

**Supplementary Table 1** - overall BNF code and drug prescribing for various months during 2020. Absolute number of prescribed items is reported as  $N_{obs}$ , forecast number of prescribed items and 99% prediction intervals are reported as  $N_{for}$  [99%PI], and per cent difference from prediction is reported as % difference.

Section/Drug Name	$N_{obs}$	$N_{for}$ [99CI]	% difference
<i>March 2020</i>			
301 Bronchodilators	3,660,136	2,586,351[2,385,115-2,787,586]	41.5
Salbutamol	2,778,606	1,816,511 [1,664,795-1,968,226]	53
Tiotropium bromide	320,677	285,527 [251,335-319,718]	12.3
Terbutaline sulphate	60,988	37,124 [32,206-42,042]	64.3
Ipratropium bromide	45,147	37,064 [30,748-43,380]	21.8
302 Corticosteroids (respiratory)	2,501,201	1,789,455[1,660,007-1,918,903]	39.8
Beclometasone dipropionate	1,592,567	1,143,059 [1,053,132-1,232,985]	39.3
Fluticasone propionate (Inhalation)	478,697	344,268 [294,753-393,783]	39
Budesonide	412,041	300,051 [272,192-327,910]	37.3
Fluticasone furoate (Inhalation)	190,119	167,943 [157,500-178,386]	13.2
407 Analgesics	5,594,383	5,119,539[4,684,937-5,554,140]	9.3
Paracetamol	1,708,852	1,404,470 [1,235,864-1,573,075]	21.7
1001 Drugs used in rheumatic diseases and gout	1,837,948	1,845,392[1,674,029-2,016,754]	-0.4
Ibuprofen	416,800	442,759 [377,190-508,327]	-5.9
Methotrexate	187,380	172,841 [159,921-185,761]	8.4
Hydroxychloroquine sulfate	108,451	95,899 [87,361-104,437]	13.1
Leflunomide	16,342	15,216 [13,972-16,460]	7.4
601 Drugs used in diabetes	5,297,866	4,887,373[4,554,891-5,219,854]	8.4
Metformin hydrochloride	2,045,234	1,920,314 [1,788,117-2,052,510]	6.5
Glucose blood testing reagents	624,352	559,310 [511,117-607,504]	11.6
Gliclazide	582,008	550,774 [504,548-597,000]	5.7
Insulin aspart	212,386	167,378 [155,482-179,274]	26.9
Ketone blood testing reagents	34,507	24,830 [23,238-26,422]	39
Glucose	33,780	28,449 [26,296-30,602]	18.7
Glucagon	8,297	6,493 [5,490-7,497]	27.8
802 Drugs affecting the immune response (malignancy and immunosuppression)	107,974	98,259[90,613-105,904]	9.9
Tacrolimus	28,930	24,388 [22,060-26,717]	18.6
Mycophenolate mofetil	18,317	16,237 [14,988-17,485]	12.8
Ciclosporin	5,592	4,904 [3,700-6,109]	14
Sirolimus	649	558 [427-689]	16.2
<i>April 2020</i>			
102 Antispasmodics & Other Drugs Altering Gut Motility	389,747	384,600[352,525-416,674]	1.3
Glycopyrronium bromide	52,901	45,125 [37,416-52,833]	17.2
402 Drugs used in psychoses and related disorders	1,091,501	1,018,306[948,933-1,087,679]	7.2
Haloperidol	33,612	24,630 [19,717-29,542]	36.5
Levomepromazine hydrochloride	16,563	8,506 [6,298-10,714]	94.7
408 Antiepileptic drugs	2,499,462	2,404,322[2,221,327-2,587,318]	4
Midazolam hydrochloride	45,033	25,303 [21,198-29,408]	78
406 Drugs used in nausea and vertigo	501,384	490,706[424,718-556,694]	2.2

Cyclizine lactate	10,414	5,927 [4,154-7,701]	75.7
407 Analgesics	5,309,715	4,991,310[4,551,713-5,430,908]	6.4
Morphine sulfate	458,547	426,753 [391,634-461,873]	7.5
Oxycodone hydrochloride	155,119	152,093 [140,335-163,851]	2
901 Anaemias and other blood disorders	1,607,183	1,619,365[1,500,462-1,738,268]	-0.8
Hydroxocobalamin	143,925	232,277 [210,762-253,791]	-38
Cyanocobalamin	123,126	84,637 [78,214-91,061]	45.5
1502 Local anaesthesia	50,077	110,722[98,072-123,372]	-54.8
Lidocaine hydrochloride	46,988	105,144 [93,053-117,235]	-55.3
Bupivacaine hydrochloride	215	1,603 [1,192-2,015]	-86.6
<i>May 2020</i>			
603 Corticosteroids (endocrine)	558,839	694,073[624,757-763,389]	-19.5
Prednisolone	485,855	614,566 [543,975-685,157]	-20.9
Dexamethasone	132,489	169,013 [143,089-194,936]	-21.6
409 Drugs used in Parkinsonism and related disorders	420,231	458,067[428,087-488,046]	-8.3
Co-careldopa (Carbidopalevodopa)	102,262	113,824 [106,270-121,378]	-10.2
Co-beneldopa (Benserazidelevodopa)	81,115	88,742 [82,933-94,552]	-8.6
411 Dementia	324,923	364,083[334,301-393,866]	-10.8
Donepezil hydrochloride	164,831	183,192 [166,954-199,431]	-10
Memantine hydrochloride	116,880	131,506 [121,570-141,441]	-11.1
Rivastigmine	30,721	34,684 [31,718-37,651]	-11.4
Galantamine	12,491	13,361 [11,550-15,172]	-6.5
703 Contraceptives	561,205	697,310[638,559-756,061]	-19.5
Medroxyprogesterone acetate	70,721	94,951 [87,016-102,886]	-25.5
Levonorgestrel	9,329	21,789 [17,472-26,106]	-57.2
Etonogestrel	1,868	11,718 [9,900-13,537]	-84.1
405 Obesity	22,177	29,310[25,435-33,185]	-24.3
Orlistat	22,171	29,307 [25,431-33,184]	-24.3