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Coverage
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Theme
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People in the South West most likely to reach 75

Health Statistics Quarterly summer 2008

People in the South West are more likely to live into their mid-seventies than those living elsewhere in England or Wales, according to a new study published today.

Research by the Office for National Statistics, published in *Health Statistics Quarterly* 38, shows that the probability of surviving to age 75 is highest in the South West region and lowest in the North East region for both males and females.

The study compared the probability of survival to age 75 in the periods 1981-83 and 2004-06. It showed that the likelihood of living to 75 in England and Wales rose markedly over the period, from 47 per cent to 66 per cent for males and from 66 per cent to 77 per cent for females.

But geographic inequalities in the chances of premature mortality remain. In 2004-06, males in the South West had a 70 per cent chance of living to 75 compared with a 62 per cent chance in the North East while females had an 80 per cent chance in the South West and 74 per cent in the North East.

The research also showed that at local authority level males and females were most likely to live into their mid-seventies in East Dorset. Women in the area had an 86 per cent chance of reaching 75 while men had a 78 per cent chance.

At the other end of the spectrum, males were least likely to live to 75 in Manchester where they had only a 52 per cent chance while females had only a 67 per cent chance of reaching this milestone in Blaenau Gwent.

Overall, the results highlighted a clear north-south divide which echoes longstanding inequalities in mortality within England and

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Wales. There are, however, signs of some convergence. The largest improvements in the probability of survival to age 75 between 1981-83 and 2004-06 were seen in the North West, North East, and Yorkshire and the Humber for both sexes. On the other hand, gains in London did not keep pace with the average improvements in England and Wales.

For both sexes, significantly higher probabilities of survival than the England and Wales average were found in the South West, South East and East of England, and significantly lower probabilities were found in the North East, North West, Yorkshire and The Humber, and Wales.

Differences within regions are also substantial. These are greatest within the North West for both sexes. Males living in South Lakeland had a probability of survival to age 75 of 73 per cent compared with 52 per cent for those living in Manchester. Females living in Eden had a probability of survival to age 75 of 84 per cent compared with 68 per cent for those living in Manchester.

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In addition to these findings, the latest *Health Statistics Quarterly* also analyses male mortality statistics for England and Wales by cause of death and socio-economic position.

It shows that the Semi-routine and Routine occupation classes have significantly higher rates of death than the national average for the majority of causes of death investigated.

The results indicate that there are marked differences in the death rate between men in advantaged and disadvantaged socio-economic circumstances, particularly in causes of death such as accidents, suicide, ischaemic heart disease, and lung cancer.

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BACKGROUND NOTES

1. The probability of survival for a given area is derived from standard period life table functions and estimates the likelihood a new born baby would live until age 75 if he or she experienced the area's age-specific mortality rates calculated for a stated time period throughout his or her life.
2. The probability of survival is not a prediction of the future survival of those living in an area in a specified time period. This is because many of those in the area will live elsewhere for at least some part of their lives. The probability of survival therefore gives a snapshot of the mortality within an area at a specified time.
3. Two local authorities, the City of London and Isles of Scilly, were excluded from the geographical analysis of premature mortality because of their very small populations and numbers of deaths.
4. The probability of survival to age 75 figures at local area level are not National Statistics as the finalised definition and method of measuring of premature mortality have yet to be put to public consultation.
5. Details of the policy governing the release of new data are available from the Media Office.
6. 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 2008.