

Beyond Pills Campaign – key stats & facts

- 10% of prescribed drugs – i.e. around 110 million items – are unnecessary, inappropriate or may cause harm, according to the Government's **National Overprescribing Review**¹
- Dispensing in primary care doubled from 10 prescription items per head per year in 1996 to 20 in 2016
- 15% of people in England (8.4 million) currently take 5+ medicines a day, with 7% taking eight or more. In some cases, people take one medicine to deal with the side effects of another. Taking so many different medicines daily places a cumulative burden on the patient's metabolism and on their quality of life
- Over a quarter (26.3%) of the adult population in England were prescribed a dependency forming drug (including antidepressants, painkillers and sleeping pills) in 2017/18, according to Public Health England Prescribed Medicines Review
- Overprescribing directly affects vulnerable groups: older people, ethnic minorities, those with learning disabilities and in deprived areas
- Adverse drug reactions (ADRs) account for 10-20% of hospital in-patient admissions, according to NICE
- In over 65s, 1 in 5 in patient hospital admissions is due to an ADR
- **US Research**² attributes just 10-20% of health outcomes to medical care
- The National Overprescribing Review recommends social prescribing as one solution to tackling overprescribing. However, there are yawning gaps in provision. The **Beyond Pills Campaign**³ aims to ensure that everyone in every community should have access to the benefits of social prescribing
- 40% of GPs say they would refer patients to social prescribing if they had more available information about services
- The recent **NHS England Fuller stocktake report**⁴ on next steps for integrating primary care says a shift in mindset is required 'towards a more psychosocial model of care that takes a more holistic approach to supporting the health and wellbeing of a community'
- When it comes to sustainability, it is estimated that medicines account for 25% of the NHS carbon footprint.

1. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-overprescribing-review-report>

2. <https://nam.edu/social-determinants-of-health-101-for-health-care-five-plus-five/>

3. <https://collegeofmedicine.org.uk/beyondpills/>

4. <https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/next-steps-for-integrating-primary-care-fuller-stocktake-report/>