

CONCEPT
EXPLAINER

WHAT IS

Excess Mortality

(and why is it important?)

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01

Mortality is a term used

to describe the death rate or number of deaths in a society or certain group over a certain period. The word “excess” is used to label those deaths which cannot be attributed to poverty or socioeconomic disparities alone.



02

The concept gives us a way to

understand the difference
in numbers of deaths
between two comparable
areas (cities, regions,
neighbourhoods etc.), with
similar levels of poverty
and deprivation.

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03

Taking Glasgow as an example,

we know that excess mortality reflects a complex interplay of historical, political, and urban factors. The city's vulnerability to socioeconomic and political exposures exacerbated excess mortality compared to other post-industrial cities.

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04

Understanding local historical

processes, often the result of political choices, such as how deprivation came to exist, or the impact of regional policies is central to understanding how Glasgow became more vulnerable than other cities.

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05

Alongside the historical, other

factors such as social connections and support (a.k.a. social capital), contribute to mortality disparities. Higher social capital offers a buffer against adverse health outcomes, showing the importance of non-key service investment.



06

Unmeasured aspects of

deprivation fail to capture different lived experiences which are likely to play significant roles.

Understanding these nuances is vital for crafting effective interventions to address health inequalities.



07

Excess mortality demands a

comprehensive approach
beyond traditional
socioeconomic explanations.
By unravelling the
complexities of historical
contexts and structural
factors, we can pave the
way for interventions to
improve population health
and narrow mortality gaps.



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Thanks for reading

Our next explainer will be:

*healthy life
expectancy*

react and share

