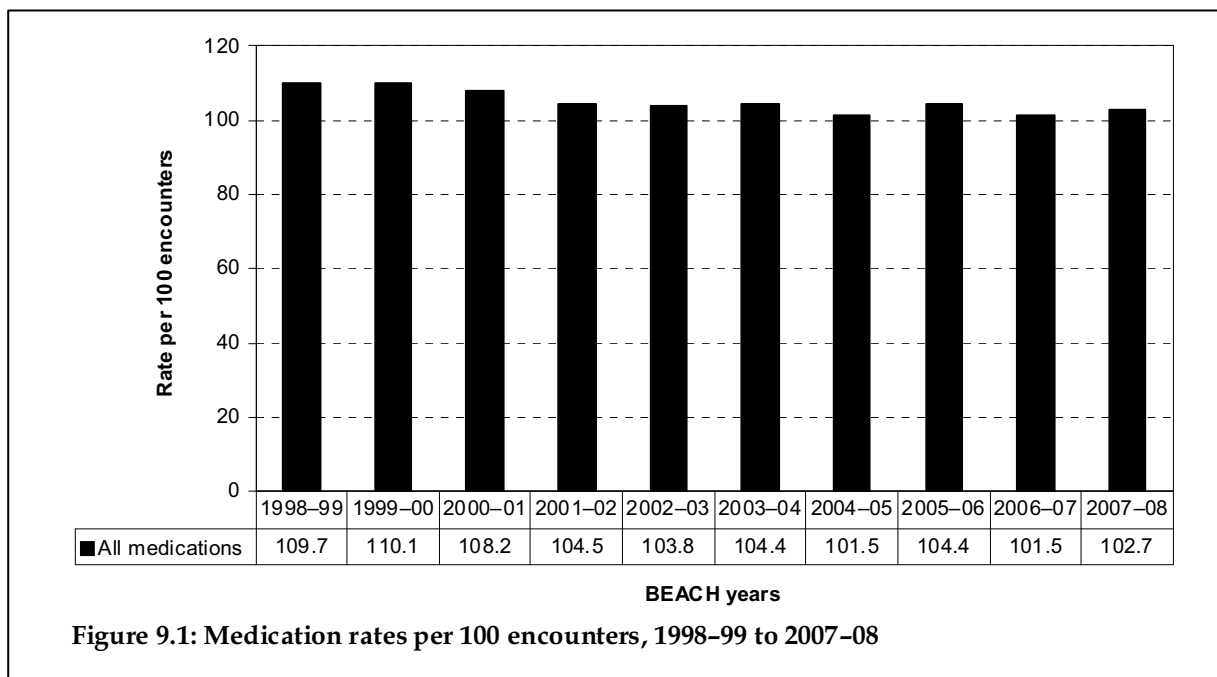# 9 Medications

This chapter includes data about the medications prescribed, advised or supplied by general practitioners from each of the 10 years of the BEACH study from 1998–99 to 2007–08. The direction and type of change from 1998–99 to 2007–08 is indicated for each result in the far right column of the tables: ↑/↓ indicates a statistically significant linear change, ↑/↓ indicates a marginally significant linear change, § indicates a non-linear significant or marginal change, and — indicates there was no change.

Significant linear changes can be extrapolated to estimate the national increase or decrease in the prescribed, supplied, or advised medication rate between 1998–99 and 2007–08. An example of an extrapolated change is given for each table. The method used to extrapolate to national change estimates is described in Chapter 2, Section 2.4.

GPs could record up to four medications for each of four problems—a maximum of 16 medications per encounter. Each medication could be recorded as prescribed (the default), supplied by the GP or recommended for over-the-counter (OTC) purchase.
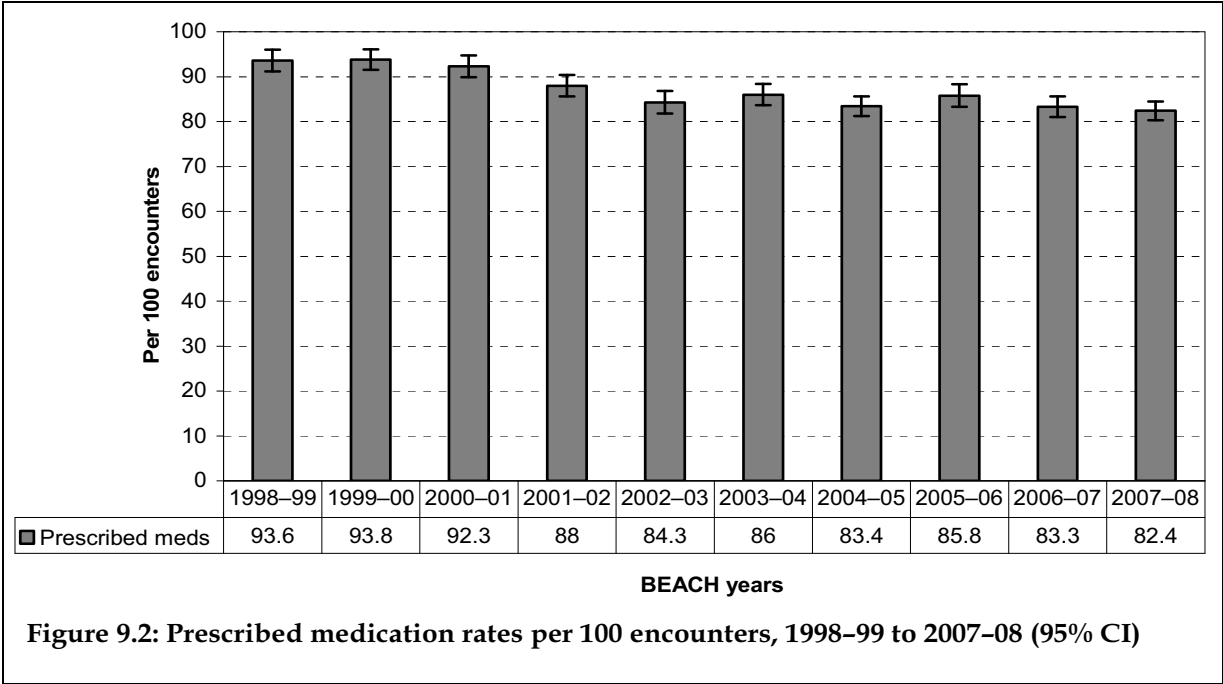
Changes in medication rates demonstrate a significant decrease from 109.7 per 100 encounters in 1998–99 to 102.7 per 100 in 2007–08 (Figure 9.1).

	1998–99	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08
All medications	109.7	110.1	108.2	104.5	103.8	104.4	101.5	104.4	101.5	102.7

