



Investment in General Practice, Northern Ireland 2021-22 to 2025-26



Department of
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An Roinn Sláinte

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um Staitisticí agus Taighde

Investment in General Practice, Northern Ireland 2021-22 to 2025-26

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Introduction:

This report details the investment in general practice and the reimbursement for drugs dispensed in general practices in Northern Ireland from 2021-22 to 2025-26. The report draws on information from the financial reporting system of the Strategic Planning & Performance Group (SPPG)¹ of the Department of Health (DoH) and other published data on reimbursement and remuneration for dispensing activity derived from the Family Practitioner Services Pharmacy Payments System maintained by the Business Services Organisation (BSO).

The data also contain some financial flows which do not reach GP Practices but contribute towards overall General Medical Services (GMS) investment. These include payments for Information Management and Technology (IM&T) and out-of-hours services.²

The figures include expenditure relating to dispensing by GP practices, but not the costs of drugs dispensed by high street pharmacies. The total cost of all prescriptions dispensed in the community by community pharmacists, appliance contractors and dispensing doctors, can be found in the Prescription Cost Analysis produced by the Business Services Organisation (BSO). This can be found on the [BSO's website](#).

Discontinued NHS Digital³ Publication:

Previously, country level information from all 4 UK countries was discussed by the Technical Steering Committee (TSC), which was chaired by NHS Digital³ and has representation from the Department of Health and Social Care, UK Health Departments, NHS England and NHS Improvement, NHS Employers and the British Medical Association (BMA). From 2003-04, NHS Digital provided a rolling five-year time series of Investment in General Practice for each UK country. As well as providing UK-level figures, the report was intended to facilitate comparison of spending across the countries.

However, changes to general practice contractual arrangements in each country over recent years mean the payment categories and spending practices are no longer comparable. As a result, the Technical Steering Committee, which oversaw this series, decided that this UK-level report was no longer relevant or appropriate and have discontinued the series. This can be found at: <http://www.digital.nhs.uk>

From 2020, each country agreed to produce and publish its own report, with NHS Digital providing links to these reports once released. It is important to note that figures between these individual country reports will not be comparable due to the differing contractual arrangements which have led to the UK-level report being discontinued.

¹ The Health & Social Care Board (HSCB) officially closed on 31 March 2022; responsibility for its functions transferred to the Strategic Planning & Performance Group (SPPG), within the Department of Health (DoH).

² This publication does not include elements of spend which are allocated to other HSC bodies, including Trusts, but which are investment in primary care.

³ NHS Digital legally merged with NHS England on 1st February 2023. All references to NHS Digital now, or in the future, relate to NHS England. NHS England has assumed responsibility for all activities previously undertaken by NHS Digital.

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Key Facts:

In 2025-26, the total investment in general practice, including the reimbursement of drugs dispensed in general practice, was £435.055m. Compared to 2024-25, this represents an increase in the total investment in GP practices of 5.55 per cent in Northern Ireland. In real terms this equates to an increase of 2.04 per cent. General practice played a key role in the response to the Covid-19 pandemic, this is reflected in higher levels of investment during that period including the financial year 2021/22.

In 2025-26, in response to the recommendation in the report of the Review Body on Doctors' and Dentists' Remuneration (DDRB), a 4.0% uplift was applied for GP pay. In addition, 4.0% uplift for practice staff expenses and a 4.1% uplift for other expenses were also applied. This represents an investment of £11.717m.

Data Quality:

Assessment of the quality of the statistics and the data sources is provided in a separate document available on the publication page at:

<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/articles/investment-general-practice>

Further Information:

Details of other publications of interest can be found at the end of this report.

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Feedback: We welcome feedback on any aspects of these statistics. This can be provided at the e-mail address above.

Table 1: Investment in General Practice in Northern Ireland 2021-22 to 2025-26 (excluding reimbursement of drugs)

£ Millions

	2021-22[#]	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Cash Terms	£374.244	£370.819	£384.084	£408.104	£430.884
% Change	:	-0.92%	3.58%	6.25%	5.58%
Real Terms	£453.875	£420.186	£413.463	£422.165	£430.884
% Change	:	-7.42%	-1.60%	2.10%	2.07%

Source: Financial Information Monitoring Returns (HSCB/SPPG); year ended March 2022 to 2026

Family Practitioner Services Pharmacy Payments System, BSO

[#] Funding in relation to the covid 19 response commenced in 2020-21 and remained for 2021-22, stabilising in 2021-22; this funding is reported under Local Enhanced Services.

