

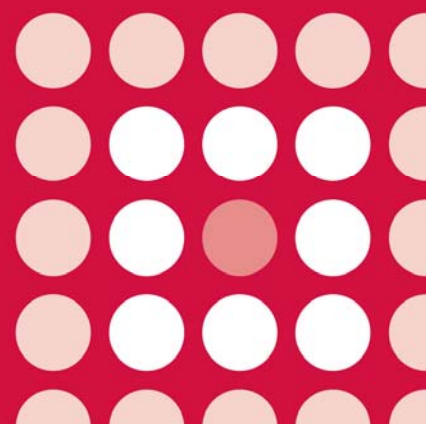


All Wales Therapeutics  
and Toxicology Centre  
Canolfan Therapiwteg a  
Thocsicoleg Cymru Gyfan

**NATIONAL PRESCRIBING INDICATORS 2013–2014**

**ANALYSIS OF ANTIDEPRESSANT AND DOSULEPIN PRESCRIBING DATA**

**MAY 2013**



This report has been prepared by the Welsh Analytical Prescribing Support Unit (WAPSU), part of the All Wales Therapeutics and Toxicology Centre (AWTTC).

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## INTRODUCTION

The All Wales Medicines Strategy Group (AWMSG) endorses National Prescribing Indicators as a means of promoting safe and cost-effective prescribing. The Welsh Analytical Prescribing Support Unit (WAPSU) currently provides a quarterly report outlining medicines usage for all of the National Prescribing Indicators at health board level. In addition to these quarterly reports, WAPSU will be providing more detailed information on specific indicators individualised to health board and locality cluster.

This report provides prescribing information on the antidepressant and dosulepin National Prescribing Indicators. The antidepressant indicator is a new prescribing indicator for 2013–2014, and measures overall usage. The prescribing of dosulepin continues to be measured due to the increased risk of cardiovascular toxicity compared with other tricyclic antidepressants. The first part of this report includes All Wales comparative data and the second part contains data specific to Powys Teaching Health Board.

## NATIONAL PRESCRIBING DATA

### 1. Antidepressants

*Unit of measurement:* ADQs per 1,000 STAR-PU; maintain performance levels within the lower quartile or reduce towards the quartile below.

As shown in Figure 1, there has been a slight upward trend in antidepressant usage in each of the seven health boards in Wales during the period 2011–2013. There was a 40% difference in usage between the highest prescribing (Cwm Taf 2,475 ADQs per 1,000 STAR-PU) and lowest prescribing (Powys 1,485 ADQs per 1,000 STAR-PU) health boards in the quarter ending December 2012.

