

THE RECENT TREND OF MORTALITY IN GREAT BRITAIN

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THIS note continues an annual series on mortality rates in Great Britain; the previous note in the series appeared in *J.I.A.* 106, 219 and dealt with mortality in 1977. Table 1 below shows central death-rates for Great Britain for the year 1978, together with the ratios of these rates to the corresponding average rates for the three years 1970-72, which have been taken as a standard. The rates have been calculated using the deaths recorded as occurring in Great Britain in 1978 and the 'home' population at 30 June 1978, i.e. the number of people actually in the country at the time, as estimated by the Registrars General of England and Wales and of Scotland.

Death-rates in this form for the years from 1961 to 1974 were given in an earlier note in this series, which appeared in *J.I.A.* 103, 213. The overall pattern of mortality changes over the last fifty years can be illustrated by reference to standardized group death-rates for a few broad age-groups. These are set out in Table 2 for each year from 1961, and for two earlier periods, 1930-32 and 1950-52. The ratios of these rates to the 1970-72 standard are given in Table 3, and they are also shown graphically for the years since 1961 in Figures 1 and 2. The age-groups used are five in number: under age 1 (infants), 1-14 (children), 15-44 (younger adults), 45-64 (the middle-aged) and 65 and over (the elderly). The group death-rates and ratios have been standardized by five-year age-groups on the age distribution of the Great Britain population at the 1971 Census, so as to eliminate the effect of changes in the age structure of the population.

Mortality overall (standardized by age groups) was some 1% higher in 1978 than in 1977. However, infant mortality (under age 1) fell for both sexes, as did female mortality at ages 75-84. There were also small reductions in mortality for males aged 1-4, 25-29 and 40-44, and for females aged 20-24 and 45-49.

The average level of mortality in the years 1976 to 1978 was about 5% lower than the average in the years 1970 to 1972, though this average is brought up by relatively high mortality in 1976. The average for 1977 and 1978 was some 6½% lower than 1970 to 1972.

Infant mortality in 1978 was 24% lower than in 1970 to 1972 for males, and 23% lower for females. Mortality in this age-group has dropped fairly steadily in recent years, and is now some 40% lower than the early 1960s. By contrast, the male 15-19 and 80-84 age-groups show a slight deterioration from the 1970 to 1972 levels, and several age-groups show only 1 or 2% improvement over this period.

Preliminary results for deaths in 1979 suggest little change overall from the 1978 levels, but a continuing fall in infant mortality.

Table 1. Death-rates for age-groups in Great Britain in the year 1978 and ratios of those rates to the rates for 1970-72

Age-groups	Death-rates in 1978		Ratios to 1970-72 rates	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
Under 1	·01530	·01201	·76	·77
1-4	·00058	·00051	·73	·76
5-9	·00032	·00022	·76	·76
10-14	·00030	·00021	·81	·95
15-19	·00090	·00036	1·01	·95
20-24	·00097	·00041	·98	·93
25-29	·00089	·00050	·98	1·00
30-34	·00102	·00066	·90	·90
35-39	·00162	·00110	·96	·92
40-44	·00257	·00187	·85	·90
45-49	·00487	·00313	·89	·87
50-54	·00893	·00533	·96	·99
55-59	·01458	·00795	·92	·97
60-64	·02469	·01256	·94	·98
65-69	·03950	·01986	·91	·95
70-74	·06297	·03246	·93	·91
75-79	·09796	·05529	·97	·90
80-84	·14597	·09600	1·01	·96
85 & over	·23470	·19124	·96	·98
All ages:				
Crude rates	·01237	·01155	·99	1·02
Standardized*	·01164	·01065	·94	·94

* Standardized on 1971 Census age distribution.