Note: Further information on how the Real Terms figures have been calculated using the GDP deflator can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/gross-domestic-product-gdp-deflators-user-guide>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/gdp-deflators-at-market-prices-and-money-gdp-june-2026-quarterly-national-accounts>

Real terms figures have been based on unrounded figures.

Table 2: Total Investment in General Practice in Northern Ireland 2021-22 to 2025-26

£ Millions

	2021-22[#]	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Cash Terms	£377.874	£374.775	£388.248	£412.168	£435.055
% Change	:	-0.82%	3.60%	6.16%	5.55%
Real Terms	£458.277	£424.668	£417.945	£426.369	£435.055
% Change	:	-7.33%	-1.58%	2.02%	2.04%

Source: Financial Information Monitoring Returns (HSCB/SPPG); year ended March 2022 to 2026

Family Practitioner Services Pharmacy Payments System, BSO

[#] Funding in relation to the covid 19 response commenced in 2020-21 and remained for 2021-22, stabilising in 2021-22; this funding is reported under Local Enhanced Services.

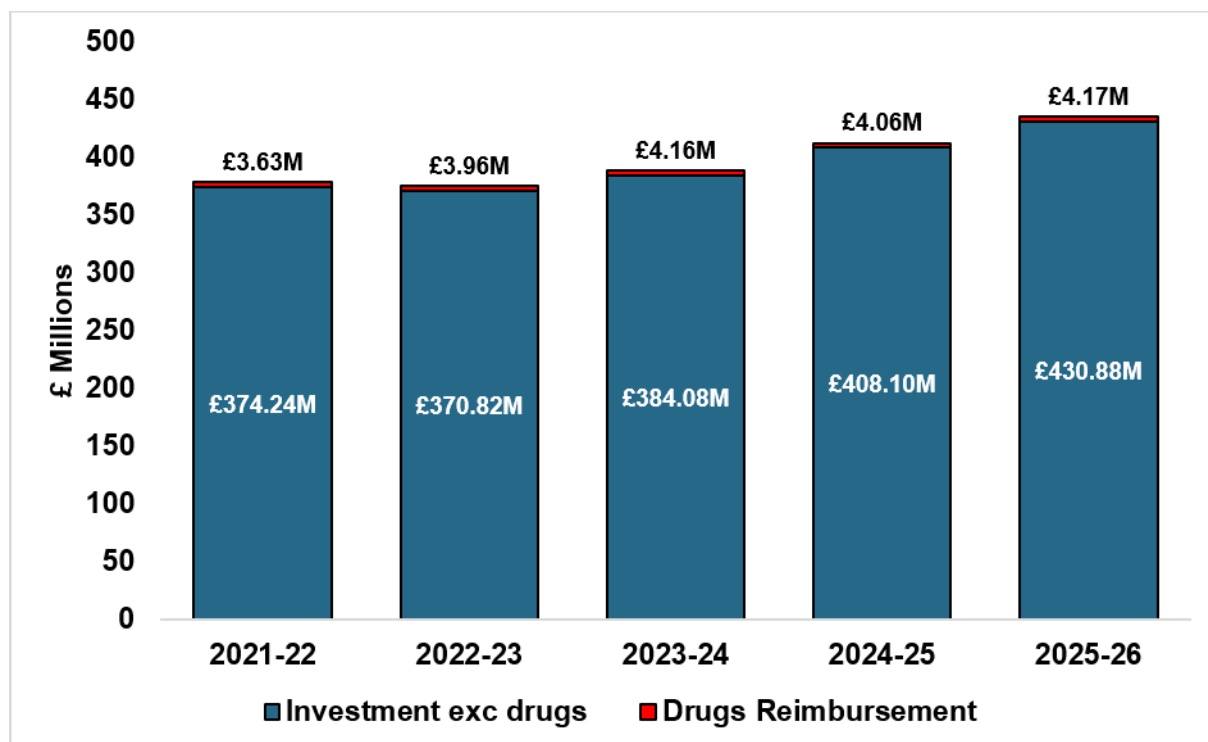
Note: Further information on how the Real Terms figures have been calculated using the GDP deflator can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/gross-domestic-product-gdp-deflators-user-guide>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/gdp-deflators-at-market-prices-and-money-gdp-june-2026-quarterly-national-accounts>

