

Infant Feeding Survey 2010

Data Quality Statement

Background

The 2010 Infant Feeding Survey is the eighth in a series of national surveys. These surveys have been conducted every five years since 1975, on behalf of the four Health Departments in the United Kingdom. This latest survey was carried out by IFF Research, in partnership with Professor Mary Renfrew of the University of Dundee, on behalf of the Health and Social Care Information Centre.

The main aim of the survey is to provide estimates of the incidence, prevalence and duration of breastfeeding and other feeding practices adopted by mothers from the birth of their baby up to around ten months. The survey also collects information about the smoking and drinking behaviour of mothers before, during and after pregnancy.

The survey consists of a longitudinal design with data being collected in three stages. The first stage is collected when the babies are approximately 6-10 weeks old, the second when they are 4-6 months old and the third when they are 8-10 months old.

The report is published in two stages;

- Early Results: These are based on the first stage of the survey only and cover two key topics; the initial incidence of breastfeeding and smoking during pregnancy. The early results for IFS 2010 were published in June 2011.
- Final Results: These are based on all three stages of the survey. The final results for IFS 2010 were published on 20 November 2012.

Data Collection and Burden

The survey consists of a longitudinal design (similar to previous surveys in this series) with data being collected in three stages. The first stage is collected from mothers when the babies are approximately 6-10 weeks old, the second when they are 4-6 months old and the third when they are 8-10 months old.

The Stage 1 questionnaire was 150 questions long, the Stage 2 questionnaire was 99 questions long and the Stage 3 questionnaire was 118 questions long. The estimated completion time for each of the questionnaires was 25-30 minutes.

A total of 15,724 mothers returned the Stage 1 questionnaire, representing a response rate of 51%. A total of 12,565 mothers completed the Stage 2 questionnaire, representing a response rate of 82%. A total of 10,768 mothers returned the Stage 3 questionnaire, representing a response rate of 86%.

Timeliness

The Infant Feeding Survey has been conducted every five years since 1975 and results from the survey are published accordingly.

In June 2011, an Early Results report was published based on findings from Stage 1 of the survey only, covering two key topics; the initial incidence of breastfeeding and smoking during pregnancy.

Stage 3 fieldwork was completed in August 2011 and so this report contains key findings from all stages of the survey.

Accessibility

The report is published online and is available free of charge alongside all of the tables. The IFS 2010 full dataset will be sent to the UK Data Archive for processing within 3 months of publication.

Confidentiality

No personal/individual level information is received by the Health and Social Care Information Centre or contained in the report. Appropriate measures are taken to ensure the data are not identifiable or disclosive.

Comparability

Between 1980 and 1990 the Infant Feeding Survey was only conducted in England and Wales and Scotland. This means that historically data on the total sample have been presented for Great Britain. In the 2000 survey it was decided to reflect the fact that the survey had also been conducted in Northern Ireland since 1990, and present the total sample results at UK level. This has been repeated for the 2010 survey, except for any analysis by ethnicity. The ethnicity question was not asked in Northern Ireland (the 2001 Census showed that 99% of the population in Northern Ireland were White), and therefore total sample estimates by ethnicity are presented for Great Britain.

The 2005 survey was the first survey designed to present separate estimates for Wales. Prior to this the sample in England and Wales had been drawn as a single sample, with the Welsh part of the sample being too small to present separate results.

The sample design and fieldwork procedures for 2010 were broadly similar to those used in the 2005 survey.

Accuracy

As the data are based on a sample of mothers, the estimates are subject to sampling error. [Appendix B](#) details the sampling errors for this survey, and includes true standard errors and design effects calculated for key survey estimates.

In general, attention is drawn to differences between estimates only when they are significant at the 95% confidence level, thus indicating that there is less than 5% probability that the observed difference could be due to random sampling variation when no difference occurred in the population from which the sample is drawn.

Uses and Users

On Friday 30 December 2011, the HSCIC launched a public consultation on the Lifestyles Surveys which included the *Health Survey for England, Smoking Drinking and Drug Use Among Young People in England* and the *Infant Feeding Survey*. The aim of this consultation was to engage with the users of these statistics to gain a fuller understanding of the users and uses, to ensure the surveys are relevant and meaningful to the needs of user and to seek the views of users on the content on format of the publications. The consultation closed on 23rd March 2012.

Twenty five users responded to the consultation, these came from Research organisations and Academia, Public Health Organisations, Other NHS organisations and the Department of Health.

The following uses were identified via the consultation;

- Smoking during pregnancy was given by one user as being the most useful,
- The datasets were also mentioned as being particularly useful.
- One of the questions in the consultation asked whether requirements are currently being met by the data available. Although we did not receive a large number of responses to this question, in general users' requirements were being sufficiently met.

Further information on this and the outcome review can be found at: <http://www.ic.nhs.uk/work-with-us/consultations/lifestyles-surveys-consultation-review>