

Life expectancy significantly worse in deprived areas

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Life expectancy and health outcomes worsen the more deprived an area or population is, new research from Cass Business School has found.

The researchers discovered that men are more adversely impacted by [deprivation](#) and the southeast of England is less deprived than the rest of

the country—with the five most deprived districts all in the north of England.

The research paper *Inequalities matter* investigated the impact of deprivation on demographic inequalities in England, forecast to 2030. It was conducted by Cass for the International Longevity Centre—UK (ILC-UK).

The researchers used the government-preferred Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) to measure deprivation. The IMD is based on 37 separate indicators including income and are grouped into seven domains, each of which reflects a different aspect of deprivation across the lifespan including education, health and crime.

Gap between rich and poor worsening

They found that although [life](#) expectancy is increasing overall and the life expectancies of men and women are converging, any improvements are slower paced in more deprived areas, with the net gap between rich and poor slowly worsening over time.

Men more adversely impacted

Men tend to be more adversely impacted by deprivation than women, with the gap in life expectancy at age 30 between the top and bottom one per cent of deprived neighbourhoods at 10.9 years for men and 8.4 years for women.

Men are 4.4 times more likely to die at the age of 44 in the most deprived 10 per cent of neighbourhoods, when compared to the 10 per cent of least deprived neighbourhoods.

Deprivation skewed towards the north

The researchers confirmed that deprivation in England is heavily skewed towards urban areas, with the top five districts of deprivation in Northern England – Middlesbrough, Knowsley on Merseyside, Kingston-upon-Hull, Liverpool and Manchester. By contrast in London, only Tower Hamlets, Haringey and Hackney fall into the top 50 deprived districts.

Life expectancy differences due to unhealthy lifestyles

Lead researcher Professor Les Mayhew, Cass Business School, said many of the differences in [life expectancy](#) between districts can be explained by [unhealthy lifestyles](#) and a lack of social mobility and investment.

"The causes of ill health are increasingly lifestyle related and rooted in the cultures of different socio-economic groups – think smoking, excessive drinking, obesity, drug abuse and mental illness. Efforts are being made to improve [health outcomes](#) in deprived areas but more resources need to be provided for preventative measures, training and education. Policy tools aimed at changing behaviour using financial incentives including taxes have shown to be successful and should also be considered."

Professor Mayhew said a positive finding from the report was the gradual reduction in inequalities across the lifespan between men and women.

"This will lead to fewer years of female isolation in later life and longer working lives for women which will have a positive impact on their retirement savings and general health and wellbeing," he said.

However, Professor Mayhew said the gap between rich and poor is widening and the fact that particular districts were more adversely impacted by deprivation was a cause for concern.

"The geographical pattern of deprived districts in England is well established and the reputation of these districts as undesirable places to live tends to go before them, making them unattractive places to invest in. If Government is serious about redressing inequalities, creating attractive job opportunities for the young and investing in training and education is one way do this."

Implications for policymakers and civil society

Baroness Sally Greengross OBE, Chief Executive, ILC-UK, said the report had important implications for policymakers and civil society alike.

"The report's call for greater targeted investment in public health is welcome, but sadly echoes calls made by the International Longevity Centre and other experts that have gone unheeded for far too long. If the UK is to realise the potential of our rapidly ageing population and all that could mean for our society, we must ensure that the benefits of longevity are shared by all."

Inequalities matter: an investigation into the impact of deprivation on demographic inequalities in adults will be launched on Wednesday 28th March and can be read [here](#).

Provided by City University London

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