BEACH years

Figure 9.1: Medication rates per 100 encounters, 1998–99 to 2007–08
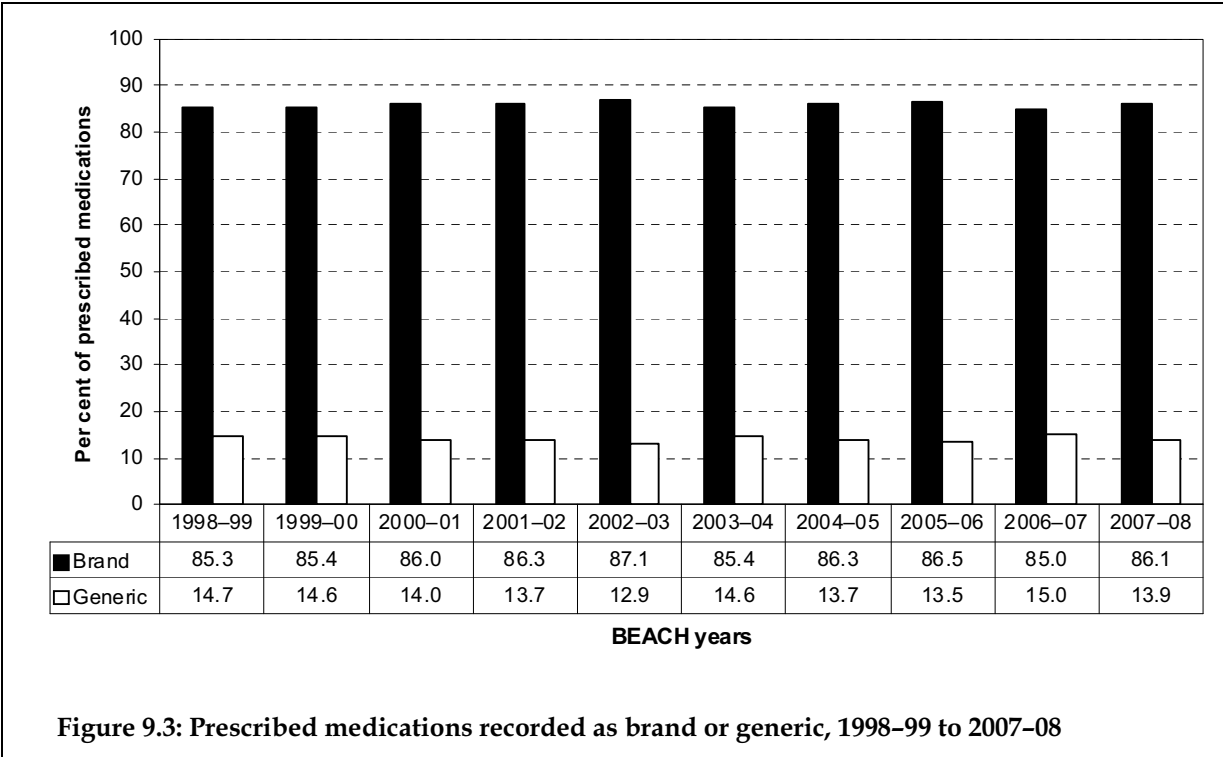
9.1 Prescribed medications

The rate of prescribed medications fell from 93.6 per 100 encounters in 1998–99 to 82.4 per 100 in 2007–08. This significant decrease in prescription rate means that 11 fewer prescriptions were being written on average for every 100 GP–patient encounters in 2007–08 than 10 years earlier (Table 9.1). The extrapolated national effect of this change is 7.9 million fewer prescriptions given by GPs in 2007–08 than in 1998–99. Figure 9.2 shows the change graphically, with the 95% confidence intervals around the estimates.

GPs recorded 86.1% of prescribed medications by brand (proprietary) name and 13.9% by their generic (non-proprietary) name in 2007–08, a similar finding to that of 1998–99 (Figure 9.3).

	1998–99	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08
Prescribed meds	93.6	93.8	92.3	88	84.3	86	83.4	85.8	83.3	82.4

BEACH years

Figure 9.2: Prescribed medication rates per 100 encounters, 1998–99 to 2007–08 (95% CI)

Note: Meds—medications; CI—confidence interval.

	1998–99	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08
Brand	85.3	85.4	86.0	86.3	87.1	85.4	86.3	86.5	85.0	86.1
Generic	14.7	14.6	14.0	13.7	12.9	14.6	13.7	13.5	15.0	13.9

BEACH years

Figure 9.3: Prescribed medications recorded as brand or generic, 1998–99 to 2007–08

Number of repeats ordered

The pattern of the number of repeat prescriptions recorded by GPs changed between 1998–99 and 2007–08. Table 9.2 shows there has been a significant increase in the proportion of prescribed medications for which no repeats were ordered (from 29.6% of prescriptions to 34.5%), and a significant move away from ordering one repeat (from 21.3% to 16.8%) or two repeats (from 18.4% to 10.2%). There was a significant increase in the proportion of prescriptions for which five repeats were recorded. In 1998–99, 25.9% of prescriptions were given five repeats whereas, in 2007–08, 33.8 of prescribed medications had five repeats. The extrapolated national effect of this change is 9.6 million more prescriptions with five repeats given by GPs in 2007–08 than in 1998–99. This trend was apparent for all prescriptions, not just those for chronic conditions (which make up about one-third of all problems and account for 40% of all prescriptions). The change in frequency of recording five repeats is presented graphically in Figure 9.4, for all medications prescribed, and for those prescribed in the management of chronic problems.

	1998–99	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08
■ Total problems	25.9	26.8	26.9	26.4	27.4	29.2	28.3	31.7	33.0	33.8
○ Chronic problems	42.6	43.6	44.9	45.2	47.0	48.9	48.2	52.4	54.3	55.8

BEACH years

Figure 9.4: Per cent of prescriptions with five repeats for total problems and for chronic problems managed, 1998–99 to 2007–08
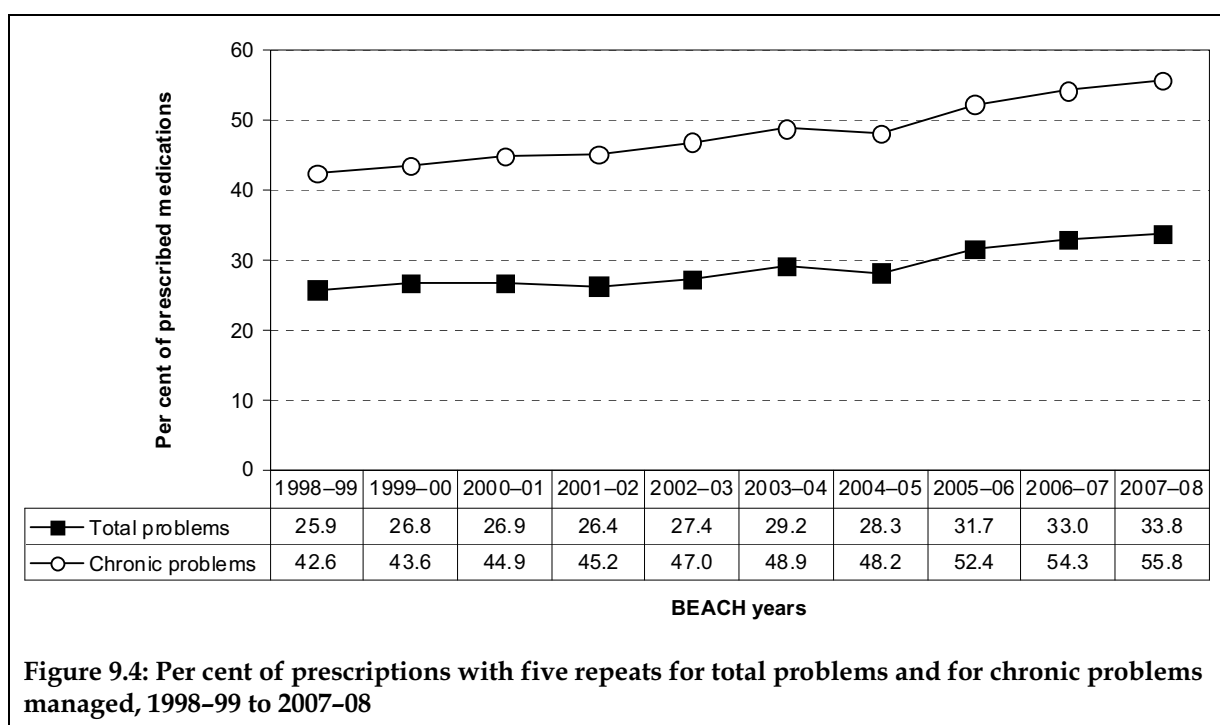
Table 9.3 shows prescribing rates of common drug groups at ATC drug group Level 2 over the 10-year period. There were approximately 2.5 million fewer antibacterials for systemic use and 2.6 million fewer drugs for obstructive airways disease prescribed in 2007–08 than in 1998–99. Conversely, there were close to 3 million more agents acting on the rennin-angiotensin system and 2 million more serum lipid reducing agents prescribed in 2007–08 than in 1998–99.

Table 9.4 shows prescribed medication rates at the generic level. Atorvastatin was prescribed 1.2 million times more often, and salbutamol was prescribed 1 million times less often in 2007–08 than in 1998–99.

