

Prevalence of chronic conditions among medical scheme beneficiaries that are eligible for Phase II of the **COVID-19** vaccination

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Carrie-Anne Cairncross and Michael Mncedisi Willie

INTRODUCTION

The Minister of Health, Dr Zweli Mkize, announced that Phase II of COVID-19 vaccinations would be commencing on 17 May 2021. This phase includes the vaccination of people 60 years and older and those suffering from chronic conditions.

The Electronic Vaccination Data System, a self-reported system, went live on the 16 April 2021, and opened registrations to the population eligible for Phase II of the vaccine rollout plan. As outlined by the Ministry, Phase II will include:

- Essential workers. Target population: 2 500 000
- Persons in congregate settings. Target population: 1 100 000
- Persons >60 years. Target population: 5 000 000
- Persons >18 years with co-morbidities. Target population: 8 000 000

As such, the purpose of this document is to highlight the number of beneficiaries in the medical schemes population that are 60 years and older and those suffering from chronic conditions.

BACKGROUND

Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) estimated that the 2020 mid-year population was at 59.6 million people in South Africa, with over 5.4 million people aged 60 and older¹. As of December 2020, there were 8.896 million medical scheme beneficiaries, with close to 1.2 million beneficiaries that 60 years and older². The South African and medical scheme population is depicted in figure 1 below.

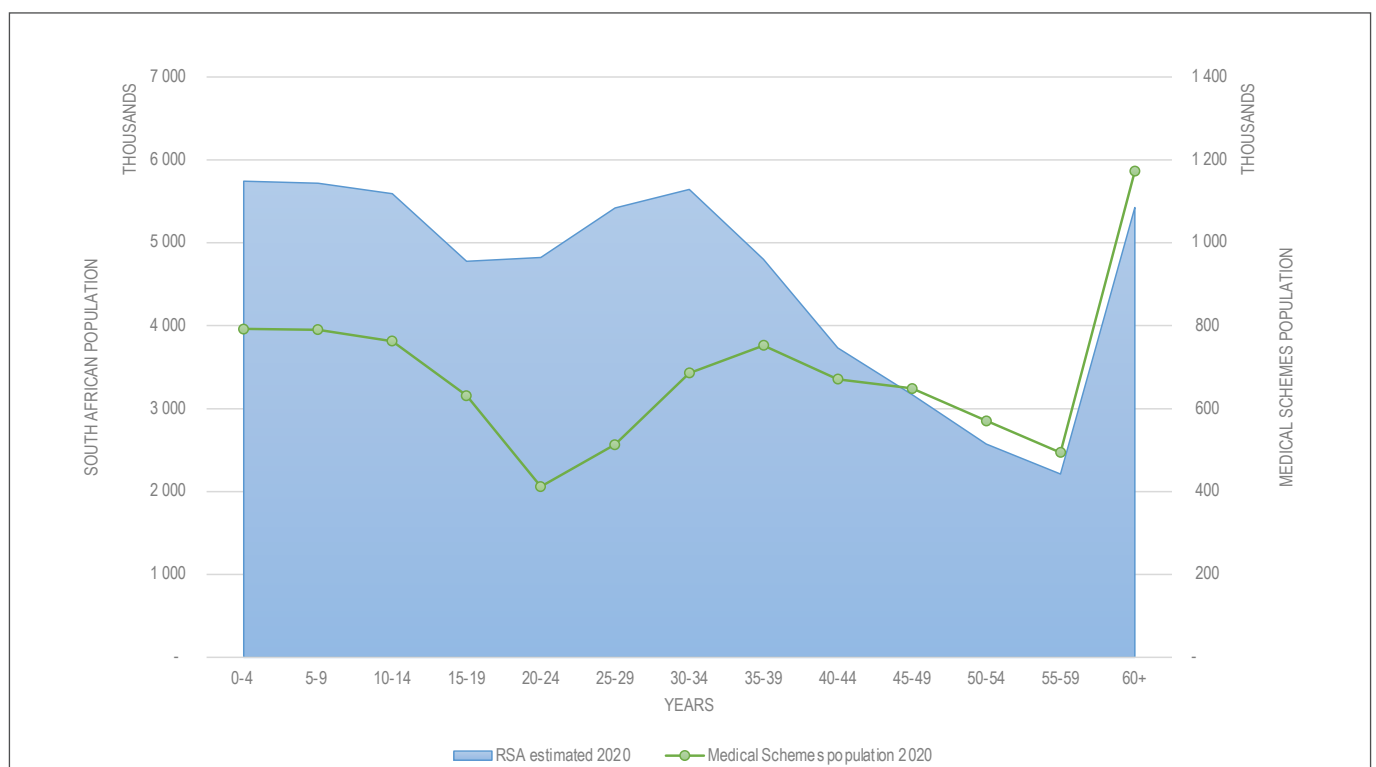
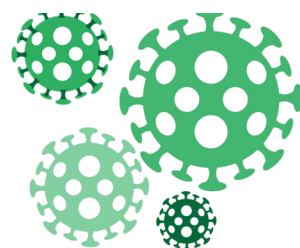