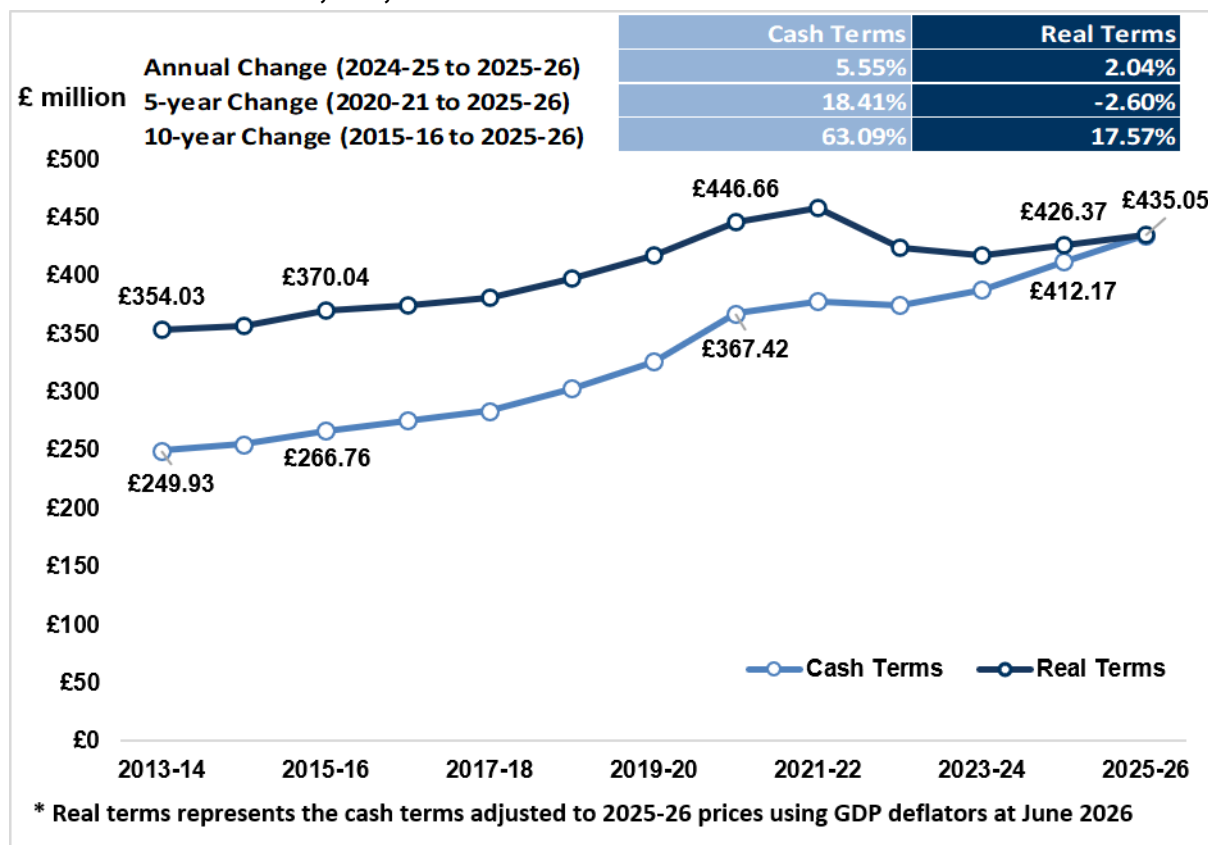
Real terms figures have been based on unrounded figures.

