

18 December 2003

Coverage

England and Wales

Theme

Health and Care

Causes of death in 2002

The main causes of death in 2002 were circulatory diseases, which include coronary heart disease and strokes, (39 per cent), cancers (26 per cent) and respiratory diseases (13 per cent), according to a detailed analysis of deaths occurring in England and Wales.

The annual report on deaths analysed by sex, age and cause is published today* by the Office for National Statistics.

Key statistics include:

- There were 533,527 deaths in England and Wales in 2002, a rise of 0.6 per cent from 530,373 in 2001.
- Male deaths totalled 253,144 deaths and female deaths 280,383. The crude death rate was 9.9 deaths per thousand population for males and 10.5 per thousand for females.
- Allowing for changes in the age structure of the population, overall death rates declined between 1993 and 2002. Rates fell by 20 per cent for males (from 10103 to 8091 per million population) and by 14 per cent for females (from 6430 to 5536 per million population).
- Death rates from cancer of the trachea, bronchus and lung fell by 1 per cent for males between 2001 and 2002, but increased by 2 per cent for females.
- There were falls in death rates from coronary heart disease for both sexes between 2001 and 2002: male rates fell by 5 per cent and female deaths fell by 4 per cent.
- In 2002 there were 16,139 deaths from accidental or violent causes, 3 per cent of all deaths. Of these deaths, 61 per cent were males.

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***Mortality statistics: cause, England and Wales, 2002
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Available free on the National Statistics website:

www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=618

BACKGROUND NOTES

1. Since publication of the First Release on deaths occurring in England and Wales in 2002 on 30 October 2003, 67 duplicate death registrations have been found. Hence, the correct total number of deaths occurring in 2002 is 533,527 not 533,594 as stated in the First Release. The duplicate registrations have been excluded from all analyses in the annual reference volume DH2 no. 29, 2002.
2. Summary data on deaths registered in 2002 were published as a Report in Health Statistics Quarterly 18 (May 2003).
3. Causes of death occurring in England and Wales in 2002 are classified using the tenth revision of The International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems (ICD-10) which was introduced into mortality coding in January 2001.
4. The main changes in mortality statistics resulting from the introduction of ICD-10 are shown on the web at <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/icd10mortality>. A report describing the main changes was published in Health Statistics Quarterly 14 (May 2002).
5. Except for the crude death rates, rates referred to in this News Release are age-standardised. That is, they allow for changes in the age structure of the population.
6. Details of the policy governing the release of new data are available from the press office.
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