

Inequalities in Irish Healthcare - the hard facts at local level



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1900 - THE POOR LAW

“an unpleasant, expensive but apparently indispensable fact of life”

2001

“In the context in which the general Irish experience in this regard [health inequalities] is significantly inferior to that of the rest of the European Union, the experience of poor Irish people must be regarded as intolerable.”

Dr. Jim Kiely, Chief Medical Officer, Department of Health and Children

Influences on Health

Environment

Lifestyle

Genetics

Health Services

Directly standardised mortality rate ratios 1989-1998

Comparison between lowest occupational class and highest occupational class

Mental and behavioural disorders	x 16
Respiratory disorders	x 6
Injury and poisoning	x 6
Infections	x 5
Circulatory disorders	x 3
Cancers	x 2

Source: Inequalities in Mortality 1989-1998. IPHI 2001



INEQUALITIES IN HEALTH
IN IRELAND: HARD FACTS



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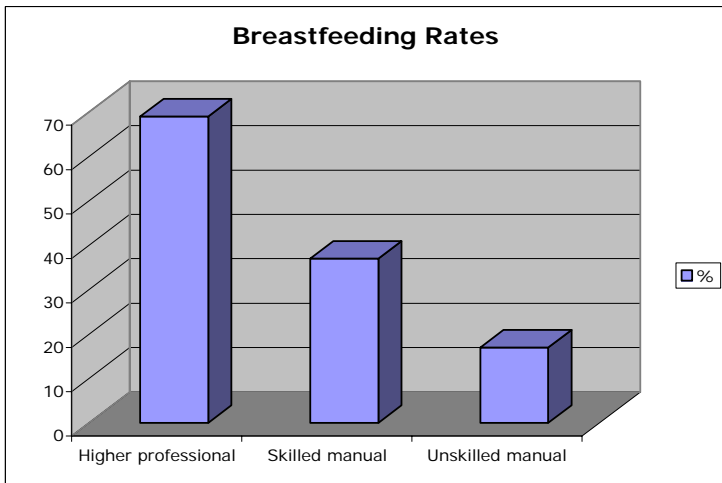
Male admission rates for psychiatric disorders (1996)

Comparison between 'unknown' socio-economic group and national figure

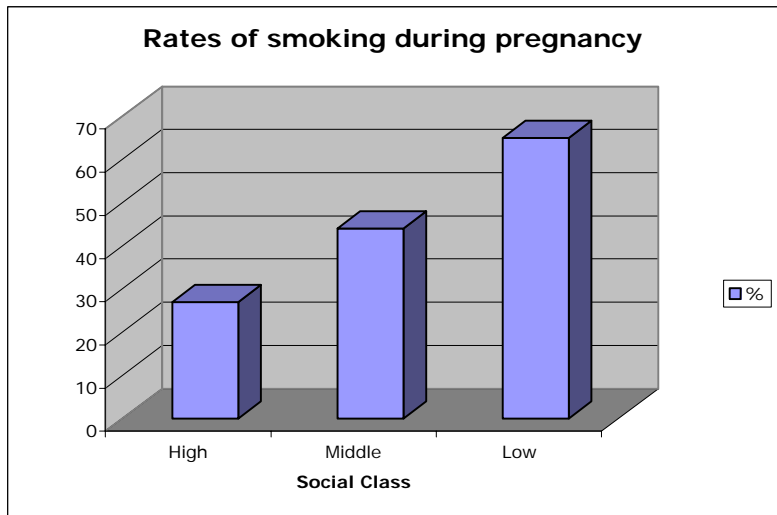
All 1st admissions	X 5
Schizophrenia	X 6
Depressive disorders	X 5
Personality disorder	X 5
Alcoholic disorders	X 4

Source: Barry J et al. Inequalities in health in Ireland - hard facts. Dublin: Department of Community Health and General Practice, Trinity College, 2001

