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Presented at the Living to 100 Symposium

Orlando, Fla.

January 4–6, 2017

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Regional Mortality in the United States at Ages 80 and Older: An Analysis of Direct Estimates, 1959–2011

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Abstract

The almost-extinct cohort method was used to produce direct mortality estimates for states of the United States in the period 1959–2011 and at ages 80 and older. The estimates produced by this method were found unreliable for data for the 1960s, due to heavy age misreporting in the U.S. data on deaths. However, following dramatic improvements in the quality of U.S. data at older ages over the last four decades, mortality estimates for the period 2000–2011 were found to be reasonably good. In 2000–2011, levels of mortality in the United States were shown to be very similar to average levels of mortality in Japan (with the exception of Japanese females) and in 12 European countries with high longevity. Disparities in mortality among U.S. states were also comparable with disparities existing in the 13 high-longevity countries. Overall, mortality was lower in Western and Northeastern U.S. states and higher in Southern U.S. states. Hawaii stood out as a state with exceptionally high survival rates at advanced ages.

The views expressed in the paper do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of the United Nations Secretariat or Duke University.

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