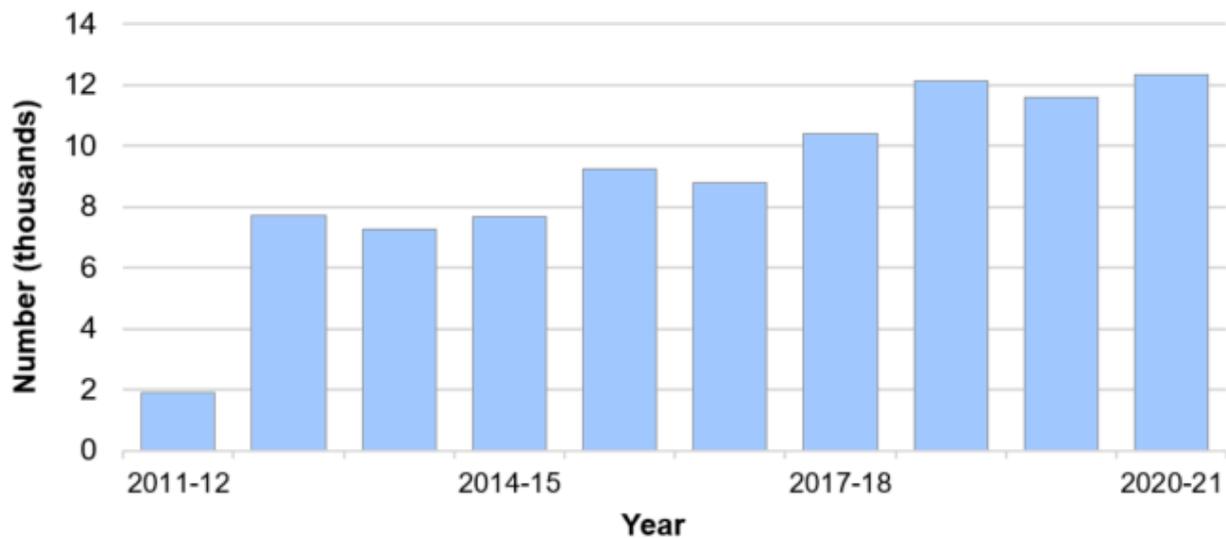
More analysis on prescriptions is available in our [Prescriptions in Wales](#) statistical release.

## Discharge medicine reviews

544 (or 76%) of pharmacies provided discharge medicines reviews in 2020-21. This has increased from 41% of pharmacies offering the service in 2011-12 (when the service was first offered).

More than 12,300 claims for discharge medicine reviews were paid in 2020-21. This is an average of 23 per community pharmacy offering the service.

**Chart 3: Number of discharge medicine reviews (DMRs) claims paid, 2011-12 to 2020-21 (a)**



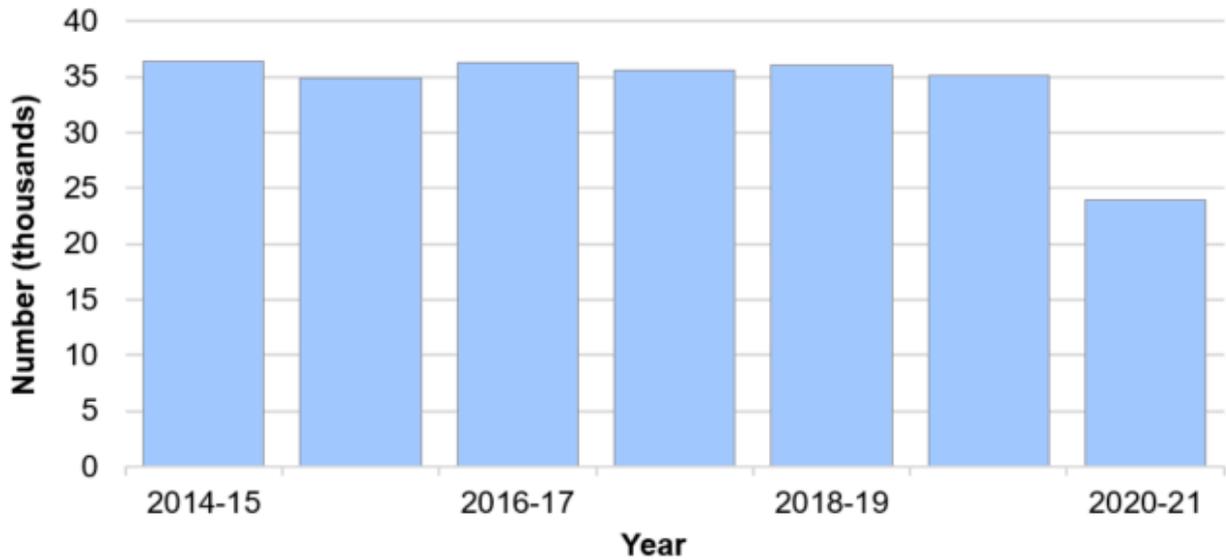
Source: NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (Pharmacy Services)