Figure 1. Trend in antidepressant usage over time

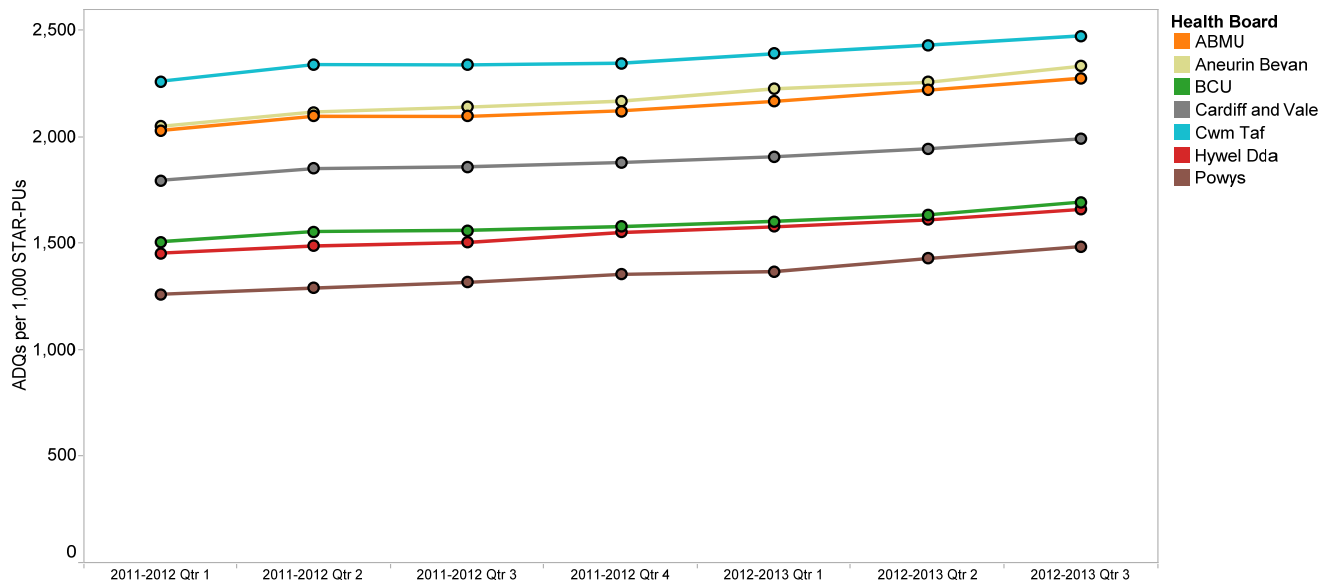


Figure 2 illustrates antidepressant prescribing across all of the 22 localities in Wales. The range of values has been divided into quintiles, and each locality coloured according to the quintile into which it falls. The map clearly illustrates areas of high usage across south Wales.

Figure 2. Antidepressant ADQs per 1,000 STAR-PUs – Quarter ending December 2012

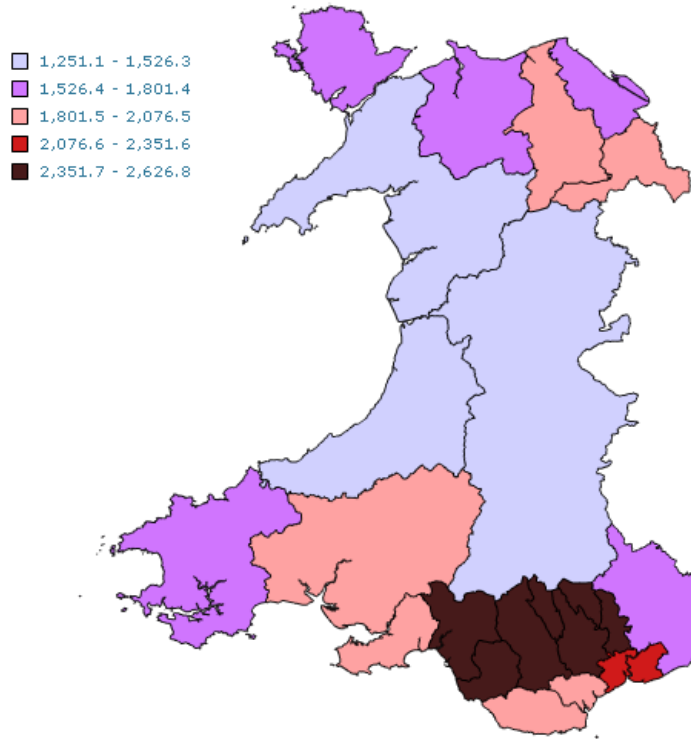
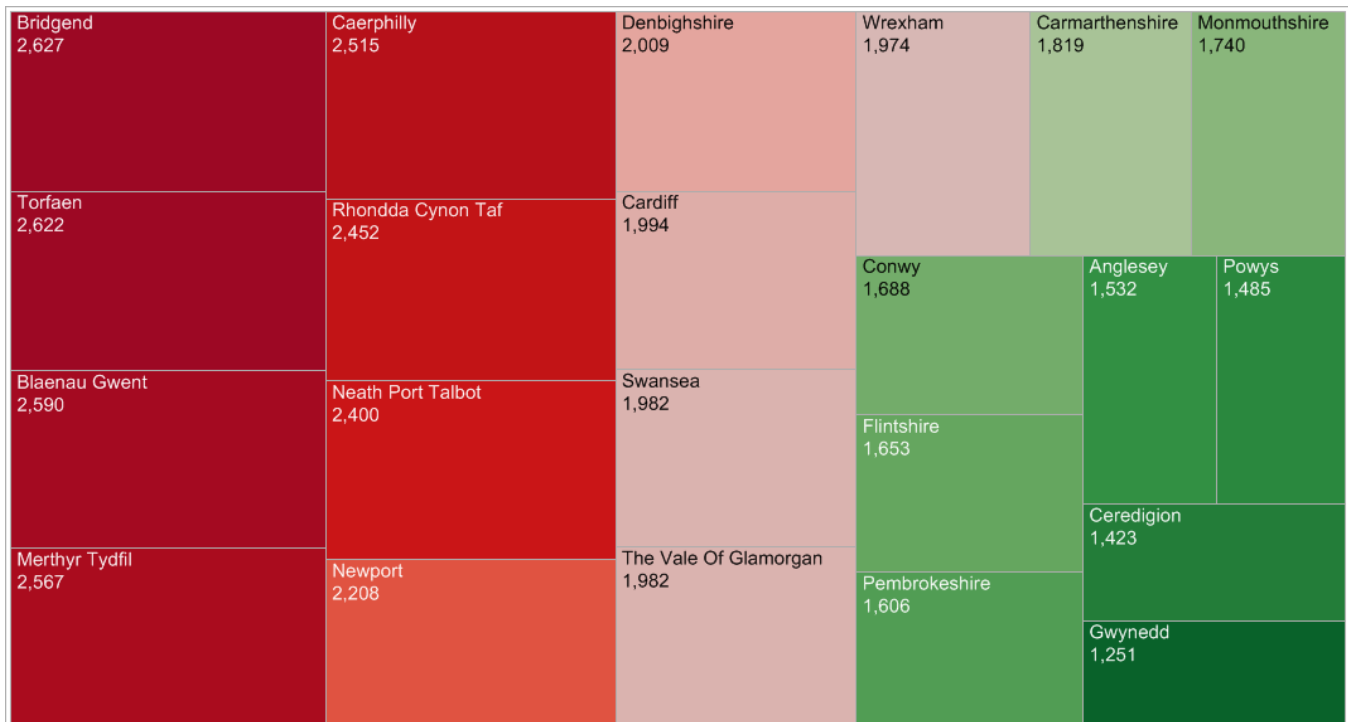