Table 2. *Standardized death-rates for age-groups in Great Britain (standardized on 1971 Census age distribution)*

Year	Under 1	1-14	15-44	45-64	65 and over	All ages
<i>Males</i>						
1930-32	·07953	·00368	·00396	·01738	·08831	·01721
1950-52	·03448	·00085	·00186	·01580	·08392	·01410
1961	·02545	·00062	·00151	·01485	·08114	·01323
1962	·02614	·00059	·00149	·01481	·08157	·01326
1963	·02512	·00062	·00152	·01503	·08372	·01354
1964	·02383	·00056	·00152	·01438	·07564	·01251
1965	·02246	·00058	·00152	·01439	·07742	·01268
1966	·02241	·00058	·00152	·01439	·07961	·01290
1967	·02093	·00056	·00144	·01376	·07484	·01219
1968	·02175	·00056	·00141	·01408	·07986	·01280
1969	·02089	·00055	·00142	·01447	·07914	·01280
1970	·02136	·00051	·00141	·01406	·07757	·01253
1971	·02021	·00052	·00139	·01360	·07524	·01215
1972	·01914	·00051	·00138	·01392	·07868	·01256
1973	·01889	·00050	·00139	·01371	·07690	·01233
1974	·01884	·00046	·00136	·01353	·07605	·01217
1975	·01738	·00045	·00132	·01317	·07540	·01197
1976	·01626	·00042	·00132	·01327	·07667	·01211
1977	·01588	·00038	·00126	·01272	·07264	·01151
1978	·01530	·00039	·00129	·01290	·07342	·01164
<i>Females</i>						
1930-32	·05973	·00333	·00341	·01300	·08229	·01908
1950-52	·02648	·00066	·00146	·00909	·07134	·01460
1961	·01983	·00044	·00096	·00784	·06405	·01281
1962	·01955	·00044	·00097	·00781	·06312	·01265
1963	·01928	·00044	·00095	·00787	·06444	·01287
1964	·01850	·00042	·00094	·00749	·05748	·01165
1965	·01705	·00044	·00094	·00748	·05822	·01175
1966	·01706	·00042	·00092	·00751	·05936	·01193
1967	·01664	·00041	·00089	·00726	·05545	·01122
1968	·01620	·00041	·00088	·00751	·05935	·01189
1969	·01582	·00037	·00090	·00769	·05768	·01167
1970	·01627	·00037	·00087	·00748	·05686	·01148
1971	·01540	·00037	·00084	·00735	·05453	·01106
1972	·01489	·00038	·00085	·00756	·05648	·01141
1973	·01448	·00035	·00084	·00739	·05607	·01129
1974	·01419	·00035	·00081	·00745	·05516	·01115
1975	·01375	·00031	·00082	·00725	·05416	·01093
1976	·01213	·00030	·00080	·00737	·05575	·01117
1977	·01232	·00028	·00076	·00709	·05253	·01058
1978	·01201	·00030	·00079	·00721	·05270	·01065

Table 3. Ratios of standardized death-rates for age-groups in Great Britain to the rates for 1970-72 (standardized on 1971 Census age distribution)