(a) This is the number of claims paid in the year, rather than the number of DMRs provided.

## Emergency contraception

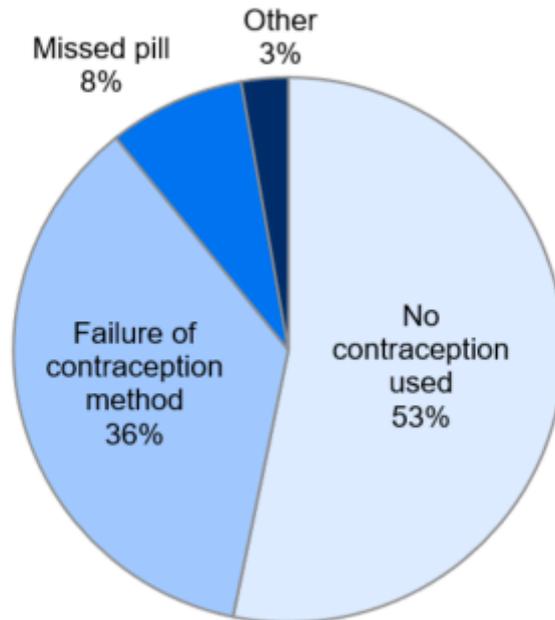
Emergency contraception (EC) was provided on 23,917 occasions in 2020-21. This is down 32% since 2019-20 and is likely to be as a result of the pandemic. Until last year, the numbers had been showing a relatively stable long term trend.

### Chart 4.1: Emergency contraception provided, 2014-15 to 2020-21



Source: NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (Pharmacy Services)

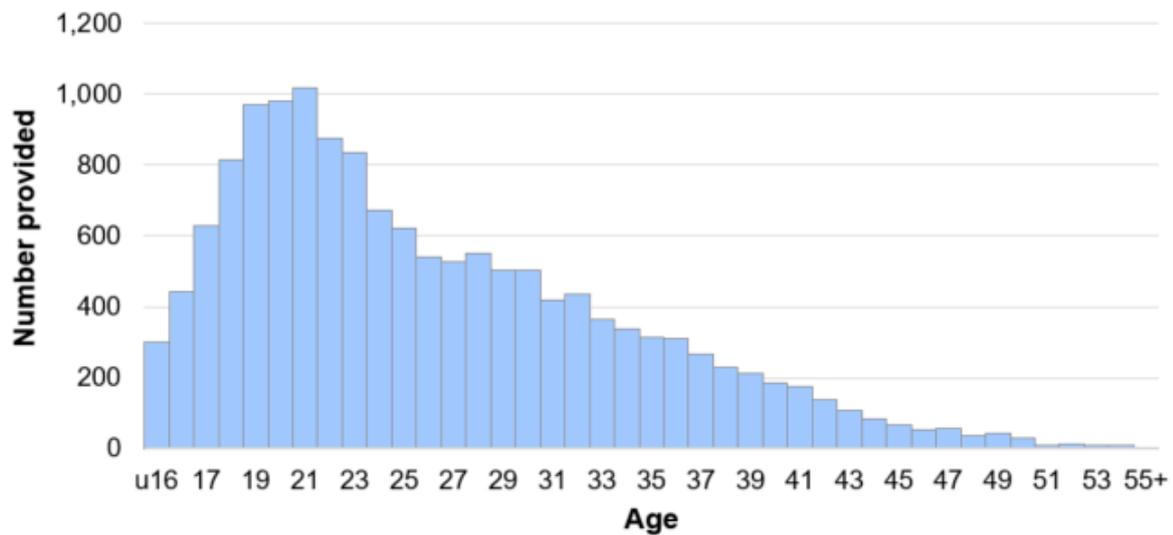
## Chart 4.2: Emergency contraception provided by reason, 2020-21