Table 9.1: Rates of medications prescribed, advised for over-the-counter purchase, supplied, summary of annual results, BEACH, 1998–99 to 2007–08

Medications	Rate per 100 encounters (95% CI)										↑↓(a)
	1998–99 (n = 96,901)	1999–00 (n = 104,856)	2000–01 (n = 99,307)	2001–02 (n = 96,973)	2002–03 (n = 100,987)	2003–04 (n = 98,877)	2004–05 (n = 94,386)	2005–06 (n = 101,993)	2006–07 (n = 91,805)	2007–08 (n = 95,898)	
Prescribed	93.6 (91.2–96.1)	93.8 (91.5–96.2)	92.3 (89.9–94.7)	88.0 (85.6–90.4)	84.3 (81.8–86.9)	86.0 (83.6–88.5)	83.4 (81.2–85.5)	85.8 (83.3–88.4)	83.3 (81.0–85.5)	82.4 (80.3–84.6)	↓
GP-supplied	7.3 (6.5–8.1)	6.9 (6.0–7.7)	6.9 (5.9–7.9)	7.6 (6.6–8.7)	9.3 (8.0–10.6)	8.6 (7.6–9.6)	8.1 (7.3–8.8)	8.8 (8.2–9.5)	8.9 (8.2–9.6)	10.1 (9.5–10.7)	↑
Advised OTC	8.8 (8.1–9.5)	9.4 (8.7–10.1)	9.0 (8.2–9.7)	8.9 (8.2–9.6)	10.2 (9.3–11.1)	9.8 (9.0–10.5)	10.1 (9.2–10.9)	9.8 (9.0–10.5)	9.4 (8.7–10.1)	10.1 (9.3–10.9)	—
Total medications	109.7 (107.4–112.0)	110.1 (107.8–112.4)	108.2 (105.7–110.6)	104.5 (102.2–106.9)	103.8 (101.4–106.2)	104.4 (102.1–106.7)	101.5 (99.3–103.8)	104.4 (101.8–107.0)	101.5 (99.2–103.9)	102.7 (100.3–105.0)	↓

Table 9.2: Number of repeats for prescribed medications, summary of annual results, BEACH, 1998–99 to 2007–08

Number of repeats	Rate per 100 prescriptions (95% CI)										↑↓(a)
	1998–99 (n = 96,901)	1999–00 (n = 104,856)	2000–01 (n = 99,307)	2001–02 (n = 96,973)	2002–03 (n = 100,987)	2003–04 (n = 98,877)	2004–05 (n = 94,386)	2005–06 (n = 101,993)	2006–07 (n = 91,805)	2007–08 (n = 95,898)	
No repeats	29.6 (27.4–31.9)	31.9 (30.2–33.7)	33.0 (31.2–34.8)	38.3 (36.7–39.4)	38.0 (36.4–39.6)	37.8 (36.2–39.3)	38.5 (36.8–40.2)	35.9 (34.4–37.5)	35.2 (33.7–36.7)	34.5 (33.1–35.9)	↑
One repeat	21.3 (20.2–22.3)	20.4 (19.5–21.3)	20.3 (19.3–21.4)	17.6 (16.8–18.3)	17.7 (16.8–18.6)	16.6 (15.8–17.3)	17.6 (16.7–18.4)	17.6 (16.8–18.4)	16.4 (15.6–17.1)	16.8 (16.0–17.6)	↓
Two repeats	18.4 (17.1–19.7)	16.3 (15.2–17.4)	15.2 (14.1–16.3)	13.1 (12.3–14.0)	12.0 (11.0–13.0)	11.4 (10.6–12.1)	10.6 (10.0–11.3)	10.1 (9.4–10.9)	10.5 (9.6–11.4)	10.2 (9.3–11.1)	↓
Three or four repeats	4.5 (4.0–4.9)	4.3 (3.7–4.8)	4.4 (4.0–4.8)	4.5 (4.1–4.9)	4.8 (4.4–5.1)	5.0 (4.7–5.4)	4.8 (4.4–5.2)	4.5 (3.8–5.2)	4.8 (4.3–5.3)	4.6 (4.0–5.2)	—
Five repeats	25.9 (24.5–27.3)	26.8 (25.3–28.3)	26.9 (25.6–28.2)	26.4 (25.2–27.7)	27.4 (26.0–28.7)	29.2 (27.9–30.4)	28.3 (27.0–29.6)	31.7 (30.3–33.1)	33.0 (31.7–34.4)	33.8 (32.5–35.1)	↑
Six or more repeats	0.3 (0.2–0.4)	0.3 (0.0–0.6)	0.1 (0.1–0.2)	0.0 (0.0–0.0)	0.2 (0.1–0.2)	0.1 (0.1–0.2)	0.2 (0.1–0.3)	0.1 (0.1–0.2)	0.1 (0.1–0.2)	0.1 (0.1–0.2)	↓

(a) The direction and type of change from 1998–99 to 2007–08 is indicated for each result: ↑/↓ indicates a statistically significant change, ↗/↘ indicates a marginal change, and — indicates there was no change.

Note: Missing data removed. Rates are reported to one decimal place, a rate of 0.0 indicates that the rate is < 0.05 per 100 prescriptions. CI—confidence interval; OTC—over-the-counter medication.

Table 9.3: Distribution of prescribed medications, by ATC Level 2, summary of annual results, BEACH, 1998–99 to 2007–08

ATC Level 2	Rate per 100 encounters[a] (95% CI)										↑[b] →
	1998–99 (n = 96,901)	1999–00 (n = 104,856)	2000–01 (n = 99,307)	2001–02 (n = 96,973)	2002–03 (n = 100,987)	2003–04 (n = 98,877)	2004–05 (n = 94,386)	2005–06 (n = 101,993)	2006–07 (n = 91,805)	2007–08 (n = 95,898)	
Antibacterials for systemic use	16.8 (16.2–17.4)	15.7 (15.2–16.3)	15.4 (14.8–16.0)	13.9 (13.4–14.4)	13.3 (12.8–13.9)	13.6 (13.1–14.2)	14.0 (13.5–14.6)	14.6 (14.0–15.2)	14.0 (13.4–14.5)	13.8 (13.2–14.3)	→
Analgesics	9.5 (9.0–10.1)	9.6 (9.1–10.2)	8.9 (8.4–9.4)	8.5 (8.1–9.0)	8.5 (8.0–9.1)	8.5 (8.0–9.0)	8.3 (7.8–8.7)	9.0 (8.4–9.5)	8.6 (8.1–9.0)	8.5 (8.0–8.9)	§
Agents acting on the renin-angiotensin system	4.0 (3.8–4.3)	4.1 (3.8–4.3)	4.6 (4.3–4.8)	5.0 (4.7–5.3)	4.9 (4.6–5.2)	5.5 (5.1–5.8)	5.5 (5.2–5.8)	6.1 (5.7–6.5)	6.5 (6.1–6.9)	6.6 (6.2–7.0)	←
Psycholeptics	5.4 (5.1–5.7)	5.4 (5.0–5.7)	5.2 (4.9–5.5)	5.1 (4.8–5.5)	4.7 (4.4–5.0)	5.0 (4.7–5.4)	4.9 (4.6–5.2)	5.0 (4.6–5.3)	4.8 (4.5–5.2)	4.7 (4.4–5.0)	—
Serum lipid reducing agents	1.9 (1.8–2.1)	2.2 (2.0–2.4)	2.4 (2.2–2.5)	2.4 (2.3–2.6)	2.4 (2.2–2.6)	2.8 (2.6–3.0)	3.0 (2.8–3.2)	3.3 (3.0–3.6)	3.4 (3.2–3.7)	3.7 (3.5–4.0)	←
Drugs for obstructive airway diseases	6.3 (5.9–6.6)	6.6 (6.1–7.0)	5.6 (5.2–5.9)	5.1 (4.8–5.5)	4.6 (4.3–4.9)	4.1 (3.9–4.4)	3.8 (3.6–4.1)	3.9 (3.6–4.1)	3.8 (3.5–4.0)	3.6 (3.3–3.8)	→
Anti-inflammatory and antirheumatic products	4.5 (4.3–4.8)	4.6 (4.4–4.9)	5.8 (5.5–6.0)	5.3 (5.1–5.6)	4.8 (4.6–5.1)	4.8 (4.5–5.0)	4.5 (4.2–4.7)	3.9 (3.7–4.2)	3.6 (3.3–3.7)	3.5 (3.2–3.7)	→
Psychoanaleptics	2.9 (2.7–3.1)	3.0 (2.8–3.1)	3.1 (2.9–3.3)	3.0 (2.8–3.2)	3.0 (2.8–3.2)	3.3 (3.1–3.5)	3.1 (3.0–3.3)	3.3 (3.1–3.5)	3.5 (3.3–3.7)	3.5 (3.3–3.6)	←
Drugs for acid-related disorders	2.6 (2.5–2.8)	2.6 (2.4–2.8)	2.4 (2.2–2.5)	2.5 (2.4–2.7)	2.5 (2.4–2.7)	2.9 (2.7–3.0)	2.7 (2.5–2.9)	3.1 (2.9–3.2)	3.0 (2.8–3.2)	3.1 (2.9–3.2)	←
Sex hormones and modulators of the genital system	3.9 (3.7–4.2)	3.9 (3.7–4.1)	3.9 (3.7–4.1)	3.8 (3.6–4.0)	3.7 (3.5–3.9)	3.5 (3.3–3.7)	3.1 (2.9–3.3)	3.0 (2.8–3.2)	3.0 (2.7–3.3)	2.9 (2.7–3.0)	→
Corticosteroids, dermatological preparations	2.8 (2.7–3.0)	2.8 (2.7–3.0)	3.1 (2.8–3.3)	2.8 (2.7–3.0)	2.6 (2.5–2.8)	2.6 (2.4–2.7)	2.8 (2.6–2.9)	2.5 (2.4–2.7)	2.6 (2.4–2.8)	2.6 (2.4–2.7)	—
Drugs used in diabetes	1.8 (1.6–2.0)	1.8 (1.6–2.0)	2.0 (1.8–2.2)	2.2 (2.0–2.4)	1.9 (1.7–2.1)	2.2 (2.0–2.4)	2.1 (1.9–2.2)	2.5 (2.2–2.7)	2.4 (2.2–2.6)	2.5 (2.3–2.7)	←
Calcium channel blockers	2.7 (2.5–2.9)	2.5 (2.3–2.7)	2.3 (2.1–2.5)	2.2 (2.0–2.4)	2.0 (1.8–2.1)	2.2 (2.0–2.3)	2.0 (1.8–2.1)	2.2 (2.0–2.4)	2.1 (2.0–2.3)	2.1 (1.9–2.3)	→

