

# Alcohol-related death rates much higher in deprived areas of England and Wales

May 27 2010

---

Researchers at the University of Sheffield have found that there are substantially increased death rates from alcohol-related diseases in socioeconomically deprived areas of England and Wales.

The findings, which were published in the journal [BMC Public Health](#), found that the [mortality rates](#) of men and women in the most deprived areas of England and Wales were over four times the rates in less deprived areas\*. The results contradict a number of previous surveys which have consistently maintained that there is no excess [alcohol consumption](#) in more socioeconomically deprived groups.

Deaths in the UK from diseases such as alcoholic liver cirrhosis, alcoholic pancreatitis, alcoholic gastritis, are increasing, despite attempts to inform the public of the dangers of binge drinking.

The research aimed to identify individuals who are most likely to die from an alcohol-related cause, to aid the future allocation of resources and the design of policies which aim to reduce the harm caused from alcohol.

The analysis was based on 18,716 deaths in men and 10,123 deaths in women from 1999 to 2003 and assessed the variation of alcohol-related mortality across areas of socioeconomic deprivation, urban-rural location and age.

The main findings are summarised below:

- People living in urban areas experienced higher alcohol-related mortality when compared with those living in rural areas. Urban areas accounted for approximately 80% of the total population analysed and 85% of all alcohol-related deaths, while villages accounted for approximately 9% of the population and 6% of alcohol-related deaths.
- Mortality rates increased with age, peaking in middle-aged adults before declining in [older adults](#). The 45-64 age group accounted for half of the alcohol-related deaths, but contained only a quarter of the total population included in the analysis.
- There is a strong link between alcohol-related deaths and socioeconomic deprivation, with progressively higher rates in more deprived areas. The most socioeconomically deprived 20% of the population of England and Wales accounted for 32% of alcohol-related deaths in men and 26% of alcohol-related deaths in women whilst the least deprived 20% of the population accounted for 11% of male and 14% of female alcohol-related deaths. The greatest socioeconomic inequalities were seen in the 25-44 year age group.

Dr Ravi Maheswaran, from the School of Health and Related Research at the University of Sheffield, and one of the authors on the study, said: "Deaths from alcohol-related causes represent one extreme of the physical harm caused by alcohol. This study highlights the large inequalities in alcohol-related mortality which exist between different socioeconomic areas of the UK. These differences should be taken into account when designing public health policies to reduce alcohol-related harm."

Provided by University of Sheffield

Citation: Alcohol-related death rates much higher in deprived areas of England and Wales (2010, May 27) retrieved 27 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2010-05-alcohol-related-death-higher-deprived-areas.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.