



Health in London

Review of the London Health Strategy high level indicators

- 2003 update
- focus on the experience of disabled Londoners

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About the report

This report presents work developed by the Greater London Authority and the London Health Observatory, brought together and published by the London Health Commission.

Aims of the report

- to provide London-wide information on health and the determinants of health in a form that will support discussion and action by agencies at local, regional and national level
- to identify important inequalities in health and the determinants of health in London, and to track trends in inequalities
- to highlight how disabled people in London experience the determinants of health, indicating key areas where action is needed to reduce inequality
- where appropriate, to draw out implications for action from the report's findings.

Editorial notes

Ethnicity: There is much debate about terminology relating to race and ethnicity and about whether any terms or categories, including those used in official statistics (e.g. 'non-white'), can claim to be accurate, appropriate, sensitive or value free. We can only touch on the existence of this debate here. No single term is entirely adequate and none will serve all purposes, as most commentators observe. Clearly, however, some choice of terms has to be made, including in relation to citing official statistics. Accordingly, a range of 'umbrella' terms is used in this publication.

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Foreword

Health in London was first published in March 2002, and provided much-needed insights into patterns of health between boroughs and communities and across London as a whole. The report was welcomed and put to practical use by a wide range of agencies and partnerships at local, regional and national level. This year's update has again been made possible by partnership working between the London Health Commission, Greater London Authority and the London Health Observatory.

When I set up the independent London Health Commission in 2000, my hope was that it would form a focus for collective action across the capital to strengthen work in key areas that influence the health and well-being of Londoners. The commitment to map and respond to inequalities in health was then and is now a key driving force. This report adds to our understanding of health in London, offers pointers to where further research is needed and highlights opportunities for practical action.



Inequalities in health take many different forms and arise from a variety of causes. It is now accepted that there are clear relationships between wealth and health (and London has three out of five of the most deprived boroughs in England). However, many other factors also affect people's health, including ethnicity, social networks, education, and living and working conditions. The inter-relationships between factors of this kind are complex in nature. For some individuals and communities they may have a 'snowballing' effect where the combined negative impact is strong.

2003 is the European Year of Disabled People, and our second *Health in London* report includes a focus on the experience of disabled Londoners, who make up over 20 per cent of our population. The report clearly shows some of the inequalities experienced by disabled people regarding access to the opportunities and services that make a difference to health and well-being. It also demonstrates the lack of research and information on many aspects of disabled people's lives, and identifies areas for further work. *Health in London* contributes to our ongoing work with partners to better understand and tackle the barriers affecting the lives of disabled people and is a timely reminder of the challenges we all face in making London a more accessible and inclusive city.

The review makes it clear that London continues to be a much healthier place for some than for others. I commend this report to those individuals, organisations, agencies and partnerships who want to know more about the scale and nature of the task facing all of us in driving forward health improvement and tackling health inequalities in London.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ken Livingstone". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Ken Livingstone
Mayor of London