Figure 3 shows the proportional usage in greater detail. The colour and size of the box indicates the level of usage in each locality (the larger the box the higher the usage).

Figure 3. Treemap of antidepressant ADQs per 1,000 STAR-PUs – Quarter ending December 2012

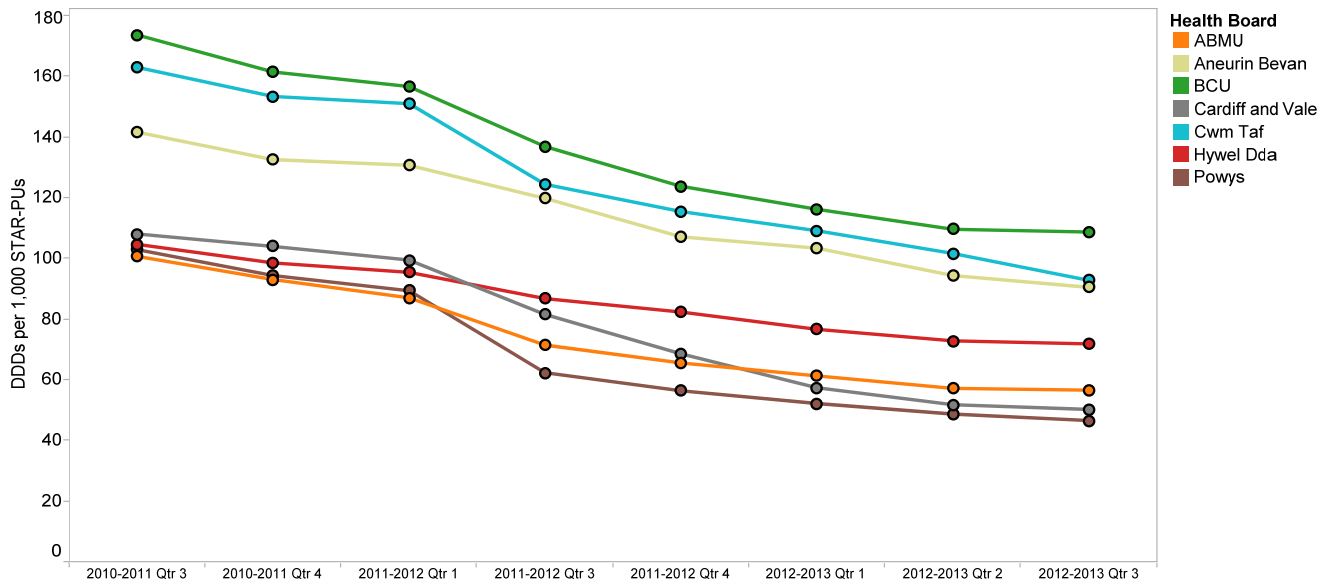


## 2. Dosulepin (DDD per 1,000 PUs)

Unit of measurement: DDDs per 1,000 PUs; maintain performance levels within the lower quartile or reduce towards the quartile below.

The graph below shows that dosulepin usage has been declining across Wales, although there is a 57% difference between the highest prescribing (Betsi Cadwaladr 109 DDDs per 1,000 PUs) and lowest prescribing (Powys 46 DDDs per 1,000 PUs) health boards. There is also considerable variation between practices within individual health boards (see Figure 5).

Figure 4. Graph showing dosulepin prescribing trend



The box and whisker plot below shows the range of dosulepin prescribing within each health board. The central line represents the median value, and the box represents the range of the middle 50% of practices.

Figure 5. Box and whisker plot showing variation in dosulepin prescribing – Quarter ending December 2012