Figure 1: Medical scheme population relative to the South African population

1 <http://www.statssa.gov.za/?p=13453>
2 Council for Medical Schemes (CMS)



The CMS (Council for Medical Schemes) monitors the treated prevalence of chronic conditions based on the following definitions³. The Scheme Risk Measurement (SRM) prevalence— which uses the Entry and Verification (E&V) criteria— specifies treatment and diagnosis to identify beneficiaries with chronic conditions. The second is general prevalence, which defines a beneficiary with at least one claim for a chronic disease. As a result, general prevalence will always be higher than SRM prevalence.

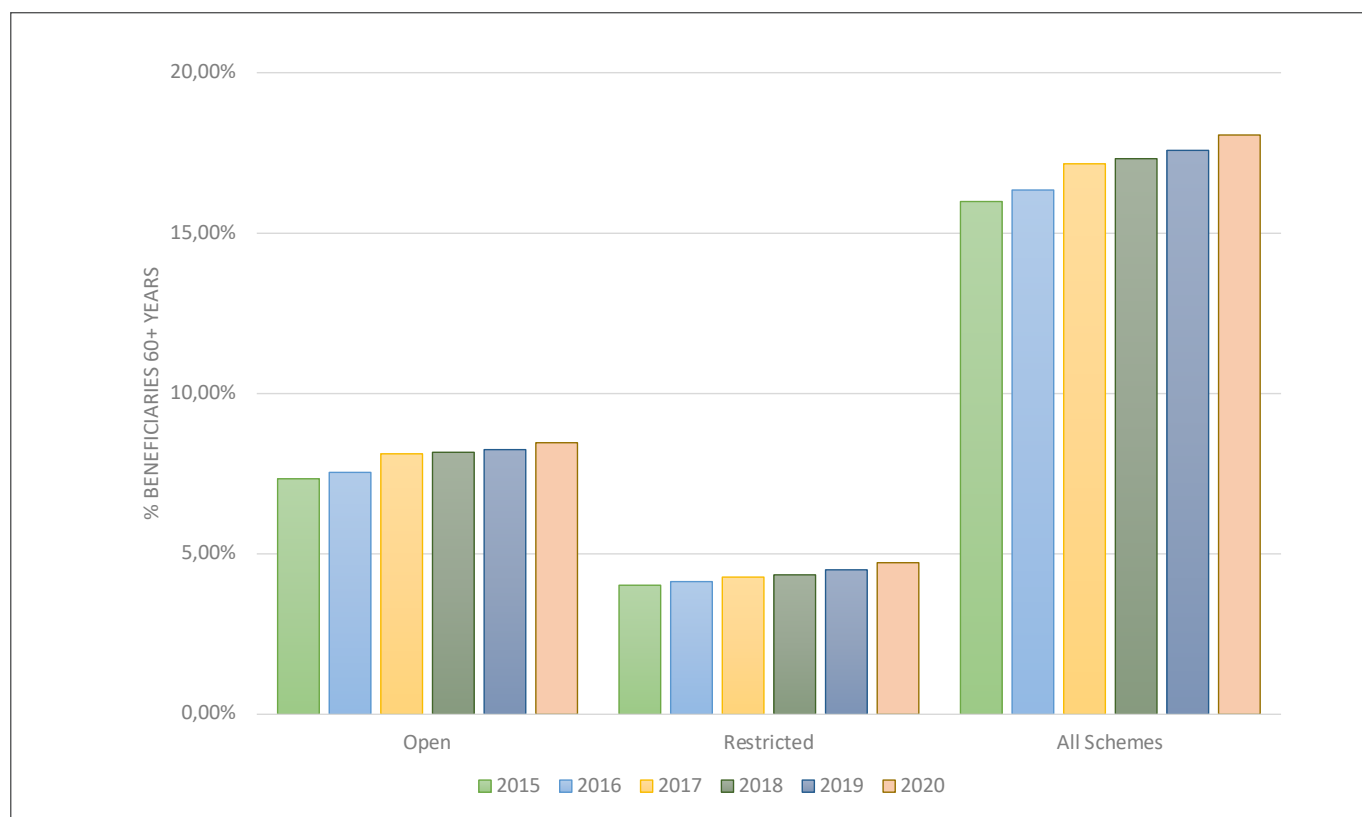
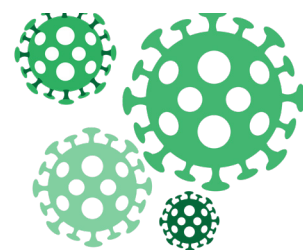


