

## Alcohol deaths in young women show 'worrying rise', warns study

The number of deaths of women born in the 1970s has "disproportionately increased" since the middle of the last decade

Ella Pickover

There has been a "worrying" increase in the number of women in their 30s and 40s who are dying from alcohol misuse, research suggests.

Despite a downward national trend in the number of alcohol-related deaths in England and Scotland, the number of deaths of women born in the 1970s has "disproportionately increased" since the middle of the last decade, the study found.

The researchers urged health officials use the figures as a "warning signal". The study, published online in the Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health, focused on Glasgow, Liverpool and Manchester, all of which have similar levels of poor health and deprivation. Researchers analysed trends in deaths related to alcohol in all three cities from the 1980s up to 2011 among people born between 1910 to 1979.

In the early 1980s, rates of alcohol related deaths were three times as high in Glasgow as they were in Liverpool and Manchester, and rates rose over the next three decades in all three cities. Death rates stabilised in all three cities by the early 2000s, and fell during the latter part of the decade in all three - apart from in women born during the 1970s.

The researchers said that unlike the men born at this time, women in Glasgow were dying from alcohol related causes at a much earlier age than women born earlier than 1970 and in "notable numbers" during the late 1990s and early 2000s.

They noted similar trends in deaths in Liverpool and Manchester. "The similarity of trends in alcohol-related deaths in young women in Glasgow, Manchester and Liverpool raises real concerns for the long-term health of this cohort in both England and Scotland," they said. "It is imperative that this early warning sign is acted upon. Given this increase in the younger cohort is seen in all three cities it is hard to dismiss this as a city-specific phenomenon. "Failure to have a policy response to this new trend may result in the effects of this increase being played out for decades to come."

PA