

27 February 2003

Coverage
United Kingdom
Theme
Health and Care

Health Statistics Quarterly

Spring 2003

The under 16 conception rate in England and Wales fell by four per cent in 2001, according to provisional statistics published today* by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). There were an estimated 7,891 conceptions to girls aged under 16 in 2001 (a rate of 8.0 per 1,000 girls aged 13-15) compared with 8,115 conceptions in 2000 (a rate of 8.3 per 1,000).

Health Statistics Quarterly 17 also contains new and up-to-date statistics on births, deaths and other health-related topics, as well as feature articles. In this issue, there are articles on: recent trends in alcohol-related deaths; the prevalence of treated asthma and its management in general practice in England and Wales, 1994-1998; occupation and cancer - the application of a novel geographic approach to routinely collected registration data; the implications of changes in the UK social and occupational classifications on infant mortality statistics.

There are new statistics on: Deaths related to drug poisoning - results for England and Wales, 1997 - 2001 and conceptions in England and Wales, 2001. There is also a report on the development of pilot UK health accounts, 1999/2000, and an announcement about the roll-out of population estimates and life expectancy figures following the 2001 Census. Both of these are accompanied by new figures released today on the National Statistics website. The population figures cover local authorities in England and Wales and comprise final rebased population estimates for 1992-2000 and the life expectancy figures cover 1991/1993 to 1999/2001.

Health Statistics Quarterly 17 also includes an annual update on mortality statistics by cause in England and Wales in 2001.

Issued by
National Statistics
1 Drummond Gate
London SW1V 2QQ

Telephone
Press Office 020 7533 5702
Email press.office@ons.gov.uk
Public Enquiries 0845 601 3034

Internet
www.statistics.gov.uk

Next publication date
29 May 2003

*** *Health Statistics Quarterly 17, Spring 2003***

The Stationery Office Price £20.00 ISBN 0 11 621629 8

Available free on the National Statistics website:

www.statistics.gov.uk/products/p6725.asp

New statistics in this issue:

Deaths related to drug poisoning: results for England and Wales, 1997 - 2001

In 2001 there were 2,898 deaths in England and Wales from drug related poisonings.

The number of deaths from drug-related poisonings has remained relatively stable since 1997, with a slight fall in 2001 compared with 2000 (when there were 2,968).

In the period 1997 to 2000, deaths mentioning heroin or morphine showed the greatest increase, although the number declined slightly between 2000 and 2001 (from 926 to 889).

Deaths with mentions of cocaine (including crack cocaine) and ecstasy have both increased to their highest levels since 1993 (the first year for which data are available in this form). Cocaine was mentioned in 96 deaths in 2001 and ecstasy in 55.

Deaths mentioning paracetamol fell to 446 in 2001, the lowest level to date.

Conceptions in England and Wales, 2001

This report contains provisional estimated numbers and rates of conceptions for women usually resident in England and Wales in 2001 nationally and by health authorities. Key findings for 2001 include:

- There were an estimated 763,300 conceptions, compared with 767,000 in 2000, a fall of 0.5 per cent.
- Seventy-seven per cent of conceptions ended in a maternity (the remainder, 23 per cent ended in a legal abortion).
- Fifty-three per cent of conceptions were outside marriage, compared with 43 per cent in 1990.

- The under 18 conception rate fell by 3 per cent in England and Wales, from 43.8 (per 1,000 women aged 15-17) in 2000 to 42.5 (per 1,000). There was a similar reduction for residents of England, from 43.6 per 1,000 in 2000 to 42.3 in 2001.

Feature articles in this issue:

Recent trends in alcohol-related mortality, and the impact of ICD-10 on the monitoring of these deaths in England and Wales by Allan Baker and Cleo Rooney

This article looks at rising trends in deaths related to alcohol consumption between 1979 and 2000, and examines the impact of the introduction of the Tenth Revision of the International Classification of Diseases Codes (ICD-10) on the definition that will be used by ONS for alcohol-related mortality in 2001 and subsequent years.

Some key findings include:

- The number of alcohol-related deaths registered in England and Wales more than doubled between 1979 and 2000, from 2,506 to 5,543 based on the ONS definition using the Ninth Revision of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-9).
- Age-standardised alcohol-related death rates for men more than doubled during this period, from six to 13 deaths per 100,000 population. Death rates were lower for women but they also rose during this time period, from four to seven deaths per 100,000 population.
- Much of the increase in death rates occurred during the 1990s. In 1990, the rates for males and females were eight and five deaths per 100,000 population respectively.
- Increases in death rates in younger age groups were especially large. The death rates for both men and women aged 25 - 44 tripled between 1979 and 2000. The death rate for men aged 45 - 64 exceeded that for men aged 65 and over for the first time in 1996; for women, the rate for the younger of these groups approached that for the older group in 2000.



- The greatest increases in rates occurred among those born since the middle of the 20th Century.
- ONS is to consult on its proposals to change the definition of alcohol related deaths following the introduction of ICD-10.

Prevalence of treated asthma and its management in general practice in England and Wales, 1994 - 1998 by Jacqueline Hoare, Maggie Bruce and Azeem Majeed

This study examines trends in the prevalence of treated asthma and its management in general practice between 1994 and 1998 using the General Practice Research Database. Key findings include:

- The age-standardised prevalence of treated asthma increased between 1994 and 1998 to reach a rate of 74 per 1,000 males and 77 per 1,000 females.
- The prevalence of treated asthma in children under five years old decreased between 1994 and 1998 from 103 to 98 per 1,000 boys and from 67 to 63 per 1,000 girls.
- There were regional variations in the prevalence of treated asthma. In England and Wales, the highest rates were found in Anglia and Oxford and the lowest rates in North and South Thames.
- Prevalence of treated asthma in females was lowest in practices in the least deprived areas. There was little variation in prevalence in males.

Occupation and cancer: the application of a novel graphical approach to routinely collected registration data by Lucy M Carpenter, David R Cox, James Doughty, Nicola T Fear, Graham R Law, Eve Roman, Jill Simpson, and Noreen Maconochie.

This article illustrates a new approach to the analysis of routinely collected cancer registration data, using the 1.3 million registrations in England and Wales between 1971 - 1990.



Implications of changes in the UK social and occupational classifications on infant mortality statistics by Steve Rowan

In 2001, changes were introduced which affected reporting of infant mortality by socio-economic status. The National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification (NS SEC) replaced the Registrar General's Social Class; the ten-yearly update of the standard occupational classification was implemented; and a change was made to the coding of employment status.

This article describes the implications of these changes on the analysis of infant deaths (deaths under one year) in England and Wales in 2001. It also describes a method for estimating NS SEC for earlier years and provides analysis of infant deaths by NS SEC from 1994 to 2001.

A key finding is that the three-class version of NS SEC ('managerial and professional', 'intermediate' and 'routine and manual' occupations) corresponds most closely to 'non-manual' and 'manual' social classes.

BACKGROUND NOTES

1. Details of the policy governing the release of new data are available from the press office.
2. **National Statistics** are produced to high professional standards set out in the National Statistics Code of Practice. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political interference. © Crown copyright 2003.