(continued)

Table 9.3 (continued): Distribution of prescribed medications, by ATC Level 2, summary of annual results, BEACH, 1998–99 to 2007–08

Rate per 100 encounters[a] (95% CI)

ATC Level 2	1998–99 (n = 96,901)	1999–00 (n = 104,856)	2000–01 (n = 99,307)	2001–02 (n = 96,973)	2002–03 (n = 100,987)	2003–04 (n = 98,877)	2004–05 (n = 94,386)	2005–06 (n = 101,993)	2006–07 (n = 91,805)	2007–08 (n = 95,898)	↑/↓[b]
Beta-blocking agents	1.8 (1.7–2.0)	1.9 (1.7–2.1)	1.7 (1.5–1.8)	1.8 (1.6–1.9)	1.6 (1.5–1.7)	1.8 (1.7–2.0)	1.7 (1.5–1.8)	1.9 (1.8–2.1)	1.8 (1.7–2.0)	1.7 (1.6–1.9)	—
Ophthalmologicals	1.7 (1.6–1.8)	1.7 (1.6–1.8)	1.6 (1.5–1.7)	1.5 (1.4–1.6)	1.6 (1.5–1.7)	1.7 (1.5–1.8)	1.7 (1.6–1.8)	1.9 (1.7–2.0)	1.7 (1.6–1.8)	1.7 (1.5–1.8)	—
Vaccines	3.8 (3.3–4.2)	4.2 (3.8–4.6)	3.8 (3.5–4.2)	3.9 (3.5–4.2)	4.2 (3.8–4.5)	3.3 (3.0–3.6)	2.9 (2.6–3.3)	2.5 (2.2–2.8)	1.7 (1.5–1.9)	1.6 (1.4–1.8)	↓
Anti-thrombotic agents	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	0.8 (0.7–0.9)	1.0 (0.9–1.1)	1.1 (1.0–1.3)	1.1 (1.0–1.2)	1.3 (1.2–1.4)	1.3 (1.2–1.4)	1.3 (1.2–1.4)	1.5 (1.3–1.6)	1.5 (1.4–1.7)	↑
Diuretics	2.3 (2.1–2.4)	2.1 (1.9–2.3)	1.9 (1.7–2.0)	1.7 (1.5–1.9)	1.6 (1.4–1.7)	1.5 (1.4–1.7)	1.4 (1.2–1.5)	1.4 (1.3–1.5)	1.4 (1.3–1.5)	1.3 (1.1–1.4)	↓
Corticosteroids for systemic use	1.2 (1.1–1.3)	1.4 (1.3–1.5)	1.2 (1.1–1.3)	1.3 (1.2–1.5)	1.1 (1.0–1.2)	1.3 (1.1–1.4)	1.2 (1.1–1.4)	1.3 (1.2–1.4)	1.3 (1.2–1.5)	1.2 (1.1–1.3)	—
Nasal preparations	1.4 (1.3–1.5)	1.6 (1.5–1.7)	1.5 (1.3–1.6)	0.9 (0.8–1.0)	0.8 (0.7–0.9)	0.8 (0.7–0.9)	0.8 (0.7–0.9)	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	0.8 (0.7–0.9)	↓
Otologicals	1.0 (0.9–1.1)	0.9 (0.8–1.0)	1.0 (0.9–1.0)	0.9 (0.8–1.0)	0.8 (0.8–0.9)	0.8 (0.8–1.0)	0.9 (0.8–1.0)	0.8 (0.7–0.8)	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	0.8 (0.7–0.8)	§
Drugs used for functional gastrointestinal disorders	1.0 (0.9–1.1)	1.2 (1.1–1.3)	1.0 (0.9–1.1)	0.9 (0.8–1.0)	0.9 (0.8–1.0)	1.0 (0.9–1.0)	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	0.8 (0.7–0.9)	0.8 (0.7–0.8)	0.8 (0.7–0.9)	↓
Thyroid therapy	0.5 (0.5–0.6)	0.5 (0.4–0.5)	0.5 (0.5–0.6)	0.6 (0.5–0.6)	0.6 (0.5–0.6)	0.7 (0.6–0.7)	0.7 (0.6–0.7)	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	0.7 (0.7–0.8)	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	↑
Cardiac therapy	1.7 (1.6–1.9)	1.7 (1.5–1.8)	1.2 (1.1–1.3)	1.2 (1.1–1.3)	1.0 (0.8–1.1)	1.0 (0.9–1.2)	0.8 (0.7–0.9)	0.9 (0.8–1.0)	0.8 (0.7–0.9)	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	↓
Total prescribed medications	**93.6 (91.2–96.1)**	**93.8 (91.5–96.2)**	**92.3 (89.9–94.7)**	**88.0 (85.6–90.4)**	**84.3 (81.8–86.9)**	**86.0 (83.6–88.5)**	**83.4 (81.2–85.5)**	**85.8 (83.3–88.4)**	**83.3 (81.0–85.5)**	**82.4 (80.3–84.6)**	↓

(a) Column will not add to 100, as multiple prescriptions could be written at each encounter. Also, only the most frequent medications are included.

(b) The direction and type of change from 1998–99 to 2007–08 is indicated for each result: ↑/↓ indicates a statistically significant change, ↑/↓ indicates a marginal change, § indicates a non-linear significant change, and — indicates there was no change.

Note: CI—confidence interval.

