



## News Release

**EMBARGOED 00.01 Tuesday 11 June 2013**

### **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 the Thames Valley 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 ranks areas showing those above average in tackling avoidable deaths as green, while those that still have more to do, are red.

The website contains a range of data that for the first time allows people to easily compare an area's rate of mortality against those with similar populations, incomes and levels of health. Overall it shows that the north of England 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.

In Thames Valley, it is mixed picture across the eight local authority areas. For example:

- Wokingham is ranked number one in the 150 local authorities in the country for the lowest rate of overall premature deaths per 100,000 population. It is also ranked in the top five for low premature death rates from heart disease and stroke and liver disease and in the top ten for cancer and lung disease.
- West Berkshire ranks 12<sup>th</sup> in the country for overall premature death rates per 100,000 and in the top 20 for low death rates relating to the other four major diseases
- Slough has the greatest deprivation of council areas in the Thames Valley and the premature death rates in the area reflect this level of deprivation. Slough is ranked 109 among all 150 local authorities for overall premature death rates and is poorly ranked for premature deaths from the other four causes of disease.
- The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead is ranked in the top 20 for premature death rates and is rated among the best in the country for low death rates from from the other four major diseases.

- Bracknell Forest is rated among the best compared to all local authorities on overall premature death rates; heart disease and stroke and lung disease. As one of the least deprived areas in England, Bracknell Forest's low ranking in its group of similar local authorities for overall premature deaths and cancer are areas for improvement. This should be helped by access to these data and sources of good practice in similar areas..
- Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire both rank in the top 20 for low rates of premature deaths per 100,000 in all areas.
- Reading, like Sough is an area of greater deprivation than most of the Thames Valley and again, like Slough, this deprivation has an impact on death rates. Reading is rated lower than average for overall premature death rates and for specific disease rates.
- Premature death rates in all the local authority areas are broadly in line with rates expected in view of the levels of deprivation, when compared nationally. However, the average rating of authorities when compared to local areas of similar deprivation indicate that there are areas for improvement.

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.

Thames Valley Centre Interim Director Dr James Mapstone said: "Longer Lives will support local government in its new role as the champion for their public's health. It presents a clear 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, such as obesity, alcohol and smoking and that these are closely linked to economic deprivation.

"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 the Thames Valley. We'll be working hard with all the local authorities and the NHS across the area 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.

ENDS

### **Notes to Editors**

To access the site immediately please visit: **[longerlives.erpho.org.uk](http://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.**

- Two rankings are assigned: Against all the 150 local authorities in the country and also in groups of 15 similar local authorities, judged to be similar based on their levels of socio economic 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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