Source: NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (Pharmacy Services)

More than half (53%) of the women requesting emergency contraception during 2020-21 had not used contraception; a further 36% reported a failure of their method of contraception.

### Chart 4.3: Emergency contraception provided by community pharmacies, by age (where recorded), 2020-21



Source: NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (Pharmacy Services)

Note: These numbers relate to emergency contraception provided during the year and not to when the claims for payment are made; age was not recorded for almost 40% of cases in 2020-21; this is unusual and is therefore likely to be as a result of the pandemic.

Where age was recorded:

- more 21 year olds (1,019 or 6.9%) were provided with emergency contraception than any other age; in the two previous years it had been 20 year olds
- 21% were aged under 20 years old
- 71% of the women provided with emergency contraception were aged between 16 and 30

Further information is provided on [StatsWales](#).

# Seasonal flu vaccine (SFV)

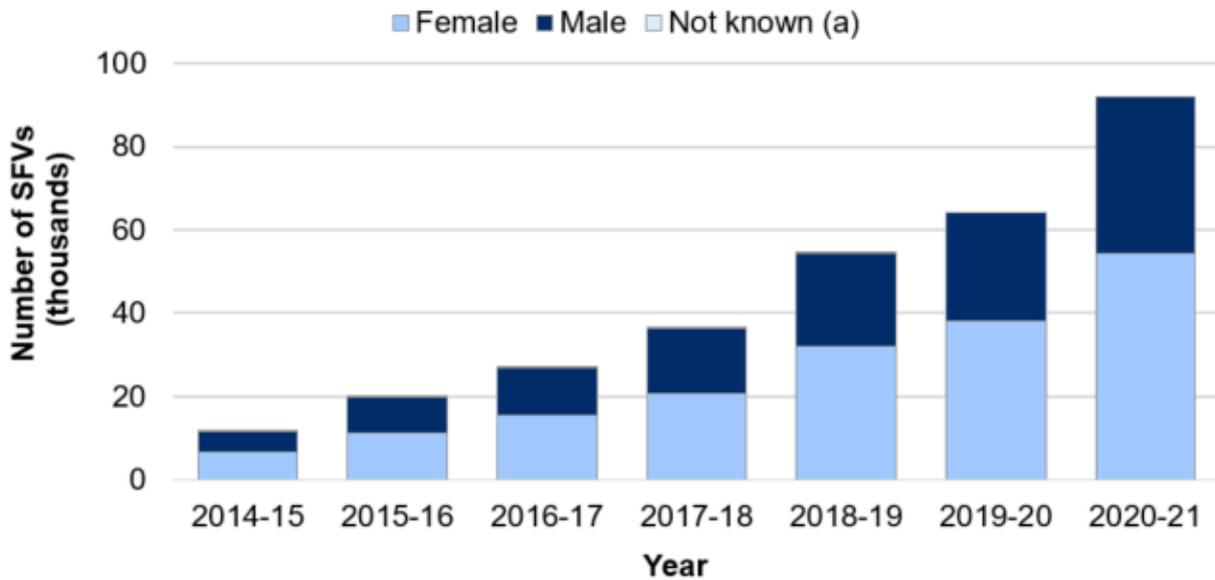
This data only includes individuals who are eligible for a seasonal flu vaccine, funded by the NHS. It does not include any individual who has paid for a vaccine privately at the pharmacy.