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Table 9.4: Most frequently prescribed medications (CAPS generic), summary of annual results, BEACH, 1998–99 to 2007–08

| Generic drug | Rate per 100 encounters[a] (95% CI) | | | | | | | | | | [b] |
	1998–99 (n = 96,901)	1999–00 (n = 104,856)	2000–01 (n = 99,307)	2001–02 (n = 96,973)	2002–03 (n = 100,987)	2003–04 (n = 98,877)	2004–05 (n = 94,386)	2005–06 (n = 101,993)	2006–07 (n = 91,805)	2007–08 (n = 95,898)	
Amoxycillin	3.2 (3.0–3.5)	3.1 (2.9–3.4)	3.2 (3.0–3.5)	2.9 (2.7–3.1)	3.1 (2.8–3.4)	3.3 (3.0–3.5)	3.5 (3.2–3.8)	3.6 (3.3–3.8)	3.3 (3.0–3.6)	3.5 (3.2–3.7)	—
Paracetamol	3.9 (3.6–4.2)	4.1 (3.7–4.4)	3.9 (3.6–4.3)	3.1 (2.8–3.4)	3.1 (2.8–3.5)	2.9 (2.5–3.2)	2.7 (2.4–2.9)	3.0 (2.7–3.3)	2.6 (2.3–2.9)	2.5 (2.2–2.7)	→
Cephalexin	2.1 (1.9–2.3)	2.1 (1.9–2.2)	2.2 (2.0–2.4)	2.0 (1.9–2.2)	1.9 (1.8–2.0)	2.0 (1.9–2.2)	2.4 (2.2–2.6)	2.5 (2.3–2.7)	2.3 (2.2–2.5)	2.4 (2.3–2.6)	§
Paracetamol–codeine	2.7 (2.4–2.9)	2.4 (2.2–2.6)	2.2 (2.0–2.4)	2.2 (2.1–2.4)	2.0 (1.8–2.2)	2.1 (1.9–2.3)	2.0 (1.8–2.2)	2.0 (1.8–2.2)	2.0 (1.8–2.1)	1.9 (1.7–2.1)	→
Atorvastatin	0.6 (0.5–0.6)	0.8 (0.7–0.9)	0.9 (0.8–1.0)	1.0 (0.9–1.1)	1.0 (1.0–1.2)	1.2 (1.1–1.3)	1.4 (1.3–1.5)	1.6 (1.4–1.8)	1.7 (1.5–1.8)	1.7 (1.6–1.9)	←
Amoxycillin–potassium clavulanate	1.8 (1.6–2.0)	1.6 (1.5–1.8)	1.7 (1.5–1.9)	1.6 (1.4–1.7)	1.6 (1.4–1.7)	1.7 (1.5–1.8)	1.7 (1.5–1.8)	1.7 (1.5–1.8)	1.7 (1.5–1.9)	1.7 (1.6–1.9)	—
Salbutamol	2.4 (2.2–2.6)	2.4 (2.2–2.6)	2.1 (1.9–2.2)	2.0 (1.8–2.1)	1.7 (1.6–1.9)	1.5 (1.4–1.6)	1.4 (1.3–1.5)	1.5 (1.4–1.6)	1.4 (1.3–1.5)	1.3 (1.2–1.5)	→
Roxithromycin	1.8 (1.6–2.0)	1.8 (1.7–2.0)	1.6 (1.4–1.8)	1.4 (1.3–1.5)	1.3 (1.2–1.5)	1.1 (1.0–1.2)	1.1 (1.0–1.3)	1.5 (1.3–1.7)	1.4 (1.2–1.5)	1.2 (1.1–1.4)	§
Metformin	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	0.8 (0.7–0.9)	0.9 (0.8–1.0)	0.8 (0.8–0.9)	1.0 (0.9–1.1)	1.0 (0.9–1.0)	1.2 (1.0–1.3)	1.1 (1.0–1.3)	1.2 (1.1–1.3)	←
Perindopril	0.6 (0.5–0.6)	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	0.6 (0.6–0.7)	0.7 (0.7–0.8)	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	0.7 (0.7–0.8)	0.8 (0.7–0.9)	1.0 (0.9–1.1)	1.2 (1.1–1.3)	1.2 (1.1–1.3)	←
Esomeprazole	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.3 (0.2–0.3)	0.6 (0.5–0.7)	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	0.9 (0.8–1.0)	1.0 (0.9–1.1)	1.2 (1.1–1.3)	←
Diazepam	1.1 (1.0–1.2)	1.1 (1.0–1.2)	1.0 (0.9–1.2)	1.0 (0.9–1.2)	1.0 (0.9–1.1)	1.1 (1.0–1.2)	1.1 (1.0–1.2)	1.1 (1.0–1.2)	1.1 (1.0–1.2)	1.1 (1.0–1.2)	—
Temazepam	1.4 (1.3–1.6)	1.4 (1.3–1.6)	1.4 (1.3–1.6)	1.3 (1.2–1.5)	1.2 (1.1–1.3)	1.2 (1.1–1.3)	1.1 (1.0–1.2)	1.1 (1.0–1.2)	1.1 (1.0–1.2)	1.1 (1.0–1.2)	→

(continued)

Table 9.4 (continued): Most frequently prescribed medications (CAPS generic), summary of annual results, BEACH, 1998–99 to 2007–08

	Rate per 100 encounters[a] (95% CI)										
Generic drug	1998–99 (*n* = 96,901)	1999–00 (*n* = 104,856)	2000–01 (*n* = 99,307)	2001–02 (*n* = 96,973)	2002–03 (*n* = 100,987)	2003–04 (*n* = 98,877)	2004–05 (*n* = 94,386)	2005–06 (*n* = 101,993)	2006–07 (*n* = 91,805)	2007–08 (*n* = 95,898)	[b]
Warfarin sodium	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	0.8 (0.7–0.9)	0.9 (0.8–1.0)	0.8 (0.7–0.9)	0.9 (0.8–1.0)	0.9 (0.8–1.1)	0.9 (0.8–1.0)	1.0 (0.9–1.2)	1.1 (0.9–1.2)	←
Oxycodone	0.2 (0.2–0.2)	0.2 (0.2–0.3)	0.3 (0.2–0.3)	0.3 (0.3–0.4)	0.3 (0.3–0.4)	0.4 (0.4–0.5)	0.5 (0.5–0.6)	0.8 (0.7–0.9)	0.9 (0.8–1.0)	1.0 (0.9–1.2)	←
Levonorgestrel–ethinyloestradiol	1.2 (1.1–1.4)	1.3 (1.2–1.4)	1.2 (1.1–1.3)	1.2 (1.1–1.3)	1.1 (1.0–1.2)	1.2 (1.1–1.3)	1.0 (0.9–1.1)	1.0 (0.9–1.1)	1.0 (0.9–1.1)	1.0 (0.9–1.1)	→
Irbesartan	0.5 (0.5–0.6)	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	0.8 (0.7–0.9)	0.8 (0.7–0.9)	0.8 (0.7–0.9)	0.9 (0.8–1.0)	0.9 (0.8–1.0)	1.1 (1.0–1.2)	1.0 (0.9–1.1)	1.0 (0.9–1.1)	←
Meloxicam	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.0† (0.0–0.1)	0.3 (0.3–0.4)	0.4 (0.3–0.5)	0.8 (0.7–0.9)	0.9 (0.8–1.0)	0.7 (0.7–0.8)	0.9 (0.8–1.1)	←
Chloramphenicol eye	0.9 (0.8–1.0)	0.9 (0.8–1.0)	0.9 (0.8–0.9)	0.8 (0.7–0.9)	0.9 (0.8–1.0)	0.9 (0.8–1.0)	0.9 (0.9–1.0)	1.1 (1.0–1.1)	1.0 (0.9–1.1)	0.9 (0.9–1.0)	—
Simvastatin	0.9 (0.8–1.0)	0.9 (0.8–1.0)	0.9 (0.8–1.0)	0.9 (0.8–1.0)	0.9 (0.8–1.0)	1.0 (1.0–1.1)	1.1 (1.0–1.2)	1.2 (1.0–1.3)	1.1 (1.0–1.2)	0.9 (0.8–1.0)	←
Atenolol	1.0 (0.9–1.1)	1.0 (0.9–1.2)	0.9 (0.8–1.0)	1.0 (0.9–1.1)	0.8 (0.7–0.9)	1.0 (0.9–1.1)	0.9 (0.8–1.0)	1.0 (0.9–1.1)	1.0 (0.9–1.1)	0.9 (0.8–1.0)	—
Tramadol	0.0† (0.0–0.0)	0.1 (0.0–1.1)	0.2 (0.1–0.2)	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	1.0 (0.9–1.1)	0.9 (0.9–1.1)	1.0 (0.9–1.1)	1.0 (0.9–1.0)	0.9 (0.8–1.1)	0.9 (0.8–0.9)	←
Fluticasone–salmeterol	N/A	N/A	0.2 (0.2–0.3)	0.6 (0.5–0.7)	0.9 (0.8–1.0)	0.8 (0.7–0.9)	0.9 (0.8–1.0)	0.9 (0.8–1.0)	0.9 (0.8–0.9)	0.8 (0.7–0.9)	←
Ramipril	0.3 (0.3–0.4)	0.3 (0.3–0.4)	0.4 (0.4–0.5)	0.6 (0.5–0.7)	0.7 (0.6–0.7)	0.7 (0.7–0.8)	0.8 (0.7–0.9)	0.8 (0.7–0.9)	0.8 (0.7–0.9)	0.8 (0.7–0.9)	←
Mometasone	0.6 (0.5–0.7)	0.6 (0.6–0.7)	0.7 (0.6–0.7)	0.8 (0.7–0.9)	0.6 (0.6–0.7)	0.5 (0.5–0.6)	0.8 (0.7–0.9)	0.7 (0.6–0.7)	0.7 (0.6–0.7)	0.8 (0.7–0.8)	←
Irbesartan–hydrochlorothiazide	N/A	N/A	0.3 (0.2–0.4)	0.6 (0.5–0.6)	0.6 (0.5–0.7)	0.7 (0.7–0.8)	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	0.8 (0.7–0.8)	0.8 (0.7–0.9)	←

