WARWICKSHIRE INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

EXCESS WINTER MORTALITY IN ENGLAND AND WALES: 2017 TO 2018 (PROVISIONAL) AND 2016 TO 2017 (FINAL)

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Source:
https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/bulletins/excesswintermortalityinenglandandwales/2017to2018provisionaland2016to2017final

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National Summary

In common with other countries, more people die in the winter than in the summer in England and Wales. This statistical bulletin presents provisional figures for excess winter deaths (EWD) and the excess winter mortality (EWM) index in England and Wales for the winter period 2017 to 2018 and final figures for the winter period 2016 to 2017.Lower tier local authority EWDs are not yet available for 2017/18.

In England, in 2017/18, there were an estimated 46,600 EWDs, representing 30.1% more deaths in the winter period, compared with the non-winter period. The number of EWD observed in 2017 to 2018 was higher than all years since the 1975 to 1976 winter period when there were 58,100 EWD. However, the increase in EWD was similar to peaks observed in previous years such as 2014 to 2015. Females and the elderly were most affected by excess winter mortality in 2017/18.

Colder than average temperatures for the winter months of 2017 to 2018 may partially explain the increase in winter deaths. However, previous years demonstate a weak relationship between temperature and EWD. Increased EWD are not always coupled with unusually cold winters and conversely winters with decreased EWD are not always coupled with milder winter temperatures, indicating factors other than temperature, such as influenza, are also relevant in explaining trends in excess winter mortality.

Respiratory diseases remained the most prominent underlying cause of excess winter deaths (EWD) with 84.9% more respiratory deaths in the winter months compared with the non-winter months in 2017 to 2018. This equates to 17,400 EWD caused by respiratory diseases and accounted for 34.7% of all EWD.

2017/18 saw moderate to high levels of influenza activity and vaccine uptake was higher compared with 2016/17 across all target groups, particularly in those aged 65 years and over. However, the vaccine was more effective in those aged 2 to 17 years (26.9% effective) and 18 to 64 years (12.2% effective) compared with those aged 65 years and over (10.1% effective). This may explain why the influenza virus had a greater impact on the elderly.

Key Facts

REGION	2017/18 (Provisional)		2016/17 (Final)	
	Excess Winter Deaths	EWM Index	Excess Winter Deaths	EWM Index
England	46,600	30.1%	32,730	21.2%
West Midlands	5,300	30.8%	3,610	21.2%
North Warwickshire Borough	-	-	40	19.0%
Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough	-	-	70	17.6%
Rugby Borough	-	-	40	13.2%
Stratford-on-Avon District	-	-	60	13.6%
Warwick District	-	-	30	7.5%

NB: Mortalities have been rounded to the nearest 10.

Regional Summary

1. Provisional figures suggest the West Midlands saw seen an increase of 1,690 (46.8%) EWDs between 2016/17 and 2017/18. This is above the England increase of 38.4%.

2. For Warwickshire, in 2016/17, North Warwickshire Borough had the highest EWM Index (19.0%) whilst Warwick District had the lowest EWM Index (7.5%).