Carer-reported health conditions among seven-year-old children in Northern Ireland in 2011

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Longstanding health conditions among children can be associated with reduced quality of life and poorer outcomes for children and their families.
Aims of study

▷ Generate population prevalence estimates of carer-reported health conditions among seven-year-old children in Northern Ireland

▷ Describe how national prevalence varies with important characteristics

▷ Describe how prevalence varies across 11 LGD’s
Method (1)

- Millennium Cohort Study, Sweep 4, children aged 7 years

- Information about children from their parents/carers:
  - *any* longstanding illness, disability or infirmity;
  - lifetime asthma, or asthma symptoms in the past 12 months;
  - lifetime eczema;
  - lifetime sight problems requiring treatment;
  - and lifetime hearing problems requiring treatment
Method (2)

▷ Estimate national prevalence: per cent estimate from MCS survey applied to NI Census 2011

▷ Describe how national prevalence varies with important characteristics (risk factors):
  • Identified an initial set of characteristics/risk factors in MCS
  • Explored the roles of these risk factors
  • Analyses were weighted to the estimated population of seven-year-olds living in Northern Ireland in 2011
Findings
Percent of 7-year-olds in NI with these conditions

- Longstanding illness, disability or infirmity (currently): 19.1%
- Asthma (ever) or asthma symptoms (past 12 months): 22.9%
- Eczema (ever): 26.1%
- Hearing problem requiring treatment (ever): 8.3%
- Sight problem requiring treatment (ever): 16.8%
Looking at conditions together

- No conditions: 47%
- One condition: 28%
- Two conditions: 15%
- Three or more conditions: 10%
Burden of these serious health conditions unequally distributed across seven-year-old population
Risks accumulate...

Prevalence of asthma / asthma symptoms:

12.8%
- Girls
- Carer did not have a condition
- Mother did not smoke during pregnancy

43.8%
- Boys
- Carer has a condition
- Mother smoked during pregnancy
Findings: Subnational prevalence %

Variation of prevalence of asthma/asthma symptoms across LGD’s due to variation in characteristics:

- Child’s sex
- Primary carer with longstanding illness
- Smoking during pregnancy

Differences in prevalence % not statistically significant
Limitations

• sample size
• attrition over time
• representativeness
• additional weight adjustment
• unavailability of some data at sub-national level
Conclusion

• Inequalities in health evident at this early age

• Understanding the characteristics of these young children and their families can help us to develop policies and plan services and interventions to support these children and their families.
• Main report and infographic
• Detailed data tables
• Childhood themes in IPH Community Profiles Tool

http://chronicconditions.thehealthwell.info
Thanks!

Any questions?

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