
Foreword

This volume, on geographic variations in health, builds on the tradition started in the nineteenth century of undertaking in-depth analyses of mortality by area in decennial supplements to the annual statistical publications.

The volume considerably extends the coverage and range of analyses available in previous supplements. For the first time, it takes a broader view of health outcomes than are reflected by mortality alone, by including reviews of variations in congenital anomalies, cancer incidence, infant mortality, births, conceptions and abortions. It makes far more extensive use of maps to illustrate statistically significant variations.

As in previous supplements, there is a strong emphasis on identifying the factors associated with geographic variation in the outcomes studied and to interpret these in terms of demographic patterns and material inequality. To these ends, there are separate chapters summarising demographic and socio-economic influences and all analyses draw on the recently revised ONS classification of local authorities.

Last, but by no means least, wherever possible the analyses of local variation are, for the first time, presented on a comparable basis for all parts of the United Kingdom. This comprehensive view has made it possible to place the geographic patterns observed in a wider context than was previously possible. The support of the Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish administrations was essential in achieving this.



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