

# Survival of patients with prostate cancer improving but socio-economic inequalities worsening

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Survival of patients with prostate cancer has improved since 1990, a new study has found, but socio-economic inequalities are still widening.

Men from the most [deprived areas](#) had poorer survival compared with men from the least deprived areas, according to research from scientists at the University of Glasgow which is published in the journal [PLOS ONE](#).

The study, which was led by Dr Kashif Shafique of the Institute of Health & Wellbeing at the University of Glasgow, tracked the outcome of more than 15,000 prostate [cancer patients](#) in the West of Scotland.

The study found that while survival from prostate cancer has improved overall since 1990, the rate of improvement was not the same for all

social groups. In the most recent period (2003-2007) patients who lived in the most deprived areas had 10% lower survival at five years compared to the patients from the least deprived areas.

Dr Shafique said: "Previous research has shown that there are socio-[economic inequalities](#) in survival of prostate cancer patients but this new study has revealed that the gap has continued to widen over time.

"Our study also showed that diagnosis of cancers at a younger age or detection of less aggressive disease did not explain the socio-economic inequalities in survival. However, further research is needed with information on how advanced prostate cancer is when it is diagnosed in wealthier compared with poorer men."

The study used data from the West of Scotland Cancer Surveillance Unit for all prostate cancer patients in the region diagnosed during 1991-2007. Just over half of the 15,292 men included in the study lived in socio-economically deprived areas. Of these, 65% died during the study period compared with 51% in the most affluent areas.

Researchers found that although five year survival of prostate cancer patients has improved from 58% in 1991-1996 to 78% in 2003-2007, the gap in [survival](#) between the wealthiest and poorest patients increased from approximately 5% in 1991-1996 to 10% in 2003-2007.

[Prostate cancer](#) is the most common cancer amongst men in Scotland and between 2000 and 2010 incidence increased by 7.4%.

**More information:** Shafique, K. et al. Socio-economic inequalities in survival of patients with prostate cancer: role of age and Gleason grade at diagnosis, *PLOS ONE*. [dx.plos.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0056184](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0056184)

Provided by University of Glasgow

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