(continued)

Table 9.4 (continued): Most frequently prescribed medications (CAPS generic), summary of annual results, BEACH, 1998–99 to 2007–08

| Generic drug | Rate per 100 encounters[a] (95% CI) | | | | | | | | | | [b] |
	1998–99 (n = 96,901)	1999–00 (n = 104,856)	2000–01 (n = 99,307)	2001–02 (n = 96,973)	2002–03 (n = 100,987)	2003–04 (n = 98,877)	2004–05 (n = 94,386)	2005–06 (n = 101,993)	2006–07 (n = 91,805)	2007–08 (n = 95,898)	
Doxycycline hydrochloride	1.2 (1.1–1.3)	0.9 (0.8–1.0)	0.9 (0.8–1.0)	0.8 (0.7–0.9)	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	0.7 (0.7–0.8)	0.8 (0.7–0.9)	0.7 (0.7–0.9)	0.7 (0.7–0.8)	→
Amlodipine	0.8 (0.7–0.8)	0.8 (0.7–0.9)	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	0.7 (0.6–0.7)	0.7 (0.6–0.7)	0.6 (0.6–0.7)	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	0.8 (0.7–0.8)	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	—
Betamethasone topical	0.9 (0.9–1.0)	0.9 (0.8–0.9)	1.0 (0.9–1.2)	0.9 (0.8–1.0)	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	0.8 (0.8–0.9)	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	—
Diclofenac sodium systemic	1.3 (1.2–1.4)	1.3 (1.1–1.4)	1.2 (1.0–1.3)	0.9 (0.8–1.0)	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	0.8 (0.7–0.9)	1.0 (0.8–1.1)	1.0 (0.9–1.1)	0.8 (0.7–0.9)	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	§
Thyroxine	0.5 (0.4–0.5)	0.5 (0.4–0.5)	0.5 (0.4–0.6)	0.5 (0.5–0.6)	0.6 (0.5–0.6)	0.6 (0.5–0.7)	0.6 (0.5–0.7)	0.6 (0.6–0.7)	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	0.7 (0.6–0.7)	←
Aspirin	0.7 (0.7–0.8)	0.8 (0.8–1.0)	0.8 (0.7–0.9)	0.7 (0.6–0.7)	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	0.7 (0.6–0.7)	0.7 (0.7–0.8)	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	0.7 (0.6–0.7)	—
Candesartan cilexetil	0.0[ᵗ] (0.0–0.0)	0.1 (0.1–0.1)	0.2 (0.2–0.2)	0.2 (0.2–0.3)	0.3 (0.2–0.3)	0.3 (0.2–0.3)	0.3 (0.3–0.4)	0.4 (0.4–0.5)	0.6 (0.5–0.7)	0.6 (0.5–0.7)	←
Sertraline	0.6 (0.5–0.7)	0.8 (0.7–0.9)	0.8 (0.7–0.8)	0.6 (0.6–0.7)	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	0.7 (0.6–0.7)	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	0.7 (0.6–0.7)	0.6 (0.5–0.7)	—
Frusemide	1.0 (0.9–1.1)	0.8 (0.7–0.9)	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	0.6 (0.5–0.7)	0.6 (0.6–0.7)	0.6 (0.6–0.7)	0.6 (0.5–0.7)	→
Cefaclor monohydrate	2.2 (1.9–2.4)	1.6 (1.3–2.0)	1.6 (1.4–1.8)	1.1 (1.0–1.2)	1.0 (0.9–1.2)	0.8 (0.7–0.9)	0.8 (0.7–1.0)	0.8 (0.6–1.0)	0.8 (0.6–0.9)	0.6 (0.5–0.7)	→
Generic medication frequently prescribed in previous years											
Erythromycin	1.1 (0.9–1.2)	0.7 (0.7–0.8)	0.8 (0.7–0.9)	0.6 (0.5–0.6)	0.5 (0.4–0.6)	0.6 (0.5–0.6)	0.5 (0.4–0.6)	0.5 (0.4–0.6)	0.5 (0.4–0.6)	0.5 (0.4–0.5)	→
Influenza virus vaccine	1.7 (1.4–2.1)	1.5 (1.3–1.7)	1.5 (1.3–1.8)	1.5 (1.2–1.7)	1.4 (1.2–1.7)	1.2 (1.0–1.4)	0.9 (0.7–1.1)	1.1 (0.9–1.3)	0.6 (0.5–0.8)	0.4 (0.3–0.5)	→
Naproxen systemic	0.9 (0.8–1.0)	0.8 (0.7–0.9)	0.6 (0.5–0.6)	0.4 (0.4–0.5)	0.3 (0.3–0.4)	0.3 (0.3–0.4)	0.3 (0.2–0.4)	0.4 (0.3–0.4)	0.3 (0.3–0.4)	0.3 (0.2–0.4)	→

(continued)

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Table 9.4 (continued): Most frequently prescribed medications (CAPS generic), summary of annual results, BEACH, 1998–99 to 2007–08

Generic drug	Rate per 100 encounters[a] (95% CI)										↑/↓[b]
	1998–99 (n = 96,901)	1999–00 (n = 104,856)	2000–01 (n = 99,307)	2001–02 (n = 96,973)	2002–03 (n = 100,987)	2003–04 (n = 98,877)	2004–05 (n = 94,386)	2005–06 (n = 101,993)	2006–07 (n = 91,805)	2007–08 (n = 95,898)	
Budesonide topical nasal	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	0.9 (0.8–1.0)	0.9 (0.8–1.0)	0.5 (0.4–0.5)	0.3 (0.3–0.4)	0.4 (0.3–0.4)	0.3 (0.2–0.4)	0.2 (0.2–0.3)	0.3 (0.2–0.3)	0.3 (0.2–0.3)	↓
Ranitidine	1.0 (0.9–1.1)	1.0 (0.9–1.1)	1.0 (0.9–1.1)	0.6 (0.6–0.7)	0.5 (0.4–0.5)	0.4 (0.3–0.4)	0.3 (0.2–0.3)	0.3 (0.2–0.3)	0.2 (0.2–0.3)	0.2 (0.1–0.2)	↓
Enalapril maleate	0.7 (0.7–0.8)	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	0.5 (0.5–0.6)	0.4 (0.3–0.4)	0.3 (0.3–0.4)	0.3 (0.2–0.3)	0.2 (0.2–0.3)	0.2 (0.2–0.2)	0.2 (0.1–0.2)	0.1 (0.1–0.2)	↓
Budesonide	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	0.7 (0.7–0.8)	0.6 (0.5–0.6)	0.5 (0.4–0.5)	0.3 (0.3–0.4)	0.3 (0.2–0.3)	0.2 (0.1–0.2)	0.1 (0.1–0.2)	0.1 (0.1–0.2)	0.1 (0.1–0.1)	↓
Beclomethasone inhaled	0.7 (0.6–0.8)	0.6 (0.5–0.7)	0.4 (0.3–0.5)	0.3 (0.3–0.4)	0.2 (0.1–0.2)	0.1 (0.1–0.1)	0.1 (0.1–0.1)	0.1 (0.1–0.1)	0.1 (0.0–0.1)	0.0[Ŧ] (0.0–0.0)	↓
Rofecoxib	N/A	N/A	0.1 (0.1–0.2)	1.2 (1.0–1.4)	1.2 (1.0–1.3)	1.0 (0.9–1.1)	0.3 (0.2–0.3)	N/A	N/A	N/A	§
Total prescribed medications	93.6 (91.2–96.1)	93.8 (91.5–96.2)	92.3 (89.9–94.7)	88.0 (85.6–90.4)	84.3 (81.8–86.9)	86.0 (83.6–88.5)	83.4 (81.2–85.5)	85.8 (83.3–88.4)	83.3 (81.0–85.5)	82.4 (80.3–84.6)	↓

(a) Column will not add to 100, as multiple prescriptions could be written at each encounter.

