



Medicines & Healthcare products  
Regulatory Agency



**MHRA**  
10 South Colonnade  
Canary Wharf  
London  
E14 4PU  
United Kingdom

[www.gov.uk/mhra](http://www.gov.uk/mhra)

**8<sup>th</sup> September 2023**

Dear 

**FOI 23/455**

Thank you for your email dated 29<sup>th</sup> June 2023, where you requested information held by the MHRA relating to the prescribing of antiepileptic medications in the UK. Apologies for the delay in responding to you on this request.

Specifically you asked:

- What is the number of prescriptions given to men in the UK for each year for Valproate from 2015 – 2022
- What is the number of prescriptions given to women in the UK for each year for Topiramate from 2015 – 2022
- What is the number of prescriptions given to men in the UK for each year for Topiramate from 2015 – 2022
- What is the number of prescriptions given to women in the UK for each year for Levetiracetam in 2022
- What is the number of prescriptions given to women in the UK for each year for Lamotrigine in 2022

MHRA do not hold the specific data that you have requested. The numbers of prescriptions dispensed in England at community pharmacies are held by NHS Business Services Authority (NHS BSA) <https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/contact-us/freedom-information>. Similar data are held within the devolved administrations, specifically by Public Health Scotland <https://www.isdscotland.org/freedom-of-information.asp>, the Welsh Government <https://www.gov.wales/requesting-information-welsh-government-htm>, and Health and Social Care Northern Ireland <https://hscbusiness.hscni.net/2059.htm>.



However, you may find some data that are already publicly available helpful. The NHS Digital (now NHS England) Medicines in Pregnancy Registry includes data on prescribing for multiple antiepileptics to females aged 0-54 in England. The latest data include prescriptions from the period April 2018 to September 2022 <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/mi-medicines-and-pregnancy-registry>. These data will be updated at the end of September to include prescribing up to end March 2023. The dashboards available (<https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/mi-medicines-and-pregnancy-registry/antiepileptic-use-in-females-aged-0-to-54-in-england-april-2018-to-september-2022>) can be used to compare prescribing for valproate, topiramate, levetiracetam, and lamotrigine. Some relevant data have been extracted below.

**Table 1: Number of females aged 0-54 dispensed an antiepileptic in the period April 2018 – September 2022 in community settings in England (date from NHS BSA)**

Drug substance	Number of females prescribed
Valproate	51,548
Topiramate	119,456
Levetiracetam	73,601
Lamotrigine	118,300

The published dashboards can also be used to explore changes in the numbers of prescriptions dispensed over time and show a reduction in the numbers of women prescribed valproate (38,508 April to June 2018 vs. 24,957 July to September 2022, -35.2%) and increases in those prescribed topiramate (37,016 vs. 44,241, +19.5%), levetiracetam (36,675 vs. 45,686, +24.6%), and lamotrigine (59,670 vs. 76,313, +27.9%).

Further, NHS BSA have provided MHRA with some data on the number of male patients aged 0-54 years recently prescribed valproate. These data show that 5,534 males aged 0-12 years and 62,235 males aged 13-54 years were dispensed a prescription for valproate in a community setting in England in the period December 2022 to February 2023 inclusive.

We hope you find this information helpful.

Yours sincerely,

FOI Team,  
Safety and Surveillance Group

The MHRA information supplied in response to your request is subject to Crown copyright. The FOIA only entitles you to access to MHRA information.

For information on the reproduction or re-use of MHRA information, please visit <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reproduce-or-re-use-mhra-information/reproduce-or-re-use-mhra-information>

If you have a query about this email, please contact us. If you are unhappy with our decision, you may ask for it to be reviewed. That review will be undertaken by a senior member of the Agency who has not previously been involved in your request. If you wish to pursue that option please write to



Medicines & Healthcare products  
Regulatory Agency



the Communications Directorate, Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency, (via this email address). After that, if you remain dissatisfied, you may ask the Information Commissioner at:

The Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF

#### Copyright notice

The information supplied in response to your request is the copyright of MHRA and/or a third party or parties, and has been supplied for your personal use only. You may not sell, resell or otherwise use any information provided without prior agreement from the copyright holder.