Figure 2: Ratio of 60 years and older beneficiaries by scheme type

The 2018 and 2019 SRM prevalence for each condition is listed in Annexure 1 and 2 for beneficiaries 60 years and older, and the total population. There is a difference in the ranking of diseases by the highest prevalence between the two groups, however, the most prevalent three conditions, namely hypertension, hyperlipidaemia and diabetes mellitus type 2, remain the same in both groups.

Just over 10% (916 836) of the medical schemes' population was treated for hypertension in December 2019. Hypertension prevalence is 2.4 times higher than the second-ranked disease, hyperlipidaemia. Almost 53% of all hypertension prevalence occurred in the group of beneficiaries 60 years and older, with slightly over 61% for hyperlipidaemia and only 47.37% for diabetes mellitus type 2.

The proportions increase significantly for lower-ranked conditions such as coronary artery disease, cardiomyopathy disease, dysrhythmias, glaucoma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.



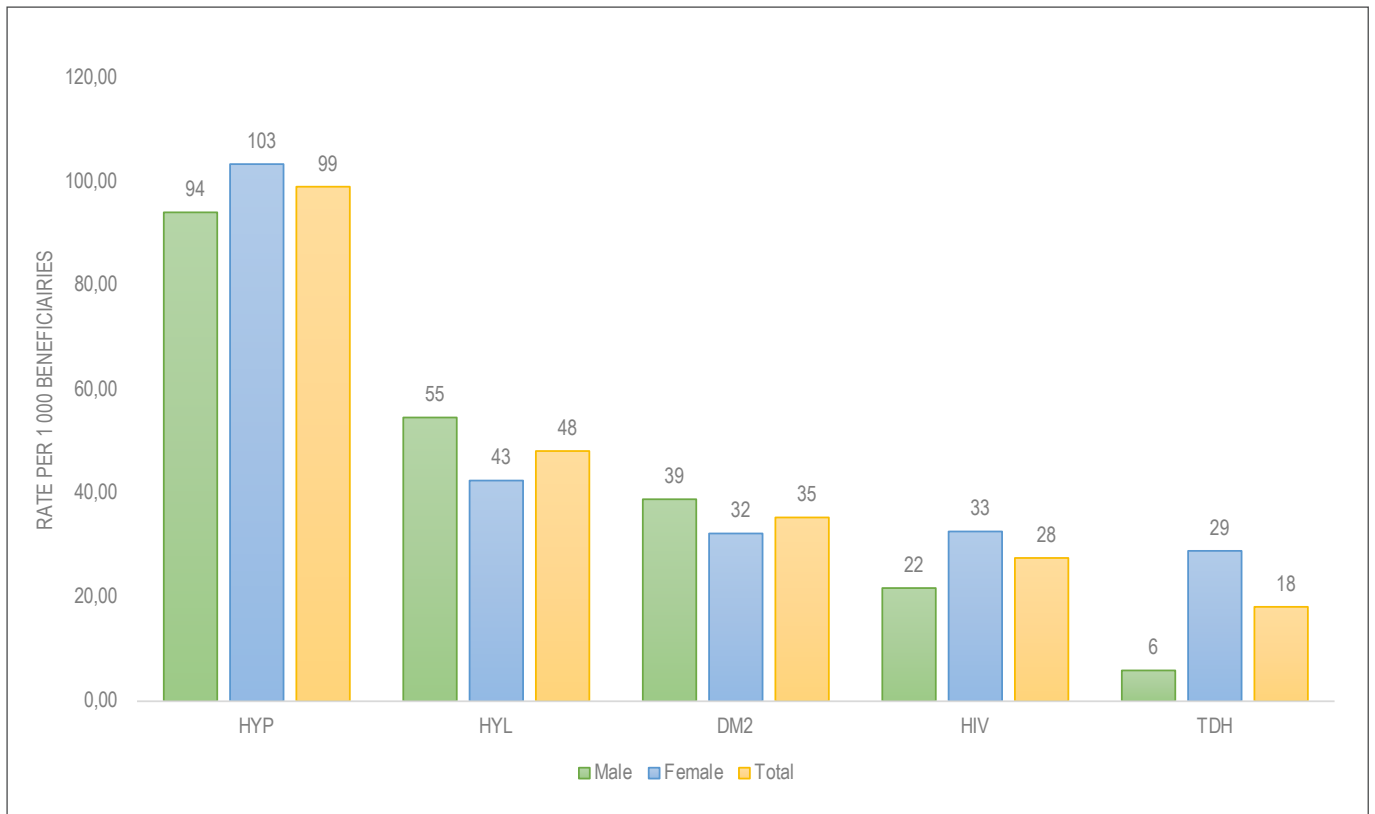


Figure 3: Top 5 SRM prevalence by gender

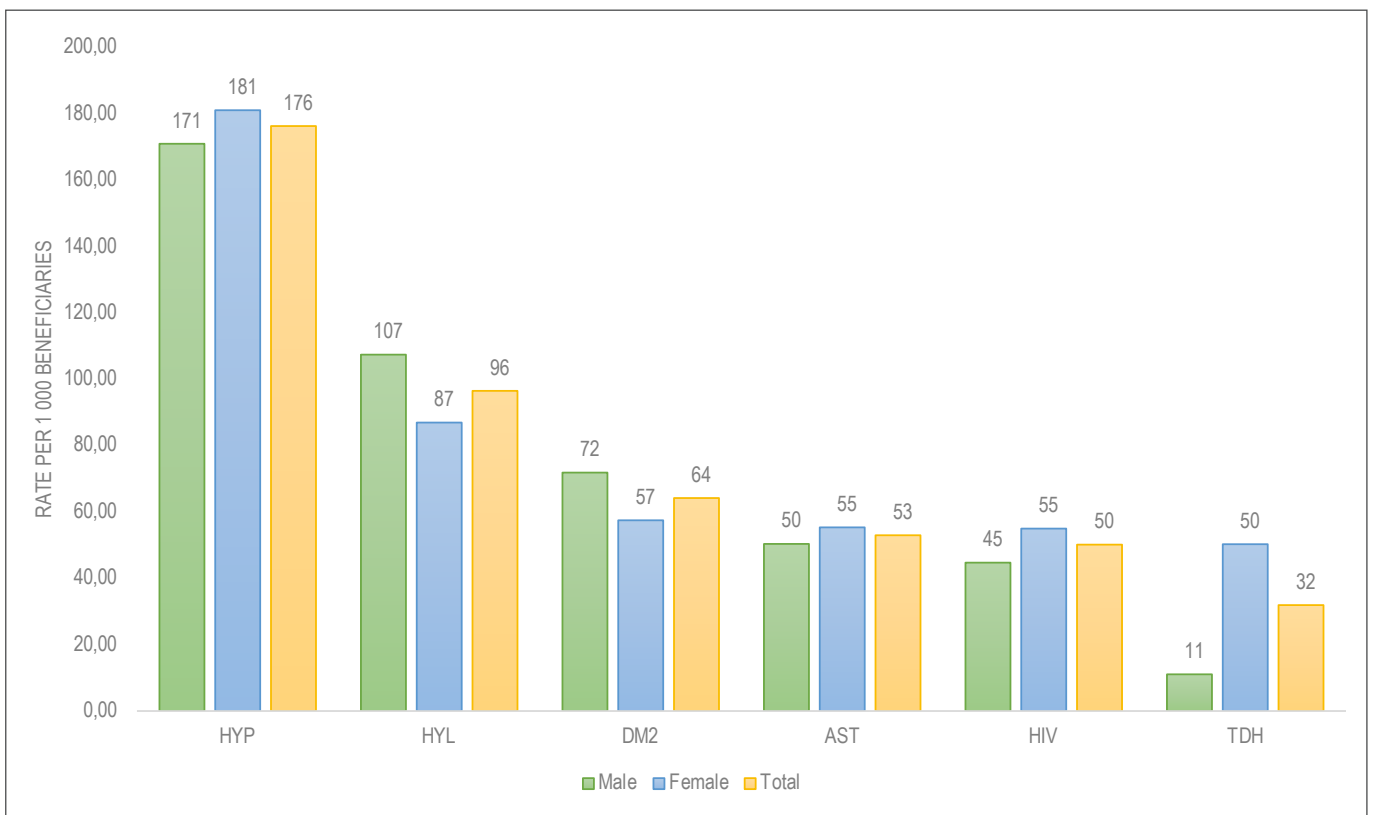
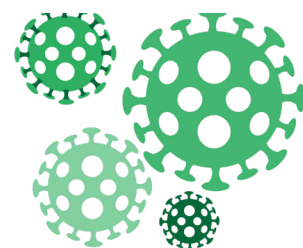