(b) The direction and type of change from 1998–99 to 2007–08 is indicated for each result: ↑/↓ indicates a statistically significant change, ↑/↓ indicates a marginal change, § indicates a non-linear significant change, and — indicates there was no change.

Ŧ Rates are reported to one decimal place. This indicates that the rate is < 0.05 per 100 encounters.
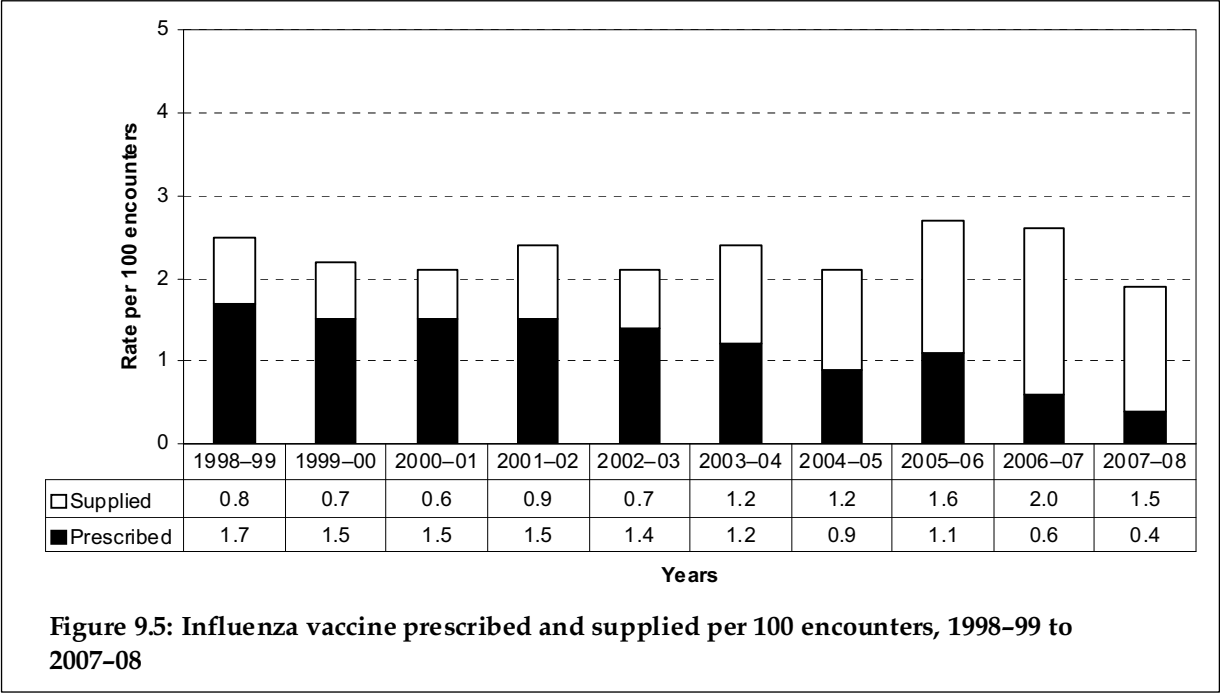
Note: CI—confidence interval; N/A—not applicable (that is, drug was not available at that time).

9.2 Medications supplied by GPs

The rate of medications supplied by GPs rose significantly, from 7.3 per 100 encounters in 1998–99 to 10.1 in 2007–08. The extrapolated national effect of this change is 3.3 million more medications supplied directly to the patient by GPs in 2007–08 than in 1998–99 (Table 9.5).

Table 9.5 shows rates of generic medications most frequently supplied by GPs between 1998–99 and 2007–08. The supply of vitamin B12 rose significantly from 0.1 per 100 encounters in 1998–99 to 0.4 in 2007–08. The extrapolated national effect of this change is that vitamin B12 was supplied 330,000 more times in 2007–08 than in 1998–99.

The move away from prescribing towards GP supply of the influenza vaccine was evident in the significant increase in its supply by GPs that coincided with the significant decrease in its prescribing rates (Figure 9.5). The extrapolated national effect of this change is 780,000 more influenza vaccines supplied by GPs in 2007–08 than in 1998–99 and 1.3 million fewer prescriptions for influenza vaccine over the same period. It is interesting also to note the marginal decrease in overall influenza vaccine prescription/supply rates between 2006–07 (2.6 per 100 encounters) and 2007–08 (1.9 per 100).

	1998–99	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08
☐ Supplied	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.9	0.7	1.2	1.2	1.6	2.0	1.5
■ Prescribed	1.7	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.2	0.9	1.1	0.6	0.4

Years

Figure 9.5: Influenza vaccine prescribed and supplied per 100 encounters, 1998–99 to 2007–08

9.3 Medications advised for over-the-counter purchase

The overall rate of advised OTC medications showed no significant change over the period (Table 9.1). Table 9.6 shows the most commonly advised OTC medications at the generic level. The rate of advised ibuprofen rose significantly from 0.2 per 100 encounters in 1998–99 to 0.6 in 2007–08. The extrapolated national effect of this change is that ibuprofen was advised by GPs 440,000 more times in 2007–08 than in 1998–99.

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Table 9.5: Medications most frequently supplied by GPs, summary of annual results, BEACH, 1998–99 to 2007–08