Year	Under 1	1-14	15-44	45-64	65 and over	All ages
<i>Males</i>						
1930-32	3.930	7.191	2.843	1.254	1.144	1.386
1950-52	1.704	1.657	1.334	1.140	1.088	1.135
1961	1.257	1.215	1.086	1.071	1.052	1.066
1962	1.292	1.156	1.066	1.069	1.057	1.068
1963	1.241	1.207	1.086	1.085	1.085	1.090
1964	1.177	1.104	1.092	1.038	.980	1.007
1965	1.110	1.139	1.093	1.038	1.003	1.021
1966	1.107	1.132	1.089	1.038	1.032	1.039
1967	1.034	1.092	1.029	.993	.970	.982
1968	1.075	1.102	1.010	1.016	1.035	1.030
1969	1.032	1.068	1.021	1.044	1.026	1.031
1970	1.055	1.001	1.013	1.015	1.005	1.009
1971	.999	1.008	.998	.981	.975	.979
1972	.946	.991	.989	1.004	1.020	1.012
1973	.933	.971	1.000	.989	.997	.993
1974	.931	.899	.976	.976	.986	.980
1975	.859	.871	.949	.950	.977	.964
1976	.803	.827	.949	.957	.994	.975
1977	.785	.752	.901	.918	.941	.927
1978	.756	.760	.928	.931	.952	.938
<i>Females</i>						
1930-32	3.849	8.891	3.991	1.743	1.471	1.686
1950-52	1.706	1.759	1.709	1.218	1.275	1.290
1961	1.278	1.179	1.125	1.051	1.145	1.132
1962	1.260	1.173	1.131	1.047	1.128	1.118
1963	1.242	1.185	1.116	1.055	1.152	1.137
1964	1.192	1.132	1.096	1.004	1.027	1.030
1965	1.099	1.166	1.106	1.002	1.040	1.038
1966	1.099	1.122	1.079	1.007	1.061	1.054
1967	1.072	1.093	1.037	.973	.991	.992
1968	1.044	1.108	1.025	1.006	1.061	1.051
1969	1.019	.991	1.053	1.031	1.031	1.031
1970	1.048	.990	1.015	1.003	1.016	1.014
1971	.992	1.000	.990	.985	.975	.977
1972	.959	1.010	.995	1.013	1.009	1.008
1973	.933	.930	.979	.990	1.002	.998
1974	.914	.923	.953	.998	.986	.985
1975	.886	.830	.956	.972	.968	.966
1976	.781	.793	.934	.987	.996	.987
1977	.794	.751	.894	.950	.939	.935
1978	.774	.803	.922	.966	.942	.941

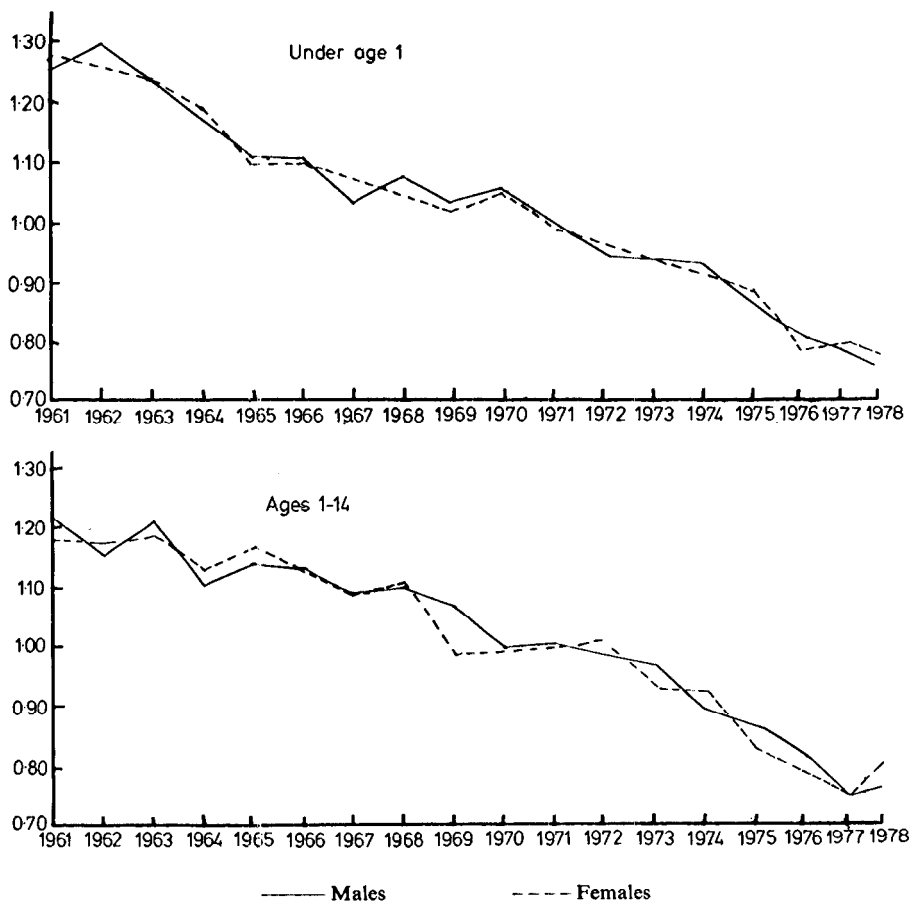


Figure 1. Ratios of Standardized Group death-rates to 1970-72 rates—Children.

