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THE INCIDENCE, RESOURCE UTILIZATION AND FINANCIAL COSTS OF TREATING CHILDREN WITH ATTENTION DEFICIT/HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER (ADHD) IN THE UNITED KINGDOM (UK)

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Introduction: ADHD is a common disorder that often presents in childhood and is associated with increased healthcare resource use.
Objectives/aims: To evaluate ADHD incidence and estimate resource utilization and costs of care in the UK.
Methods: The Clinical Practice Research Datalink was searched between 1998 and 2010 for patients aged 6-17 years, newly diagnosed with ADHD. Age- and sex-matched, controls were also identified (ratio 1:3). ADHD incidence was calculated as the number of incident cases/100,000 people (/100k) in the at-risk population. Resource utilization in the first year post-diagnosis was estimated for general practice (GP) contacts, investigations, drug treatments, outpatient appointments, and inpatient admissions. Monetary costs were derived from various sources (at 2011 prices).
Results: 2,873 subjects with ADHD and 6,598 matched controls were identified. Mean (standard deviation [SD]) age was 9.8 (2.8) years and most (87%) were boys. The incidence of ADHD amongst boys and girls, respectively, increased from 69/100k and 7/100k in 1998 to 132/100k and 24/100k in 2007, and then fell to 98/100k and 20/100k in 2010. The mean (SD) annual, cost was £1,291 (£2,121) for cases and £315 (£2,345) for controls. For cases and controls, respectively, annual costs comprised GP contacts (£199, £70), investigations (£10, £8), drug treatments (£306, £37), outpatient appointments (£572, £62) and inpatient admissions (£203, £139).
Conclusions: The incidence of ADHD increased between 1998 and 2007, then declined slightly in 2010. Medical costs in the first year post-diagnosis were notably higher in children with ADHD compared with controls.
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