91,960 SFV's were given in community pharmacies. Of those receiving the vaccine:

- almost half (49%) were aged 65 or over
- nearly 1 in 5 (18%) were aged under 65 and in 'at risk' groups
- a further 13% were aged 50 to 64 (eligible for the first time in 2020-21)
- another 13% were carers such as nursing home staff, community first responders, voluntary and informal carers.
- nearly 30,000 (32%) received the vaccine for the first time
- females made up almost 60% of the total
- just under half (48%) of those previously vaccinated had had the SFV at their GP surgery, with the same number at a community pharmacy; the remainder had been previously been vaccinated at other locations including their own home or in their workplace.

93,044 claims for payment for the provision of seasonal flu vaccine were paid in 2020-21 (these include some payments for vaccinations given in the previous year).

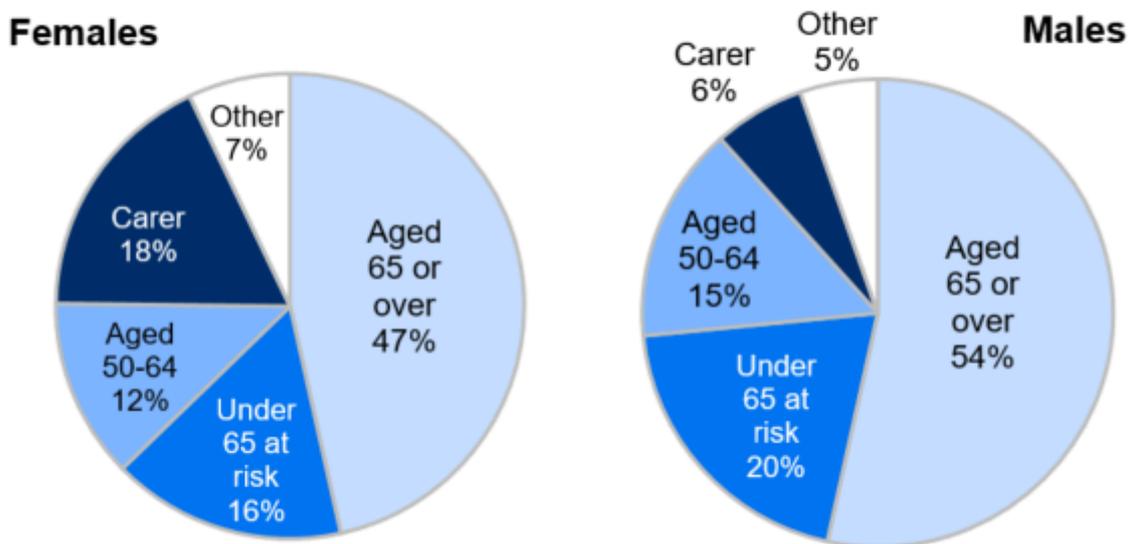
## Chart 5.1: Seasonal flu vaccination (SFV), 2014-15 to 2020-21



Source: NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (Pharmacy Services)

(a) 12 in 2014-15, 29 in 2015-16, 19 in 2016-17, 27 in 2017-18, 4 in 2018-19, none since.

## Chart 5.2: Seasonal flu vaccination (SFV) by gender and eligibility, 2020-21



Source: NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (Pharmacy Services)

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The percentage split by eligibility shows 18% of the female total being carers, compared to 6% of males. These numbers relate to the seasonal flu vaccines given in the year and not to when the claims for payment are made.

Further information is provided on [StatsWales](#).