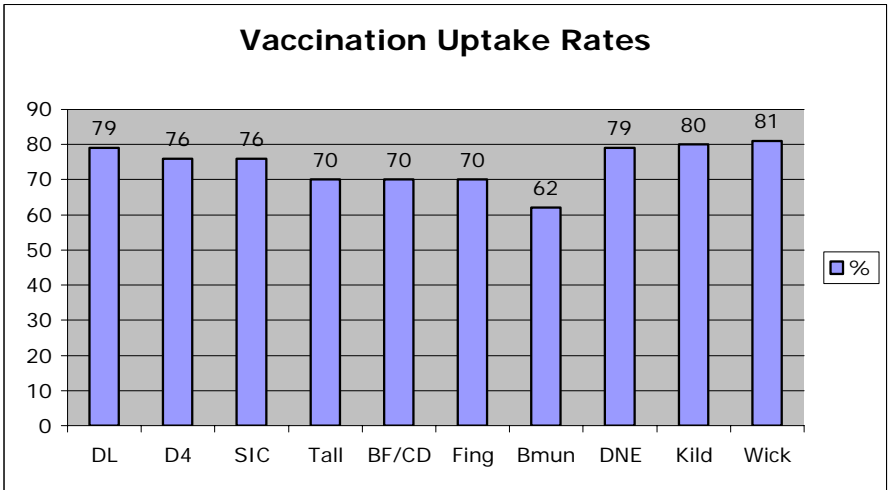
Percentage of mothers breastfeeding in Higher Professional, Skilled Manual and Unskilled Manual groups (by father's occupation)



Percentage of women who smoke during pregnancy in High, Middle and Low social class groups

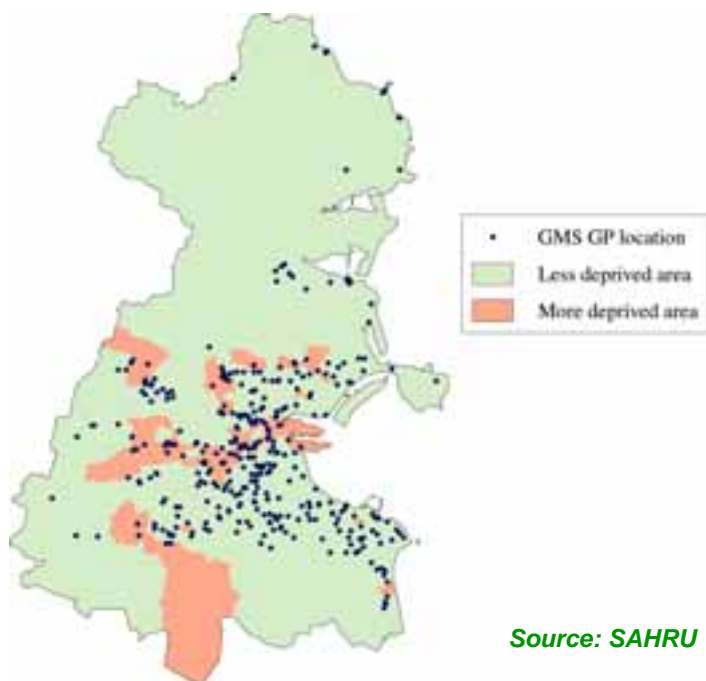


Average percentage uptake of vaccinations at 12 months of age, within each community care area



“Clinical psychiatric resources are not concentrated in areas of greatest need but paradoxically have been best developed in areas of greatest affluence. The absence of an up-to-date national mental health strategy for service development is one of the main causes of current inequities in clinical resource distribution.”

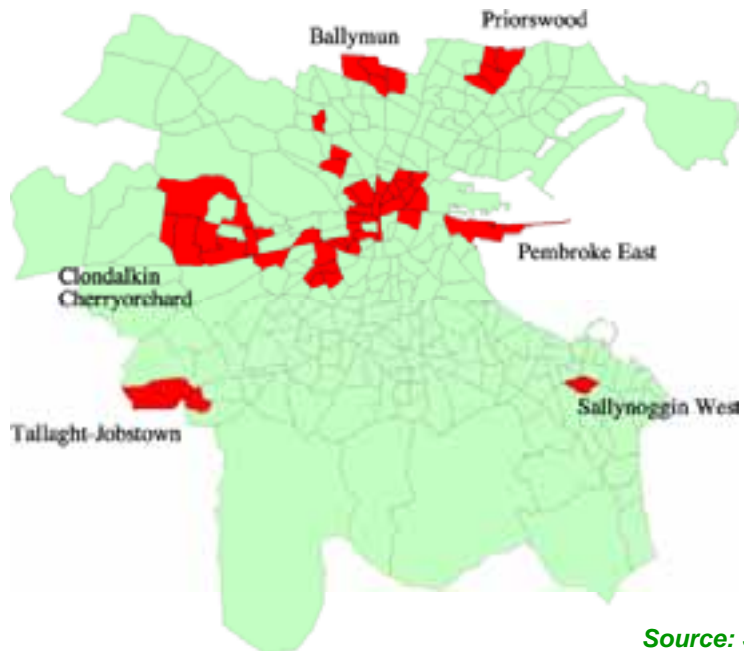
Irish Psychiatric Association, 'The Stark Facts', 2003