**Figure 1: Investment in General Practice in Northern Ireland, 2021-22 to 2025-26
£ millions**



Source: Financial Information Monitoring Returns (HSCB/SPPG); year ended March 2022 to 2026
Family Practitioner Services Pharmacy Payments System, BSO

Figure 2: Investment in General Practice in NI - Total Investment, 2013-14 to 2025-26, £m, Cash and Real Terms*



Source: Financial Information Monitoring Returns (HSCB/SPPG); year ended March 2014 to 2026; Family Practitioner Services Pharmacy Payments System, BSO

Table 3a: 5-Year Trend Summary Table

£ thousands

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Global Sum ¹	177,206	187,056	197,278	243,031	264,361
Minimum Practice Income Guarantee (MPIG) Correction Factor	7,875	8,334	8,920	9,403	9,788
Global Sum/MPIG¹	185,081	195,390	206,198	252,434	274,149
Quality Aspiration Payments ²	21,913	21,874	21,423	0	0
Quality Achievement Payments ²	9,692	9,695	9,660	0	0
Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF)²	31,605	31,569	31,083	0	0
Direct Enhanced Services ³	13,162	14,371	11,893	11,534	10,240
Local Enhanced Services ⁴	34,202	20,771	18,601	14,965	15,351
Regional Enhanced Services (including Clinical Priorities)	41,093	40,147	42,533	42,857	41,073
Total Enhanced Services^{1,5}	88,457	75,289	73,027	69,356	66,664
Premises	22,720	18,394	18,249	19,571	19,274
Primary Care Organisation (PCO) Administered Funds/Other GMS Services ^{3,6}	15,040	16,789	22,004	30,536	32,783
Out of Hours (inc. OOH Development Fund)	26,205	27,762	27,579	29,976	31,007
IM and IT	4,995	5,482	5,800	6,081	6,859
Total Other Payments	68,960	68,427	73,631	86,164	89,923
Total Net of Dispensing	374,104	370,676	383,939	407,954	430,736
Cost of Dispensing Fees ⁷	140	144	145	150	148
Total Investment Excluding Reimbursement of Drugs⁸	374,244	370,819	384,084	408,104	430,884
Reimbursement of Dispensed Drugs ⁹	3,630	3,955	4,164	4,064	4,171
Total Spend¹⁰	377,874	374,775	388,248	412,168	435,055

Source: Financial Information Monitoring Returns (HSCB/SPPG); year ended March 2022 to 2026; Family Practitioner Services Pharmacy Payments System, BSO

1. Under the 2024/25 GMS Contract, the Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF) and a number of specified Enhanced Services were incorporated into the core contract with associated funding transferred into core funding.
2. In 2024/25 the QOF was replaced with the Clinical Care Domain within the Northern Ireland Contract Assurance Framework (NICAF). QOF funding was transferred into core funding.
3. See Table 3b for detailed breakdown of these funding lines.
4. 2021-22 includes funding in relation to Covid 19 response.
5. There are no National Enhanced Services in place in Northern Ireland.
6. Dispensing element of PCO administered funds reported on separate line. 2024/25 & 2025/26 include funding for indemnity as a result of funding repurposed under the 2024/25 GMS Contract.
7. This figure refers only to the cost of dispensing fees for items dispensed and/or personally administered by dispensing doctors.
8. This total includes the cost of dispensing fees but not reimbursement of the cost of drugs.
9. This total includes Net Ingredient Cost (NIC), vat allowance and discounts and stock order costs (NIC) for both dispensing doctors and non-dispensing doctors.
10. Figures may not sum to total due to rounding.

Table 3b: Supplementary Information 2025-26

£ thousands

Direct Enhanced Services	
Childhood Vaccination and Immunisation Scheme	3,272
Influenza and Pneumococcal Immunisations Scheme	3,535
Learning Disabilities	442
MEN ACWY	14
Minor Surgery	2,366
Services for Violent Patients	280
Shingles Vaccinations	331
Total Direct Enhanced Services¹	10,240
PCO Administered Funds/Other Services	
Seniority	5,596
Doctors Retainer Scheme Payments/NI GP Development Scheme	0
Locum Allowances consisting of:	
a) Adoptive, paternity and maternity	1,483
b) Sickness	1,341
c) Suspended Doctors	0
d) Other Locum payments	0
Appraiser Costs of Sessional GPs	229
Indemnity	4,894
Practice Training	213
Interpreting	172
Treatment Room Nursing	4,354
GP Locum Superannuation	2,174
GP Consumables reimbursement scheme	788
GP Federation Infrastructure Costs	0
Medical Equipment and Data Storage	0
Miscellaneous	11,537
Total PCO Administered Funds/Other Services¹	32,783

**Source: Financial Information Monitoring Returns (SPPG);
year ended March 2026**

1. Figures may not sum to total due to rounding.

Other Publications:

Investment in General Practice in England, 2018/19 to 2022/23

Current Link: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/investment-in-general-practice-in-england-2018-19-to-2022-23/>

Summary: This report details the investment in General Practice and the reimbursement for drugs dispensed in General Practices in England from 2018/19 to 2022/23. The report draws on information from the financial reporting systems of NHS England and Improvement and other published data on reimbursement and remuneration for dispensing activity. This information has been discussed with the General Practitioners Committee (GPC) of the British Medical Association (BMA), which represents the interests of GPs.

