

## **R027: Mortality rates of dementia and associated factors in Northern Ireland**

Dementia is a term used to describe a broad group of conditions that affect the brain and causes a progressive cognitive decline in the ability to think, learn and remember. At present there is no cure for dementia, nor a way to slow down its progress. The occurrence of dementia, together with the major health and social care burden associated with it, is predicted to increase considerably with our ageing population (Department of Health Social Services and Public Safety Northern Ireland, 2011).

Dementia shortens life expectancy, with survival estimates ranging from 1 to 13 years (Garcia-Ptacek et al., 2014). Understanding mortality rates (incidence of death) in dementia is essential for resource planning, public and economic policy and will provide valuable information to the individual with dementia, their carers and their medical team (Ganguli, Dodge, Shen, Pandav, & DeKosky, 2005). Several factors have been shown to influence mortality in dementia. For instance, research has shown that females have a lower rate of mortality in comparison to males (Ganguli et al., 2005; Wolfson et al., 2001), whilst living alone, being in residential care and receiving a higher numbers of prescribed medications have been shown to significantly increase mortality rates (Cermakova et al., 2017).

However, we know very little about the mortality rates associated with dementia in Northern Ireland. The primary research aim is to assess the mortality rates of dementia in Northern Ireland and what other factors, such as gender and age may also be associated with mortality.