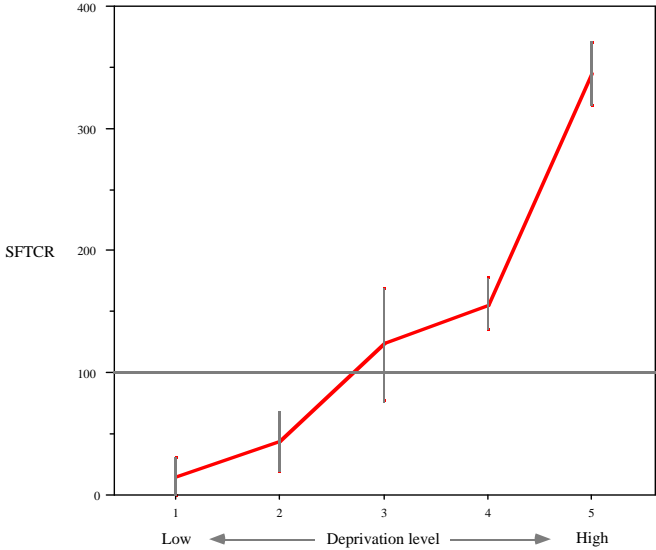
Source: SAHRU

The relative odds of finding any GP according to a DED's deprivation level, adjusted for population size



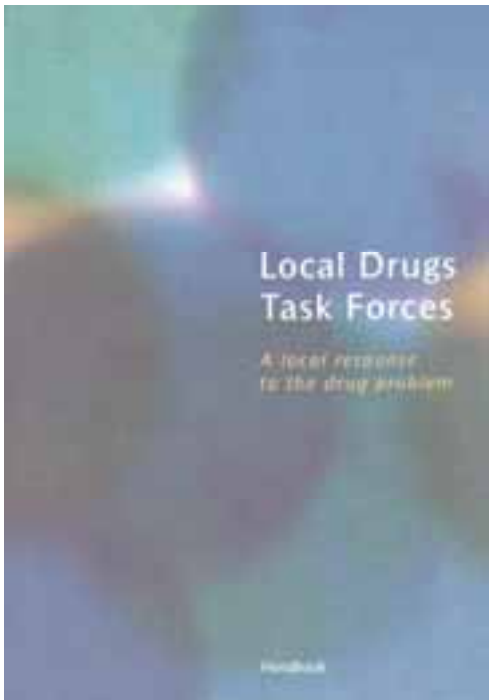


Standardised First Treatment Contact Ratios according to deprivation levels



'Ministerial Task Force on Measures to Reduce the Demand for Drugs' 1996

- Key recommendations/findings:
 1. Poverty link explicitly recognised
 2. Set up national drug strategy team
 3. Set up 13 local drugs task forces
 4. Make funding available
 5. Establish advisory body