Previous Versions: Previous versions can be found at:
<https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/investment-in-general-practice-in-england-17-18-to-21-22/>
<https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/investment-in-general-practice-in-england-2016-17-to-2020-21/>
<https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/investment-in-general-practice-in-england-2015-16-to-2019-20/>

Investment in General Practice in Wales, 2020/21 to 2024/25

Current Link: <https://www.gov.wales/investment-general-practice-2020-2021-financial-year-2024-2025-financial-year-html>

Summary: This report details the investment in General Practice and the reimbursement for drugs dispensed in General Practices in Wales from 2020/21 to 2024/25.

Previous Versions: Previous versions can be found at:
<https://www.gov.wales/investment-general-practice-2019-2020-financial-year-2023-2024-financial-year-html>
<https://www.gov.wales/investment-general-practice-2018-2019-financial-year-2022-2023-financial-year-html>
<https://www.gov.wales/investment-general-practice-wales-2016-2017-financial-year-2020-2021-financial-year-html>

Previously NHS Digital published country level information for all 4 UK countries;
Investment in General Practice 2014/15 to 2018/19; England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland

Current Link: <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/investment-in-general-practice/2014-15-to-2018-19-england-wales-northern-ireland-and-scotland>

Summary: This report details the investment in General Practice and the reimbursement for drugs dispensed in General Practices from 2014/15 to 2018/19. The report draws on information from country level financial monitoring reports discussed by the Technical Steering Committee (TSC). This series has been discontinued.

Previous Versions: <http://www.digital.nhs.uk>

2024-25 GP Earnings and Expenses Report

Current Link: <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/gp-earnings-and-expenses-estimates/2024-25>

Summary: This report presents results from the GP Earnings and Expenses Enquiry for the financial year 2024-25.

Previous Versions: <http://www.digital.nhs.uk>

The Quality and Outcomes Framework 2022-23 for Northern Ireland

Current Link: <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/articles/quality-and-outcomes-framework-qof-statistics-annual-report>

Summary: This statistical publication presents a summary of data (achievement and exceptions data) from the Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF). The QOF has now been replaced by the Clinical Care Domain within the Northern Ireland Contract Assurance Framework (NICAF), a key feature of the 2024/25 GMS Contract. The NICAF continued for 2025/26. Achievement reporting against the QOF indicators has therefore ceased. In turn, the annual QOF achievement and exception reporting publication has been discontinued and latest data available relates to 2022/23.

Previous Versions: <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/quality-and-outcomes-framework-qof-achievement-exception-reporting-statistics-201516-202122>

Disease Prevalence Data for Northern Ireland

Current Link: <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/articles/prevalence-statistics>

Summary: This bulletin presents raw disease prevalence data at GP Federation, LCG and Northern Ireland levels. Time series data is presented for Northern Ireland, with LCG and GP Federation data given for the current year, for each of the 14 registers which count patients with specific conditions or diseases as covered by the Clinical Care Domain of the NI Contract Assurance Framework, a key feature of the 2024/25 GMS Contract which continued for 2025/26. A comprehensive excel spreadsheet, which also includes GP practice level data, and an interactive tool accompany the bulletin.

Previous Versions: <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/200405-202425-raw-disease-prevalence-data-northern-ireland>

General Medical Services Statistics

Current Link: <https://bso.hscni.net/directorates/operations/family-practitioner-services/directorates-operations-family-practitioner-services-information-unit/1776-2/>

Summary: The Family Practitioner Services (FPS) Information Unit of the Business Services Organisation (BSO) produces information on General Practitioners, GP practices and registered patients including registration activity and payments.

Previous Versions: <https://bso.hscni.net/directorates/operations/family-practitioner-services/directorates-operations-family-practitioner-services-information-unit/1776-2/previous-general-medical-services-publications/>