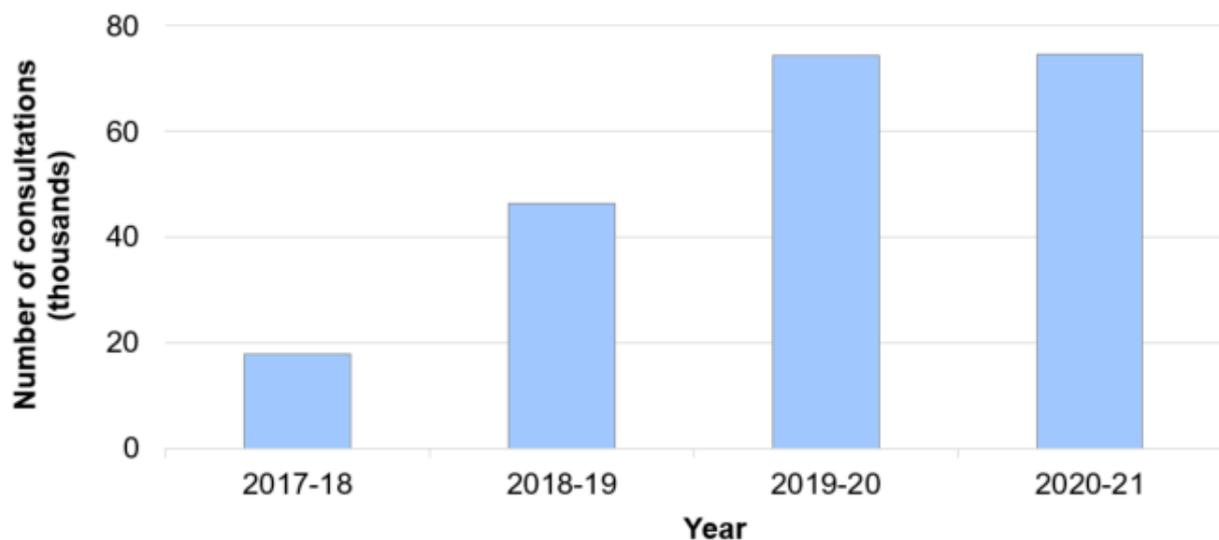
## Common ailments service

74,624 consultations were made to the common ailments service in 2020-21, a slight increase over 2019-20. The service is now available in 698 (98%) of the 712 community pharmacies in Wales.

Not all consultations have more details such as age, ailment etc.

2,109 people used the common ailments service more than twice during 2020-21; one person used the service 13 times, and a further 5 people more than 10 times.

**Chart 6.1: Common ailments service (CAS) consultations, 2017-18 to 2020-21**



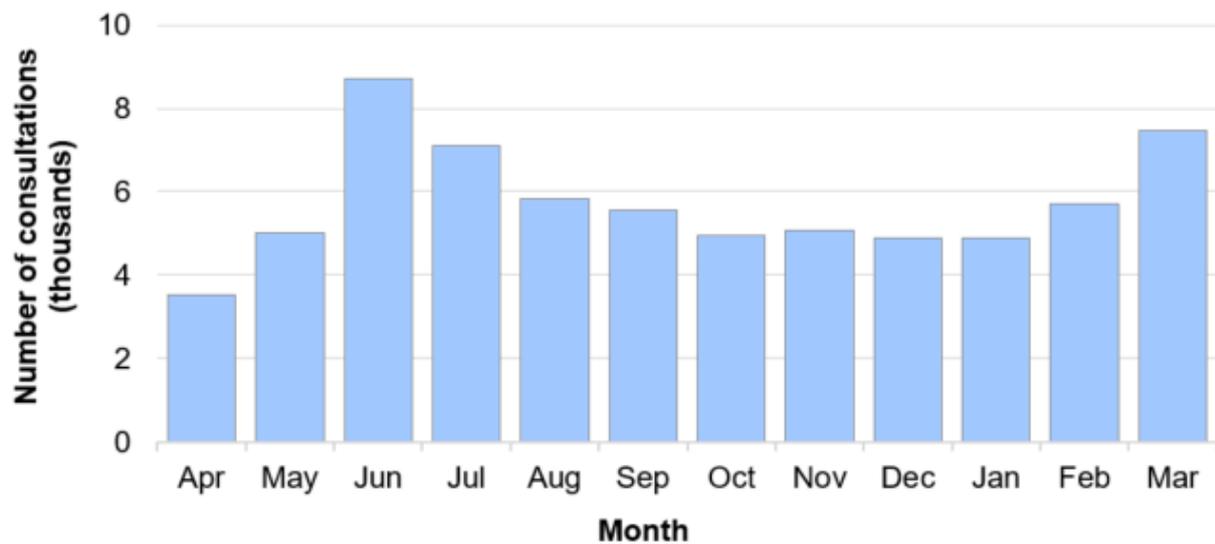
Source: NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (Pharmacy Services)

