



Prescription Charges

The charge on National Health Service (NHS) prescriptions was introduced on June 1st, 1952 (PJ 1952:168:375-6). The charge was made in respect of items prescribed on forms presented for dispensing and in respect of items supplied by dispensing doctors. The charge was one shilling in respect of an item or items ordered on any one prescription form; or supplied by a dispensing doctor on any one occasion. There were also arrangements for a refund of the charge under certain criteria. On December 4th, 1956 the charge on NHS prescriptions was increased from one shilling per form to one shilling per item (PJ 1956:177:391).

The prescription charge for medicines, elastic stockings, and certain appliances supplied to hospital outpatients was abolished on February 1st, 1965 (PJ 1964:193:641). At the time it was abolished the charge was two shillings per item.

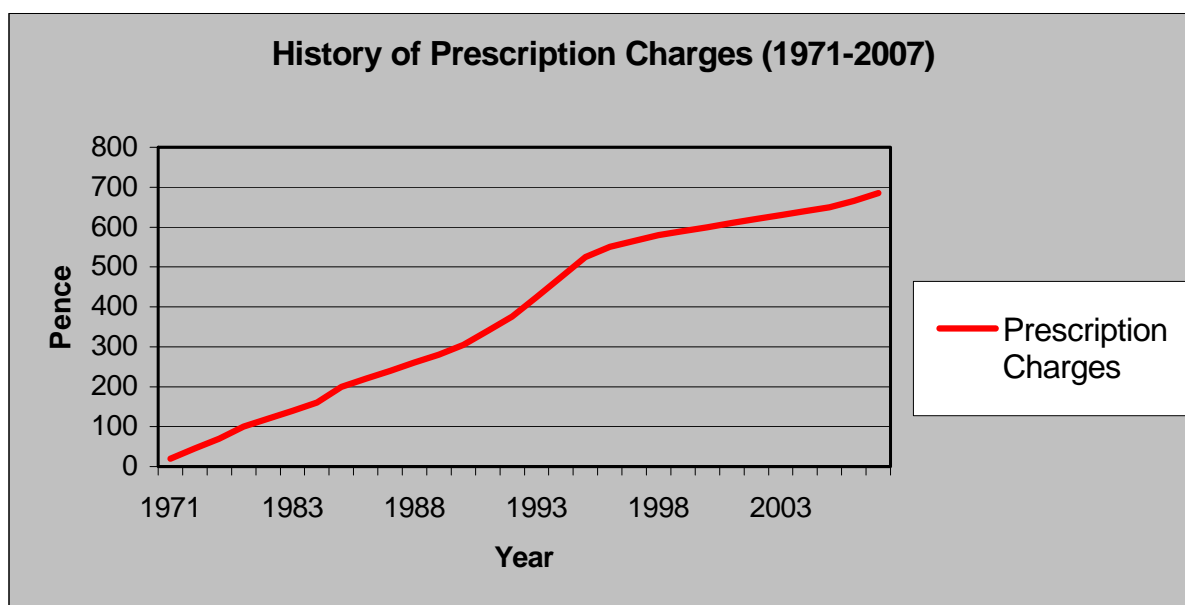
The prescription charge was reintroduced on June 10th, 1968 (PJ 1968:200:612-613) at a level of, two shillings and six pence per item dispensed.

In 2000, the Welsh Finance Minister announced a freeze on prescription charges in Wales ([PJ 2000:265:641](#)). Since 2001 the prescription charge for Wales has differed to that of England and Scotland (See table).

The following table provides details on the increase of the prescription charge from conception in 1952.

DATE	PRESCRIPTION CHARGE
1952 (1 st June)	1 Shilling per prescription form
1956 (1 st Dec)	1 Shilling per prescription item
1961 (1 st Mar)	2 Shillings per item
1965 (Abolished 1 st Feb)	
1968 (reintroduced 10 th June)	2 Shillings 6 pence per item
1971 (1 st Apr)	20 pence per item
1979 (16 th Jul)	45 pence per item
1980 (1 st April) (1 st Dec)	70 pence per item £1 per item
1982 (1 st Apr)	£1.20 per item
1983 (1 st Apr)	£1.40 per item
1984 (1 st Apr)	£1.60 per item
1985 (1 st Apr)	£2.00 per item
1986 (1 st Apr)	£2.20 per item
1987 (1 st Apr)	£2.40 per item
1988 (1 st Apr)	£2.60 per item
1989 (1 st Apr)	£2.80 per item
1990 (1 st Apr)	£3.05 per item
1991 (1 st Apr)	£3.40 per item

1992 (1 st Apr)	£3.75 per item
1993 (1 st Apr)	£4.25 per item
1994 (1 st Apr)	£4.75 per item
1995 (1 st Apr)	£5.25 per item
1996 (1 st Apr)	£5.50 per item
1997 (1 st Apr)	£5.65 per item
1998 (1 st Apr)	£5.80 per item
1999 (1 st Apr)	£5.90 per item
2000 (1 st Apr)	£6.00 per item
2001 (1 st Apr)	£6.10 per item (England & Scotland) £6.00 (Wales)
2002 (1 st Apr)	£6.20 per item (England & Scotland) £6.00 (Wales)
2003 (1 st Apr)	£6.30 per item (England & Scotland) £6.00 (Wales)
2004 (1 st Apr)	£6.40 per item (England & Scotland) £5.00 (Wales 1 st Oct)
2005 (1 st Apr)	£6.50 per item (England & Scotland) £4.00 (Wales)
2006 (1 st Apr)	£6.65 per item (England & Scotland) £3.00 (Wales)
2007 (1 st Apr)	£6.85 per item (England & Scotland) Abolished (Wales)



Note: From 2001 this graph only represents the prescription charge for England and Scotland only.