



Case study: Rural Deprivation and Health

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Outline

- Rural health research prior to the new definition
- Using the new rural definition in a case study
- Selection of case study sites
- Rural proofing research methodology
- Interpretation of rural research findings

Phase 1: Health in rural areas

Systematic Review: *The Impact of Rurality on Health*

- ‘Is there a health impact of rural compared with urban residence?’
- ‘Which health-related interventions work in improving the physical and mental wellbeing of older people living in rural areas of the United Kingdom?’

Definition of rural

- *Uneven coverage of rural and urban populations*
- *Large variation within and between rural and urban comparison groups*
 - ◆ *definition*
 - ◆ *populations*

Health Impact: Strength of evidence

Health topics and outcomes

- Uneven coverage of the health conditions for some conditions
- Limited number of studies
- Findings biased towards the elderly and adults in general

Interpreting reported values and findings

- Causality
- Health differences between rural and urban subjects
- Limited evidence on the effectiveness or cost-effectiveness

Phase 2: Determinants of Health Among Older Residents of Rural Areas

- Do they vary between different types of rural community?
- How do they impact on older people living in rural areas?
- What issues influence opportunities for lengthening life expectancy in rural older populations?
- What issues influence opportunities for promoting healthy lifestyles in rural areas?

Site selection: New rural definition

Site	County	Total Households	Percentage of Less Affluent Households (%)
Folkingham	Lincolnshire	307	62
Mablethorpe	Lincolnshire	3197	75
Church Stretton	Shropshire	1679	27
Cleobury Mortimer	Shropshire	1216	50
Bolsterstone	South Yorkshire	120	0
Worrall	South Yorkshire	512	31

Perception of 'rural'

- Perception of 'rural'
 - ◆ Local stakeholders
 - ◆ Older people
 - ◆ Stereotypical views

What's a coastal town got to do with rural England?

Is rural Shropshire rural?

What is rural affluence?

Is proximity of the settlement important?

Rural proofing research methodology

- ◆ Locating communities
- ◆ Output areas
- ◆ Proximity to services
- ◆ Remoteness

Interpretation of rural data

- **Diversity in rural England**
- **Does qualitative data increase understanding?**
- **How generalisable are the findings?**
- **Is comparable data available?**

Preliminary findings - Understanding

- How rural areas and types of rural are perceived
- Commonality of problems in relation to health determinants
- Impact of dispersed nature and diversity of lived experiences
- Disparate pattern of accommodating problems
- Importance of social networks and community groups
- Perceptions of determinants of health
 - ◆ Crime
 - ◆ Mobility
 - ◆ Independent living
- The reported experience of mismatch in rural policy

Case study: Rural deprivation and health

■ Fit for purpose?

- ◆ Adding to the rural evidence base
- ◆ Need to quantify the size of the problem
- ◆ Lack of relevant evidence to explain findings