Figure 4: Top 5 General prevalence by gender



CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This research note found approximately 1.2 million beneficiaries currently covered by medical schemes are eligible for Phase II of the vaccination.

The main prevalent chronic conditions being hypertension, hyperlipidaemia and diabetes mellitus type 2. This note also found that more than half of beneficiaries currently treated with hypertension were in 60 year age bands and older.

Almost two-thirds of those treated for hyperlipidaemia were mainly pensioners. Under 61% of those treated for diabetes mellitus type 2 were also pensioners. It is recommended that medical schemes identify all members older than 60 and those with chronic conditions eligible for Phase II of the vaccines and encourage them to register on the Electronic Vaccination Data System (EVDS) Self Registration.

Estimates covered in this research note could be higher as some members are currently not registered in diseased management programs (DMP). Thus, medical schemes are encouraged to further identify potential members with chronic conditions not reported in DMP.

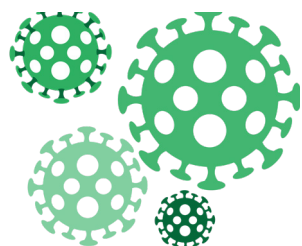
For further information regarding this report, please contact:

Ms Carrie-Anne Cairncross

Senior Researcher: Policy, Research and Monitoring.

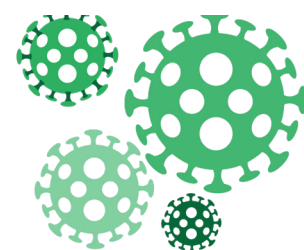
Tel: (012) 431 0500

Email: c.cairncross@medicalschemes.co.za



ANNEXURE 1: SRM PREVALENCE 2019

SRM Prevalence 2019							
Conditions	60 years older treated prevalence				Industry prevalence		
	Rank of condition	Prevalence	% of the total prevalence	% of population	Rank of condition	Total Prevalence	% of population
Hypertension	1	491 035	53,56%	5,47%	1	916 836	10,21%
Hyperlipidaemia	2	277 501	61,83%	3,09%	2	448 838	5,00%
Diabetes Mellitus Type 2	3	155 989	47,37%	1,74%	3	329 323	3,67%
Hypothyroidism	4	101 455	60,30%	1,13%	5	168 240	1,87%
Coronary Artery Disease	5	61 783	75,55%	0,69%	7	81 779	0,91%
Cardiomyopathy Disease	6	46 052	70,97%	0,51%	8	64 887	0,72%
Asthma	7	46 008	30,35%	0,51%	6	151 580	1,69%
Dysrhythmias	8	35 571	85,59%	0,40%	11	41 561	0,46%
Glaucoma	9	28 107	74,64%	0,31%	12	37 655	0,42%
Rheumatoid arthritis	10	17 495	52,35%	0,19%	13	33 422	0,37%
Epilepsy	11	13 381	29,69%	0,15%	9	45 074	0,50%
Chronic obs. Pulmonary disease	12	12 511	85,73%	0,14%	15	14 593	0,16%
HIV/AIDS	13	11 833	4,54%	0,13%	4	260 702	2,90%
Parkinson's disease	14	8 103	89,45%	0,09%	17	9 059	0,10%
Bipolar mood disorder	15	7 769	17,87%	0,09%	10	43 487	0,48%
Chronic renal disease	16	4 467	44,34%	0,05%	16	10 075	0,11%
