



News Release

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LOCAL VARIATION IN AVOIDABLE DEATH RATES PUBLISHED

A new website showing significant variation in early death rates has been launched today to drive public awareness and local action to tackle public health problems.

Longer Lives, a new Public Health England (PHE) website, allows people to see local information for Kent, Surrey and Sussex on early deaths from major killers like heart disease, stroke and cancer and how it varies across the area and the country.

Using a traffic-light rating system, it shows areas with below average early mortality rates as green, while those that have relatively high rates are red.

The website contains a range of data that allows people to easily compare an area's rate of mortality against those with similar levels of deprivation. Overall it shows that the north of England (where there is more social deprivation) has a higher risk of early death than the south, but when comparing areas of a similar socioeconomic status, it reveals a more complex picture.

Across Kent, Surrey and Sussex, the picture is mixed with early death rates varying across the six local authorities areas. As expected, the more deprived areas such as Brighton and Medway have higher premature death rates, but there are some variations

For example:

- Surrey has one of the lowest rates of deaths from cancer, heart disease and stroke and within its category of similar local authorities also does well overall
- Brighton and Hove have the lowest death rate from heart disease and stroke within its category of similar local authorities in the country but its overall rates of premature deaths are relatively high
- East Sussex has relatively low rates of premature mortality in general, and in relation to similar local authorities
- West Sussex has low death rates for heart disease and stroke within its category of similar local authorities but face challenges to improve on their rates of premature deaths for cancer and liver disease
- Medway has particularly high levels of deaths linked to cancer, but compared to similar local authorities they are better than average for liver disease.

- Kent is in the top third within its category of similar local authorities in the country for lowest premature death rates

It is important to recognise that these data do not explore variations within each Local Authority area, so even healthy councils will have areas of deprivation and higher death rates. And, even the best areas still have considerable scope to improve health and reduce premature mortality.

The data and website will provide local areas with information to help them understand their own position and better target efforts to improve the health of the people they serve.

Kent, Surrey and Sussex Centre Director Dr Graham Bickler said: "Longer Lives will support local government in its new role as the champion for their public's health. It presents an important picture of health in local areas – where it is good and where there is more to do – so everyone involved can consider and agree how to make improvements from a common basis of the same information.

"The evidence is clear - a person's likelihood of dying prematurely from one of the top four killers varies widely between local authorities due to differences in risk factors, and that social deprivation and smoking are the most important factors.

"The website goes further than just data, it contains evidence of what needs to be done and case studies of what has been successful elsewhere. Longer Lives has the potential to make a real difference to the health of each and every community in Kent, Surrey and Sussex. We'll be working hard with all the local authorities and the NHS across those counties to bring about the changes we need."

Local councils were given the leadership of public health in April 2013 as part of a move to empower local areas to make real change in people's lives. To help them deliver these improvements the government has given them £5.46bn of funding.

Leading the work of the local Health and Wellbeing Board with Clinical Commissioning Group partners, local councils have a pivotal role in piloting the local health and care system to improve the health of their local citizens.

The website provides examples of best practice from other local authorities, guidance from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), and links to NHS Choices so that individuals and families can learn about these conditions and what they can do to improve their health.

This data is the first information to be rolled out as part of the Government's plans to provide the public and health professionals in local areas with clear, easy accessible information on how health and care services are doing in improving health outcomes wherever we live.

Notes to Editors

To access the site immediately please visit: longerlives.erpho.org.uk

Username: preview

Password: Longerlives1

Please note these details will give you immediate access but information on the site is under embargo until 00:01 on Tuesday 11 June.

- Rankings are made in the total 150 local authorities in the country and also in groups of 15 similar local authorities, judged to be similar based on their levels of deprivation.
- The data provided in *Longer Lives* is from the Public Health Outcomes Framework (PHOF). This is the first time it has been published in this form, making the information easy to access, view and compare. It is also the first time it has been published alongside relevant supporting information, such as the intervention guidance provided by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE).
- From May 2013 *Longer Lives* will undergo a process of continuous iteration adding new data and responding to feedback from health professionals and users.
- Longer Lives provides peer grouping so local authorities can compare their premature mortality rates with others of similar socioeconomic status. All local authorities are divided into ten groups (each containing fifteen local authorities) by their Index of Multiple Deprivation.
- For more information please contact the Department of Health on 0207 210 4990 or Public Health England on 0207 654 8400.

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