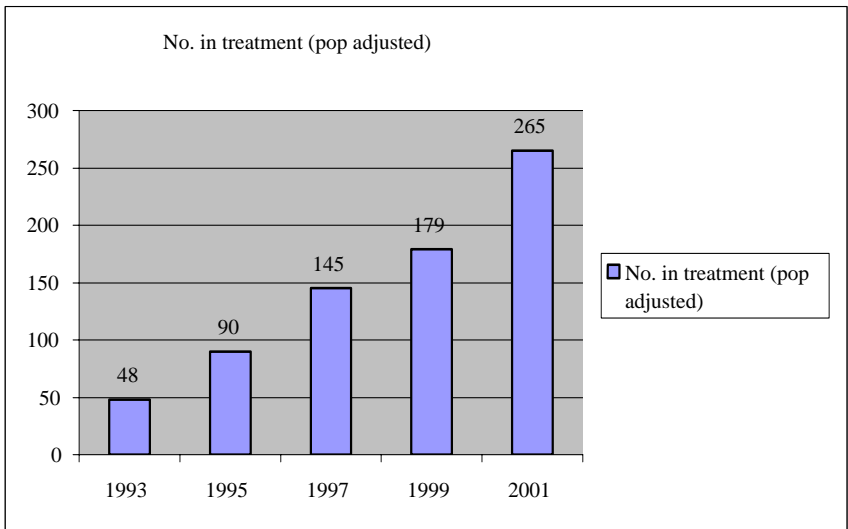


Local Drugs Task Forces

*A local response
to the drug problem*

Handbook

Estimated number of addicts in methadone substitution treatment per 100,000 population aged 16-60, Ireland



Health inequalities are reduced

Action	Deliverable	Target date	Responsibility
A programme of actions will be implemented to achieve National Anti-Poverty Strategy and Health targets for the reduction of health inequalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Target for premature mortality achieved ▪ Target for life expectancy for the travelling community achieved ▪ Targets for health of Travellers, asylum seekers and refugees developed ▪ Targets for birth weight rates achieved 	2007 2007 Immediate commencement of monitoring targets developed by 2003 2007	DoHC (lead)/ Service providers/ Relevant Government departments/ Inter-departmental Group on the National Anti-Poverty Strategy
Initiatives to eliminate barriers for disadvantaged groups to achieve healthier lifestyles will be developed and expanded	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implement fully existing policy in the National Health Promotion Strategy ▪ Community-level programmes introduced 	Ongoing Ongoing	Health boards

Rights enshrined in the Irish Constitution

Equal before the law

The Family

Education

Private Property

Religious Freedom

Nine grounds on which a case can be taken to the Equality Authority in relation to discrimination

- **Gender**
- **Marital status**
- **Family status**
- **Sexual orientation**
- **Religion**
- **Age**
- **Disability**
- **Race**
- **Traveller status**

Community Development

Sharing - power, skills, knowledge, experience

Needs of community (users/recipients) met

Collective and constructive action

Challenges discrimination

Helps health system to better understand social issues

More democratic and accountable health service

Primary carers' view of benefits of the hospital in Tallaght (n=317)

Nearby	296	93.4%
Services for all ages	84	26.5%
Employment for people in Tallaght	71	22.4%
Local transport adequate to access hospital (visits)	58	18.3%
Local transport adequate to access hospital (appointments)	53	16.7%
Immediate attention in an emergency	53	16.7%
Restaurant facilities available	36	11.4%
Easy to access information	34	10.7%
Parking facilities available	25	7.9%
Short waiting time for elective admissions	24	7.6%
Improve area profile	4	1.3%

Source: Long et al *People living in Tallaght and their health. 2002*

Primary carers' suggested additional health needs in Tallaght (n=176)

Maternity services for pregnant women	83	47.2%
Out of hours local GP service	51	29.0%
GP in accident and emergency	41	23.3%
Clinic specially to promote women's health	43	24.4%
Clinic specially to promote men's health	28	15.9%
Clinic specially to promote child health	29	16.5%
Contraceptive advice for adolescents	37	21.0%
Psychological services for adolescents	34	19.3%
Counselling service	26	14.8%
Drug/Alcohol services	39	22.2%
Long term care for the elderly	46	26.1%
Day care services for the elderly	39	22.2%
Respite services for the elderly	37	21.0%

Source: Long et al People living in Tallaght and their health. 2002

Strategy for Ireland

- Build social capital
- Community development
- Public Health Alliance
- Produce evidence
- Disseminate evidence
- Qualitative research
- Set policy
- Implement (fund) policy

Front page of Irish Times in Millennium Spire

**McCreevy
issues stern
warning on
public
spending**

**Tax
shortfall
expected**



Mr. J. P. McManus (left), Mr. Gerard Doherty and Mr. John Maguire at the Pro-Am competition of the Seamus the Seamus European Open at the Ballydoon Golf Club, Kildare, yesterday. They performed better than the Seamus the Seamus. Photograph by the Irish Times, page 25.