Diabetes mellitus Type I	17	4 401	23,70%	0,05%	14	18 571	0,21%
Ulcerative colitis	18	1 686	38,14%	0,02%	20	4 421	0,05%
Schizophrenia	19	1 436	28,86%	0,02%	18	4 976	0,06%
Systemic LE	20	1 285	26,59%	0,01%	19	4 832	0,05%
Bronchiectasis	21	862	50,23%	0,01%	23	1 716	0,02%
Crohn's disease	22	810	32,78%	0,01%	21	2 471	0,03%
Multiple sclerosis	23	409	17,35%	0,00%	22	2 358	0,03%
Addison's disease	24	289	40,65%	0,00%	24	711	0,01%
Diabetes insipidus	25	49	19,37%	0,00%	25	253	0,00%
Haemophilia	26	16	7,80%	0,00%	26	205	0,00%
Two simultaneous conditions		217 214	54,68%	2,42%		397 213	4,42%
Three simultaneous conditions		120 710	60,45%	1,34%		199 674	2,22%
Four or more simultaneous conditions		33 098	66,62%	0,37%		49 684	0,55%
Count of beneficiaries with at least 1 CDL Condition		629 242	47,59%	7,00%		1 322 209	14,72%



ANNEXURE 2: GENERAL PREVALENCE 2019

General Prevalence 2019							
Conditions	60 years the older prevalence				Industry prevalence		
	Rank of condition	Prevalence	% of the total prevalence	% of population	Rank of condition	Total Prevalence	% of population
Hypertension	1	720 316	46.34%	8.08%	1	1 554 527	17.43%
Hyperlipidaemia	2	448 048	54.76%	5.02%	2	818 193	9.18%
Diabetes mellitus Type 2	3	224 371	41.54%	2.52%	3	540 095	6.06%
Hypothyroidism	4	145 508	53.21%	1.63%	6	273 460	3.07%
Coronary artery disease	5	145 475	64.14%	1.63%	7	226 798	2.54%
Asthma	6	94 783	20.42%	1.06%	4	464 098	5.20%
Cardiac failure	7	61 970	70.35%	0.69%	12	88 083	0.99%
Glaucoma	8	57 926	63.35%	0.65%	11	91 434	1.03%
Dysrhythmias	9	57 397	76.11%	0.64%	14	75 412	0.85%
Chronic obstructive Pulmonary disease	10	40 708	71.33%	0.46%	15	57 069	0.64%
Diabetes mellitus Type 1	11	36 227	36.14%	0.41%	10	100 250	1.12%
Rheumatoid arthritis	12	35 893	43.78%	0.40%	13	81 978	0.92%
Cardiomyopathy	13	33 461	58.79%	0.38%	16	56 912	0.64%
Epilepsy	14	29 649	23.25%	0.33%	8	127 504	1.43%
Chronic renal disease	15	20 068	43.39%	0.23%	17	46 245	0.52%
HIV/AIDS	16	15 694	3.39%	0.18%	5	462 653	5.19%
Bipolar mood disorder	17	14 893	13.97%	0.17%	9	106 601	1.20%
Parkinson's disease	18	14 098	87.53%	0.16%	19	16 106	0.18%
Ulcerative colitis	19	5 626	27.69%	0.06%	18	20 318	0.23%
Systemic LE	20	3 302	24.82%	0.04%	20	13 304	0.15%
Bronchiectasis	21	3 255	35.44%	0.04%	22	9 184	0.10%
Schizophrenia	22	2 690	23.90%	0.03%	21	11 255	0.13%
Crohn's disease	23	2 096	26.62%	0.02%	23	7 875	0.09%
Multiple sclerosis	24	1 061	20.32%	0.01%	24	5 222	0.06%
Diabetes insipidus	25	641	29.74%	0.01%	25	2 155	0.02%
Addison's disease	26	591	35.18%	0.01%	26	1 680	0.02%
Haemophilia	27	66	12.77%	0.00%	27	517	0.01%