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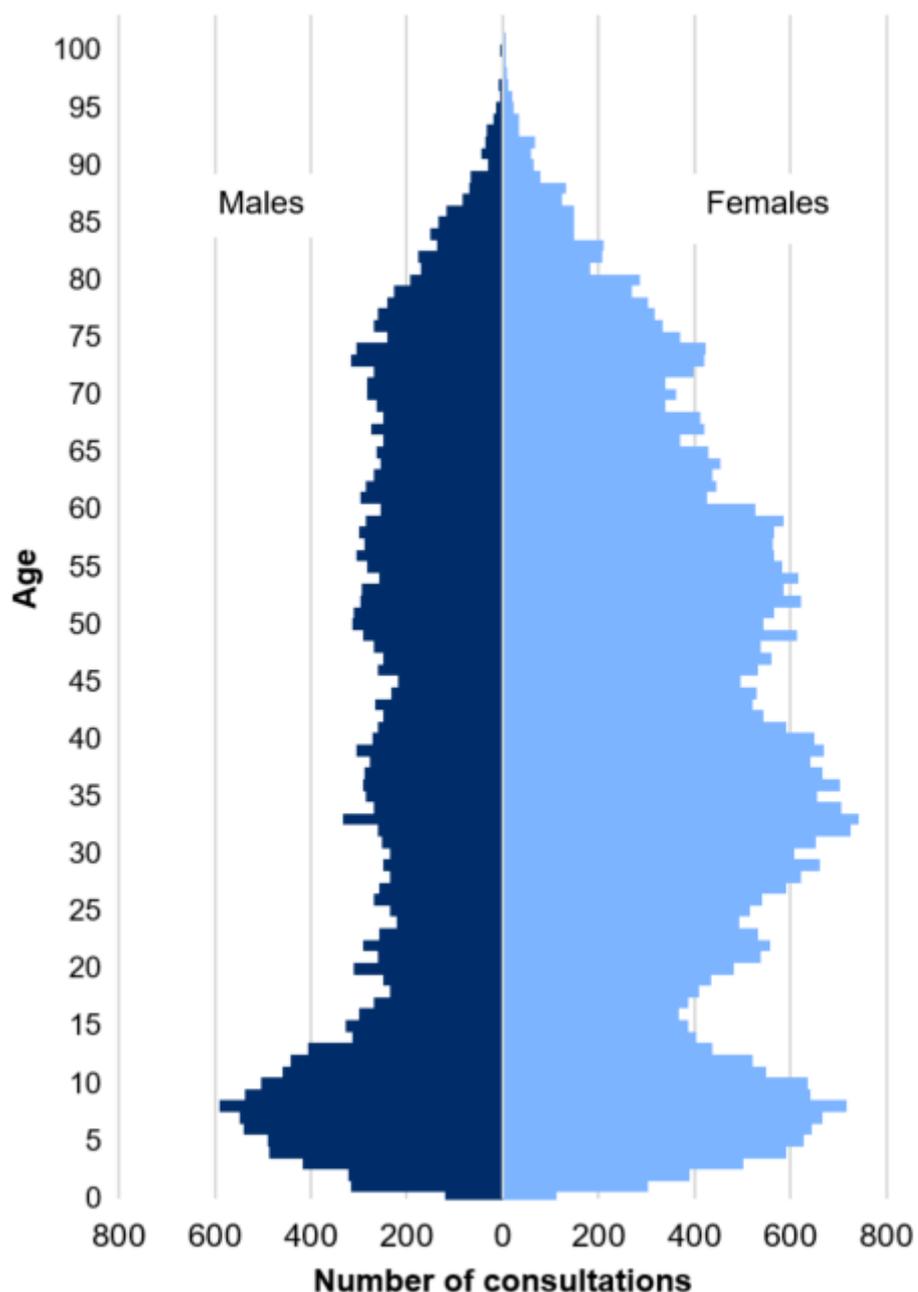
**Chart 6.2: Common ailments service (CAS) consultations by month, April 2020 to March 2021**



