About this release

This release by Information Services Division (ISD) provides statistics on the coverage of child health reviews offered to preschool children as part of the nationally agreed child health programme. Information is shown by NHS Board and council area of residence, deprivation level and sex. Information is provided for children becoming eligible for each of the reviews in 2002/03 (or later if the review has been added to the schedule more recently) to 2018/19.

Main Points

- Of children becoming eligible for the Health Visitor first visit (offered at 10-14 days), the 6-8 week review, and the 27-30 month review in 2018/19, 97%, 90% and 91%, respectively, were recorded as having their review. Note that not all NHS Boards had introduced the 13-15 month and 4-5 year reviews in 2018/19.

- Coverage of the well-established reviews (Health Visitor first visit, the 6-8 week review, and the 27-30 month review) is consistently high for children living in more and less deprived areas, and for boys and girls.

- Although recorded coverage of the 6-8 week review remains high, it has declined in recent years in some areas. Ongoing attention is required to ensure that as many families as possible receive the reviews that are offered, and that the results are reliably recorded in the national child health information system.
• The 13-15 month review was introduced in April 2017. It has not yet been implemented in all NHS Board areas. Coverage in 2018/19 was therefore lower for this review at 71%, and coverage varied markedly between Boards.

• The 4-5 year review will be offered to all children turning 4 years from April 2020 onwards however some Boards are already providing this review to some or all children as they turn 4. As would be expected, overall coverage in 2018/19 was low at 34%, and coverage varied markedly between Boards.

Background
All children in Scotland are offered a series of child health reviews between birth and starting school as part of the nationally agreed child health programme. Reviews are provided by Health Visitors. They include ongoing assessment of children’s growth, health, and development and wider family wellbeing. They offer an opportunity for provision of health promotion and parenting support, and also identify children and families who would benefit from additional ongoing services. It is important that all children receive the reviews that are offered. This helps to ensure that any problems are identified and addressed as quickly as possible, allowing children to thrive.

The ‘coverage’ achieved for a particular review in a year means the proportion of children becoming eligible for that review in the year (for example turning 6 weeks of age) that received their review, and had the result recorded in the national child health information system.

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Further Information
Find out more in the accompanying data tables located in the data files section of this page. Background information can be found in the technical report.

ISD Scotland publishes a wide range of information on Child Health including infant feeding, immunisations, and early child development. Further information can be found in the Child Health section on the ISD website.

The next release of this publication will be in February 2021.