

Top 10 drugs 2017–18

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Tables 1–3 show the top 10 drugs for the year July 2017 – June 2018. The figures are based on PBS and RPBS prescriptions from the date of supply. The figures include prescriptions under the co-payment (non-subsidised).

None of the most frequently prescribed drugs in Australia appears in the Top 10 drugs by cost. That list is dominated by sofosbuvir and its combinations for the treatment of hepatitis C.

Table 1 Top 10 drugs by DDD/1000 pop/day

Drug	DDD/1000 pop/day*
1. atorvastatin	71.34
2. rosuvastatin	54.02
3. perindopril	51.55
4. amlodipine	46.84
5. irbesartan	33.29
6. candesartan	33.11
7. telmisartan	30.89
8. esomeprazole	29.40
9. ramipril	27.93
10. metformin	24.89

Table 2 Top 10 drugs by prescription counts

Drug	Prescriptions
1. rosuvastatin	11 246 365
2. atorvastatin	10 863 219
3. esomeprazole	9 442 144
4. pantoprazole	7 112 063
5. perindopril	6 466 954
6. cefalexin	5 458 659
7. amoxicillin	5 253 018
8. metformin	5 006 664
9. amoxicillin + clavulanic acid	4 680 931
10. escitalopram	4 187 180

Table 3 Top 10 drugs by cost to government (does not include rebates)

Drug	Cost to government	DDD/1000 pop/day*	Prescriptions
1. sofosbuvir + velpatasvir	\$695 729 924	†	31 079
2. aflibercept	\$324 696 598	†	255 264
3. adalimumab	\$322 733 592	41.48	229 719
4. ledipasvir + sofosbuvir	\$244 917 648	†	10 990
5. ranibizumab	\$218 702 078	†	174 627
6. nivolumab	\$215 410 197	†	43 215
7. sofosbuvir	\$204 520 430	0.99	10 451
8. denosumab	\$189 073 508	44.26	673 160
9. trastuzumab	\$169 958 330	†	55 980
10. pembrolizumab	\$148 956 436	†	17 631

DDD defined daily dose

PBS Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme

RPBS Repatriation Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme

* DDD/thousand population/day is a more useful measure of drug utilisation than prescription counts.

It shows how many people in every thousand Australians are taking the standard dose of a drug every day.

DDD includes use in combination products. The calculation is based on ABS 3101.0 – Australian Demographic Statistics for December 2017 (as at March 2018).

† The World Health Organization has not allocated a DDD for this drug.

Source: Department of Health, October 2018. ©Commonwealth of Australia