



# Plain Language Summary

The cost-effectiveness of the Scottish Hip Fracture Audit  
SHTG Assessment | October 2023

## What is a hip fracture?

Your hip is a ball and socket joint at the top of your thigh bone where it meets your pelvis. A hip fracture is a break in this joint. Falls are common in older people. Your bones may not be as strong as they used to be. Bone is strong and doesn't usually break with a simple fall. As we get older, however, our bones become weaker. Osteoporosis and other bone diseases can also make your bones weaker. This means that a fall even from standing height can cause a fracture.

Sometimes a hip fracture can be caused by a medical condition (for example cancer, or osteoporosis), which could weaken the hip bone.

## What is the Scottish Hip Fracture Audit?

The Scottish Hip Fracture Audit is a record of all the hospital care given to hip fracture patients in Scotland. These records are collected locally and sent to Public Health Scotland. The information on hip fracture patients' care is assessed to check clinical standards of clinical treatment are being met in Scotland.

## Why is this important?

Maintaining high standards of patient care ensures patients with hip fractures in Scotland have the best chance of a good, and quick recovery from their injury. Keeping a record of hip fracture care may help clinical staff to meet the standards that can ensure this happens.

However, collecting and analysing the hip fracture data at a national level also costs money, and so it is important to find out whether the money being spent on the Scottish Hip Fracture Audit is likely to help clinical staff to meet standards.

## What we did

We used Public Health Scotland data to look at the value of the Scottish Hip Fracture Audit. We did this by comparing the money that is spent on the audit with two outcomes of patient care;

whether or not the patient survived having a hip fracture after 30 days, and how long the patient stayed in hospital for after their hip fracture.

### What we found

The data showed a higher number of the standards being met for hip fracture care meant higher odds of patient survival. However because in Scotland most of the patients already survive after having a hip fracture, there was no evidence that the Scottish Hip Fracture Audit itself had improved survival rates over the timeframe for which data were available (since 2016).

The data also showed, a higher number of the standards were met for hip fracture care, when a patient's stay in hospital was shorter. This led to cost savings in patient care because hospital care did not need to be provided for as long for this group of patients. Depending on the costs used in the the Scottish Hip Fracture Audit data, we estimate that for every £1 invested in the audit, the NHS saves between £6.50 and £10.

### What is our conclusion?

Meeting a higher number of the standards of the Scottish Hip Fracture Audit saves the NHS more money than it costs to do the audit each year.

### What next?

We have sent our report to the Scottish Hip Fracture Audit team who asked us to do this assessment. The analysis we conducted could be applied to other audits in the future, but we note it has been difficult to attribute outcomes to the audit itself rather than being the result of compliance by clinical teams with the standards that the audit was set up to monitor. This is particularly an issue if we do not have any information on how many standards were being met for patients in the years when there was no audit. A better understanding of how the audit monitoring helps clinical compliance with standards being audited, could be useful.

This plain language summary has been produced based on SHTG Assessment of The cost-effectiveness of the Scottish Hip Fracture Audit, October 2023