Generic medication	Rate per 100 encounters (95% CI)										(a)
	1998–99 (n = 96,901)	1999–00 (n = 104,856)	2000–01 (n = 99,307)	2001–02 (n = 96,973)	2002–03 (n = 100,987)	2003–04 (n = 98,877)	2004–05 (n = 94,386)	2005–06 (n = 101,993)	2006–07 (n = 91,805)	2007–08 (n = 95,898)	↑/↓
Influenza virus vaccine	0.8 (0.6–1.1)	0.7 (0.5–0.9)	0.6 (0.4–0.7)	0.9 (0.7–1.1)	0.7 (0.5–0.9)	1.2 (0.9–1.4)	1.2 (0.9–1.6)	1.6 (1.3–1.8)	2.0 (1.6–2.3)	1.5 (1.2–1.7)	↑
Papillomavirus vaccine	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.0ᵮ	1.0 (0.9–1.1)	↑
Pneumococcal vaccine	0.1 (0.1–0.2)	0.1 (0.0–0.1)	0.0ᵮ (0.0–0.0)	0.0ᵮ (0.0–0.1)	0.1 (0.0–0.1)	0.1 (0.1–0.1)	0.4 (0.3–0.5)	0.9 (0.8–1.0)	0.6 (0.6–0.7)	0.6 (0.5–0.7)	§
Vitamin B12 (cobalamin)	0.1 (0.1–0.1)	0.1 (0.0–0.1)	0.1 (0.0–0.1)	0.0ᵮ (0.0–0.1)	0.1 (0.0–0.1)	0.1 (0.1–0.2)	0.2 (0.2–0.2)	0.2 (0.2–0.3)	0.3 (0.2–0.3)	0.4 (0.3–0.4)	↑
Mumps–measles–rubella vaccine	0.2 (0.2–0.3)	0.2 (0.1–0.2)	0.2 (0.1–0.2)	0.2 (0.1–0.2)	0.1 (0.1–0.2)	0.2 (0.1–0.2)	0.3 (0.2–0.3)	0.3 (0.3–0.4)	0.3 (0.3–0.4)	0.3 (0.3–0.4)	↑
Haemophilus B vaccine	0.3 (0.2–0.4)	0.3 (0.3–0.4)	0.2 (0.2–0.3)	0.2 (0.1–0.2)	0.2 (0.1–0.2)	0.2 (0.1–0.2)	0.2 (0.2–0.2)	0.3 (0.2–0.4)	0.2 (0.2–0.2)	0.3 (0.2–0.3)	—
Polio vaccine oral sabin/injection	0.4 (0.3–0.5)	0.4 (0.3–0.5)	0.3 (0.2–0.3)	0.3 (0.3–0.4)	0.3 (0.2–0.4)	0.3 (0.3–0.4)	0.4 (0.4–0.5)	0.5 (0.4–0.5)	0.2 (0.2–0.3)	0.2 (0.2–0.3)	↓
ADT–CDT vaccine (diphtheria–tetanus)	0.2 (0.2–0.3)	0.3 (0.2–0.3)	0.2 (0.1–0.2)	0.1 (0.1–0.2)	0.1 (0.1–0.2)	0.1 (0.1–0.2)	0.2 (0.2–0.2)	0.2 (0.2–0.3)	0.2 (0.2–0.3)	0.2 (0.2–0.3)	—
Diphtheria–pertussis–tetanus–polio vaccine	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.0ᵮ (0.0–0.0)	0.1 (0.0–0.1)	0.2 (0.1–0.2)	0.2 (0.1–0.2)	↑
Chicken pox (varicella zoster) vaccine	0.0ᵮ (0.0–0.0)	0.0ᵮ (0.0–0.0)	0.0ᵮ (0.0–0.0)	0.0ᵮ (0.0–0.0)	0.0ᵮ (0.0–0.0)	0.0ᵮ (0.0–0.0)	0.1 (0.0–0.7)	0.1 (0.1–0.1)	0.1 (0.1–0.2)	0.2 (0.1–0.2)	↑
Meningitis vaccine	0.0ᵮ (0.0–0.0)	0.0ᵮ (0.0–0.0)	0.0ᵮ (0.0–0.0)	0.0ᵮ (0.0–0.0)	0.2 (0.1–0.2)	0.3 (0.2–0.3)	0.2 (0.1–0.2)	0.2 (0.1–0.2)	0.2 (0.1–0.2)	0.2 (0.1–0.2)	↑
Total GP-supplied medications	**7.3 (6.5–8.1)**	**6.9 (6.0–7.7)**	**6.9 (5.9–7.9)**	**7.6 (6.6–8.7)**	**9.3 (8.0–10.6)**	**8.6 (7.6–9.6)**	**8.1 (7.3–8.8)**	**8.8 (8.2–9.5)**	**8.9 (8.2–9.6)**	**10.1 (9.5–10.7)**	**↑**

(a) The direction and type of change from 1998–99 to 2007–08 is indicated for each result: ↑/↓ indicates a statistically significant change, ↑/↓ indicates a non-linear significant change, § indicates a marginal change, and — indicates there was no change.

ᵮ Rates are reported to one decimal place. This indicates that the rate is < 0.05 per 100 encounters.

Note: CI—confidence interval. N/A—not applicable (that is, drug was not available at that time).

Table 9.6: Most frequently advised over-the-counter medications, summary of annual results, BEACH, 1998–99 to 2007–08

Generic medication	Rate per 100 encounters (95% CI)										
	1998–99 (n = 96,901)	1999–00 (n = 104,856)	2000–01 (n = 99,307)	2001–02 (n = 96,973)	2002–03 (n = 100,987)	2003–04 (n = 98,877)	2004–05 (n = 94,386)	2005–06 (n = 101,993)	2006–07 (n = 91,805)	2007–08 (n = 95,898)	(a)
Paracetamol	2.4 (2.1–2.7)	2.5 (2.2–2.8)	2.4 (2.0–2.7)	2.1 (1.9–2.4)	2.6 (2.3–2.9)	2.5 (2.1–2.8)	2.3 (2.0–2.6)	2.5 (2.2–2.8)	2.4 (2.1–2.7)	2.6 (2.2–2.9)	—
Ibuprofen	0.2 (0.2–0.3)	0.3 (0.2–0.4)	0.5 (0.4–0.6)	0.5 (0.4–0.6)	0.7 (0.5–0.8)	0.6 (0.5–0.7)	0.5 (0.4–0.6)	0.6 (0.5–0.7)	0.5 (0.5–0.6)	0.6 (0.5–0.7)	←
Loratadine	0.2 (0.2–0.2)	0.3 (0.2–0.3)	0.2 (0.2–0.3)	0.3 (0.2–0.3)	0.3 (0.2–0.3)	0.2 (0.2–0.3)	0.2 (0.2–0.3)	0.2 (0.1–0.2)	0.2 (0.1–0.2)	0.2 (0.2–0.3)	—
Diclofenac diethyl topical	0.2 (0.1–0.2)	0.2 (0.2–0.3)	0.2 (0.1–0.2)	0.2 (0.2–0.2)	0.2 (0.2–0.3)	0.2 (0.2–0.3)	0.2 (0.2–0.3)	0.2 (0.1–0.2)	0.2 (0.1–0.2)	0.2 (0.1–0.2)	—
Sodium chloride topical nasal	0.0Ŧ (0.0–0.0)	0.0Ŧ (0.0–0.0)	0.1 (0.0–0.1)	0.1 (0.1–0.1)	0.1 (0.1–0.2)	0.1 (0.1–0.1)	0.1 (0.1–0.2)	0.2 (0.1–0.2)	0.2 (0.1–0.2)	0.2 (0.1–0.2)	←
Sodium/potassium/citric/ glucose	0.1 (0.1–0.1)	0.1 (0.1–0.2)	0.1 (0.1–0.2)	0.1 (0.1–0.2)	0.1 (0.1–0.2)	0.1 (0.1–0.2)	0.1 (0.1–0.2)	0.1 (0.1–0.2)	0.2 (0.1–0.2)	0.2 (0.1–0.2)	—
Fexofenadine	0.1 (0.0–0.5)	0.1 (0.0–0.9)	0.1 (0.0–0.5)	0.1 (0.0–0.5)	0.1 (0.0–0.4)	0.1 (0.0–0.5)	0.2 (0.0–0.5)	0.1 (0.1–0.1)	0.1 (0.1–0.1)	0.1 (0.1–0.2)	—
Aspirin	0.2 (0.1–0.2)	0.2 (0.1–0.2)	0.1 (0.1–0.2)	0.2 (0.1–0.2)	0.2 (0.1–0.2)	0.2 (0.1–0.2)	0.1 (0.1–0.2)	0.1 (0.1–0.2)	0.2 (0.1–0.2)	0.1 (0.1–0.2)	—
Cetirizine	0.0Ŧ (0.0–0.0)	0.0Ŧ (0.0–0.0)	0.2 (0.1–0.2)	0.1 (0.1–0.2)	0.1 (0.1–0.1)	0.1 (0.1–0.1)	0.1 (0.1–0.2)	0.1 (0.1–0.1)	0.1 (0.1–0.2)	0.1 (0.1–0.2)	←
Paracetamol–codeine	0.2 (0.2–0.3)	0.3 (0.2–0.4)	0.2 (0.1–0.2)	0.2 (0.1–0.2)	0.1 (0.1–0.2)	0.1 (0.1–0.2)	0.1 (0.1–0.2)	0.1 (0.1–0.2)	0.1 (0.1–0.2)	0.1 (0.1–0.2)	→
Total advised medications	**8.8 (8.1–9.5)**	**9.4 (8.7–10.1)**	**9.0 (8.2–9.7)**	**8.9 (8.2–9.6)**	**10.2 (9.3–11.1)**	**9.8 (9.0–10.5)**	**10.1 (9.2–10.9)**	**9.8 (9.0–10.5)**	**9.4 (8.7–10.1)**	**10.1 (9.3–10.9)**	**—**

(a) The direction and type of change from 1998–99 to 2007–08 is indicated for each result: ↑/↓ indicates a statistically significant change, ↑/↓ indicates a marginal change, and — indicates there was no change.

Ŧ Rates are reported to one decimal place. This indicates that the rate is < 0.05 per 100 encounters.

Note: CI—confidence interval.