Source: NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (Pharmacy Services)

The number of CAS consultations reached almost 9,000 in June 2020, but then dropped to five to six thousand a month before rising again in both February and March.

## Chart 6.3: Common ailments service (CAS) consultations by age and gender, 2020-21



Source: NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (Pharmacy Services)

More than 1 in 5 (22%) CAS consultations related to children under age 16. Almost two thirds (63%) of all consultations related to females.

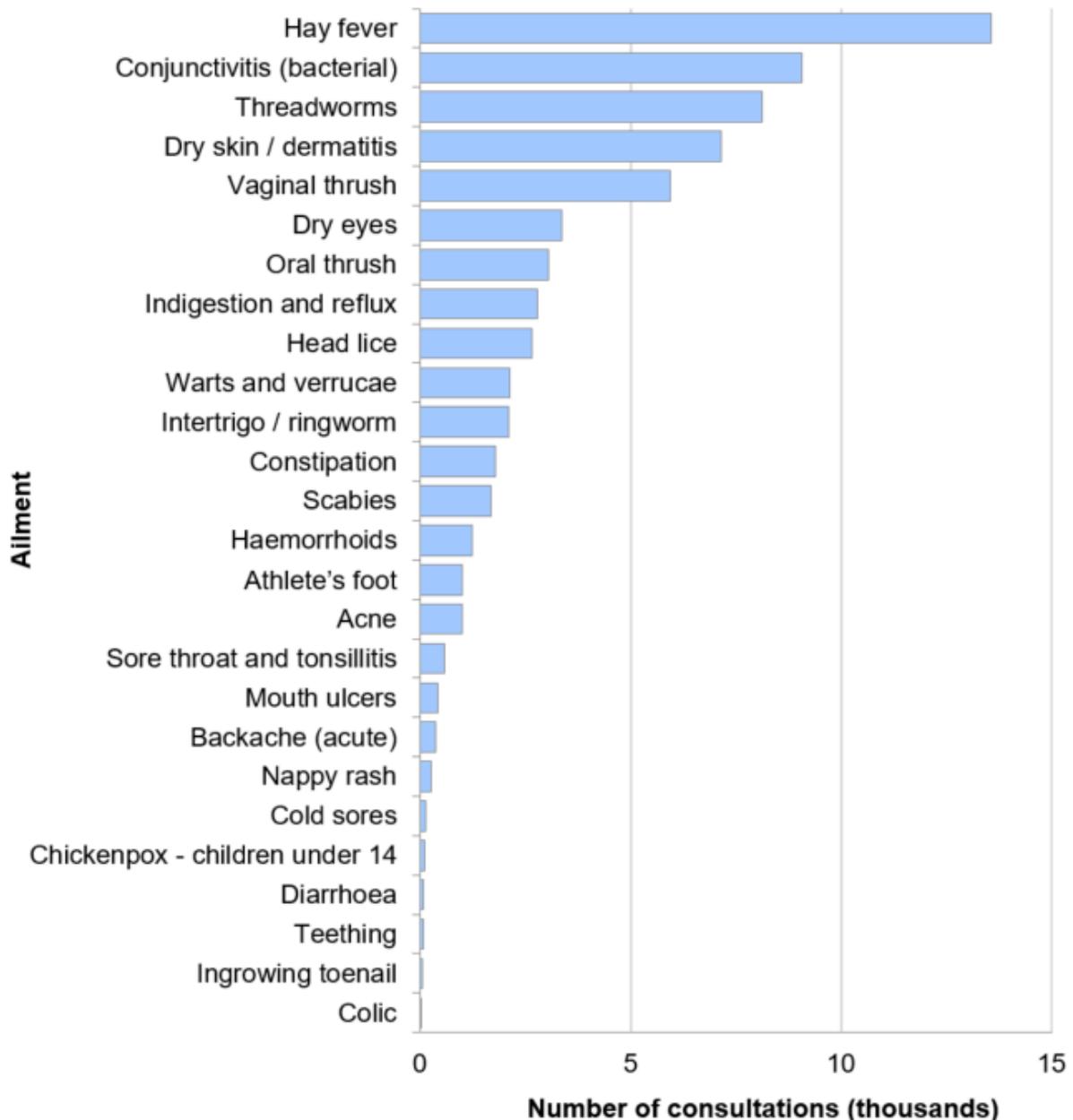
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The population pyramid above shows high numbers of consultations in respect of children, both male and female. While the numbers are fairly constant for adult males until their late 70s, there are increased numbers of consultations by women in their 30s and again in their 50s.

