

A Survey of the Lower Limb Amputee Population in Scotland 2024

Executive Summary



SPARG
Scottish Physiotherapy Amputee
Research Group

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The full report can be accessed from the BACPAR website (BACPAR website:
<https://www.bacpar.org/resources/sparg-resources/sparg-public-reports/>)

2 SPARG 2024 Annual Report: Executive Summary

- 2024 includes Aberdeen's data for the first time 2014
- The number of amputations in Scotland remained high in 2024 (n=886). The number of hip disarticulations was also notably high for a second year in a row (n=11).
- The population of those with a major lower limb amputation (MLLA) in Scotland continue to have a median age of around 68 years and 70% are male. The ratio of transtibial (TTA) to transfemoral (TFA) amputations is 1.5:1, this is largely unchanged.
- Dysvascular aetiology remains the leading cause of MLLA in Scotland.
- The number of patients limb-fitted overall remains constant at 40%–45%. Over the last few years the TTA limb-fitting is sustained around 65%, whilst TFA limb fitting rate is nearer 20%.
- When reporting on limb-fitting percentages we typically consider the combined percentage of males and females. However, in 2024 there were less female unilateral TTAs limb-fitted (51.2%), compared with the males (70.5%). For unilateral TFA, females who were limb-fitted were often considerably reduced compared to their male counterparts (10.2% vs 20.9% in 2020, 13% vs 22.7% in 2023, and 12.9% vs 26.3% in 2024).
- Transfemoral limb fitting numbers continue to be low, and highly variable across Scotland. In 2023, TORT limb-fitted 7% in 2023 this increased to 13% in 2024, but Hairmyres was reduced at 8% in 2024. Conversely, Raigmore fitted 57% in 2024, with WestMARC, SMART and MARS sitting around 25%.
- The median days from casting to delivery for TFA and TTA patients stayed at 14 days in 2024. This appears to be a new norm since 2022 for TFA, and 2023 for TTA.
- Receiving compression within 10 days of MLLA is on the decline again from a peak in 2022. 64% of TTA and 41% of TFA were fitted within this timeframe.
- Starting EWA within 10 days remains low in both TTA (35%) and TFA (20%) groups.
- Falls rates across all patients is relatively stable at around 20% in hospital, but falls at home have been slowly increasing. The hospital falls rate in patients who went on to limb-fit and patients who abandoned limb-fitting was significantly higher in 2024 at 30% and 41%.
- The functional co-morbidities index (FCI) mean score remains highest for patients with diabetes, this has increased slightly in 2023 (3.1) and 2024 (3.2). Diabetes account for the largest aetiology in MLLAs, this combined with increasing co-morbidity scores might explain why the complexity of our patient group seems to be increasing.