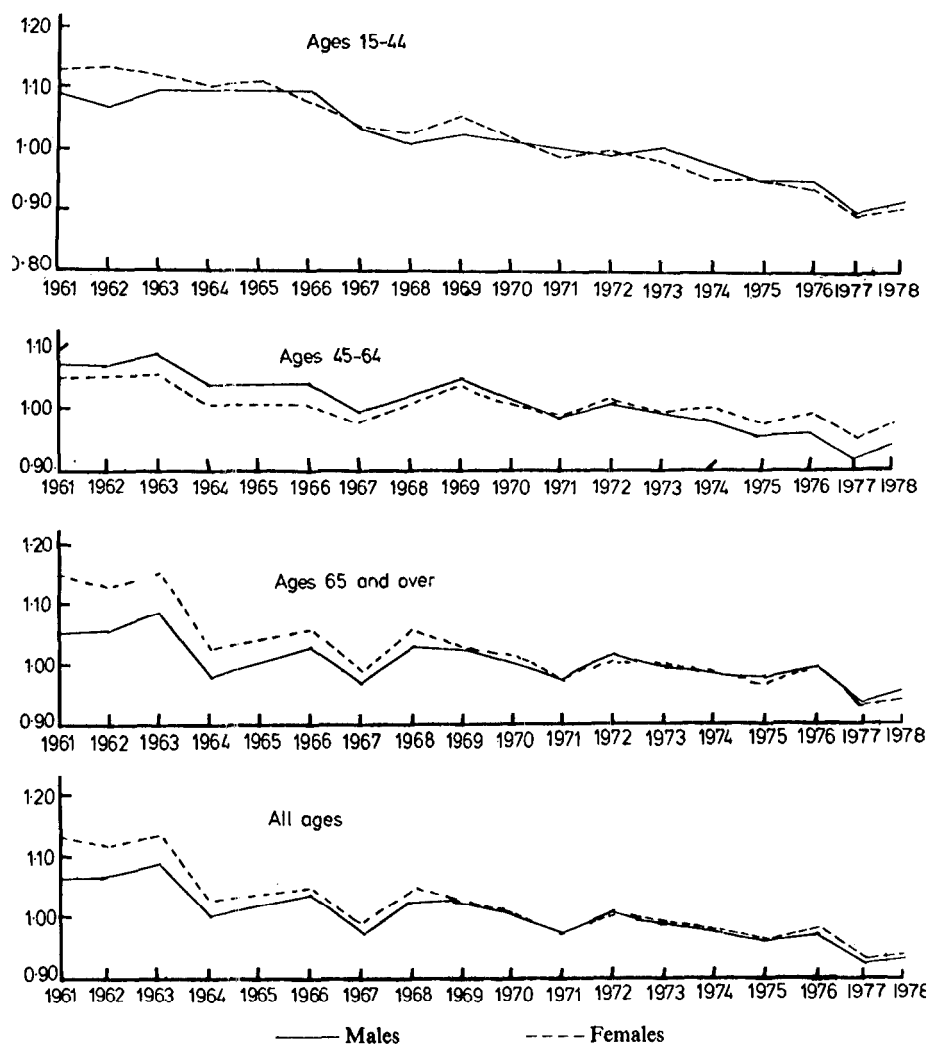


Figure 2. Ratios of Standardized Group death-rates to 1970-72 rates—Adults and all ages.