**Chart 6.4: Common ailments service (CAS) consultations by ailment, 2020-21**



Source: NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (Pharmacy Services)

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Around 1 in 5 (20%) CAS consultations related to hayfever, followed by conjunctivitis (13%), threadworms (12%) and dry skin / dermatitis (10%).

## Medicine use reviews

The Medicine Use Review (MUR) service was suspended in March 2020 in response to the COVID pandemic. The service remains suspended. Accordingly no MUR consultations took place in 2020-21. Data for previous years is available in the [statistical release for 2019-2020](#) and on [StatsWales](#).

## Quality and methodology information

The data is provided by NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (Pharmacy Services). Further information is available in the [quality report](#).

## National Statistics status

The [United Kingdom Statistics Authority](#) has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#).

National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value.

All official statistics should comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for Statistics. They are awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the UK Statistics Authority's regulatory arm. The Authority considers whether the statistics meet the highest standards of Code compliance, including the value they add to public decisions and debate.

It is Welsh Government's responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected of National Statistics. If we become concerned about

whether these statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, we will discuss any concerns with the Authority promptly. National Statistics status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when standards are restored.

The continued designation of these statistics as National Statistics was confirmed in June 2012 following a compliance check by the Office for Statistics. These statistics last underwent a full Regulation **Statistics on Health and Personal Social Services in Wales** against the Code of Practice in 2012.

Since the latest review by the Office for Statistics Regulation, we have continued to comply with the Code of Practice for Statistics, and have made the following improvements:

- published the statistical release in html format, with more open data published on our **StatsWales** website
- updated the quality report and refreshed commentary in the release

## **Well-being of Future Generations Act (WFG)**

The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of Wales. The Act puts in place seven wellbeing goals for Wales. These are for a more equal, prosperous, resilient, healthier and globally responsible Wales, with cohesive communities and a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. Under section (10)(1) of the Act, the Welsh Ministers must (a) publish indicators (“national indicators”) that must be applied for the purpose of measuring progress towards the achievement of the Well-being goals, and (b) lay a copy of the national indicators before Senedd Cymru. The 46 national indicators were laid in March 2016

Information on the indicators, along with narratives for each of the wellbeing goals and associated technical information is available in the **Wellbeing of Wales report**.

Further information on the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**.

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The statistics included in this release could also provide supporting narrative to the national indicators and be used by public services boards in relation to their local wellbeing assessments and local wellbeing plans.

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