



MENS HEALTH MATTERS

20

23



CITY OF LONDON AND HACKNEY

PHIT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Movember, also known as Men's Health Awareness Month, encourages men to talk openly about their health, seek help, and take steps for a healthier and happier life.
- Movember focuses on mental health, preventing suicide, prostate cancer, and testicular cancer.
- In Hackney, men live for about six years less than women, and they spend about 1.3 fewer years in good health. In the City of London, men live for about two years less than women.
- Depression is a relatively common mental health condition, but it can pose a serious risk to health if left untreated.
- It is estimated that depression is underreported by about 40% among men in Hackney and about 30% among men in the City of London.
- Young people, black residents, and those living in the most deprived areas are the least likely to seek help for depression.
- Making good choices like avoiding drugs, eating healthily, and staying active can reduce the risk of mental health problems.
- The chance of surviving prostate and testicular cancer improves when the cancer is diagnosed at an early stage. So, it's important to know the signs to watch out for.
- Prostate cancer is the most common cancer to be diagnosed among men, with around 1 in 6 men being diagnosed during their lifetime.
- In Hackney and the City of London, prostate cancer causes 13% of male cancer-related deaths.
- Testicular cancer is not common, making up only 1% of male cancers. However, it is common among young men, with 81% of cases found in those aged 15 to 49 in the UK.
- Testicular cancer survival has improved over the last 50 years and is now one of the most treatable cancers when well-managed. There have been very few deaths from testicular cancer in Hackney and the City of London recently.

CONTENT

- [Executive Summary](#)
- [Content](#)
- [Mens Health Matters](#)
- [Mental Health and Suicide](#)
- [Prostate and Testicular Cancer](#)
- [Local Movember Events](#)
- [References](#)



MENS HEALTH MATTERS

Movember, also known as Men's Health Awareness Month, is a yearly worldwide event that's held in November. During this month people often grow moustaches to raise money for charity. The goal of this is to encourage men to **discuss their health, seek help when needed,** and **make choices** that enable them to lead **healthier** and **happier** lives. (1)

Movember is really important when we think about how men's health can be different. In 2021, men born in Hackney were expected to live to 76 years, which was **six years less than women**, who were expected to live to 82 years. Hackney's male life expectancy was the second lowest in London and significantly lower than the average for both London and England. (2)

Data for 2021 is not available for the City of London due to small counts. However, looking at data from 2013 to 2017, men born in the City of London were expected to **live for two years less than women**. Men had an average life expectancy of 89 years, while women could expect to live for 91 years. These numbers are higher than the national average, but they haven't changed much over the past decade, showing that the gap between men and women hasn't become smaller. (3)

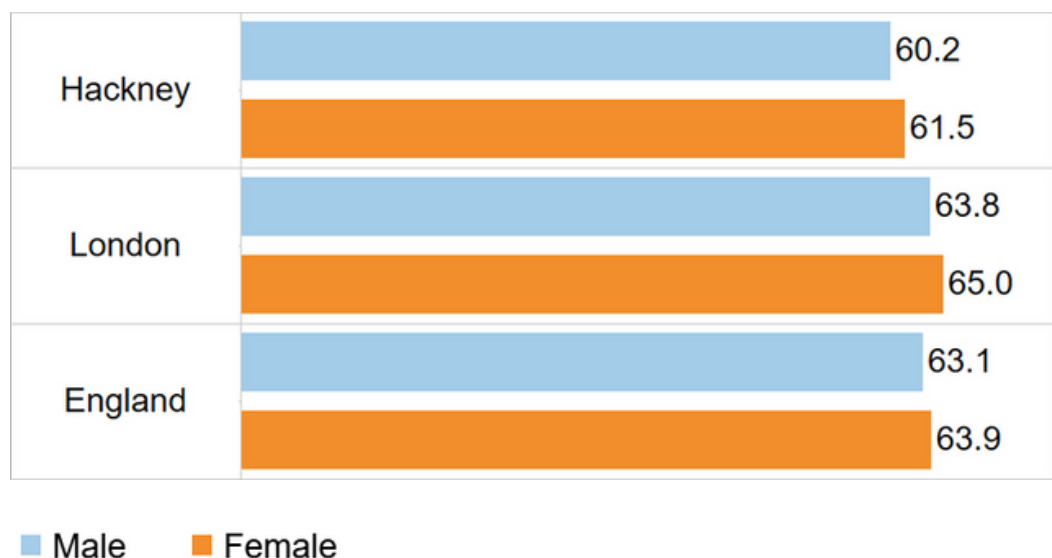
Figure 1. Average life expectancy at birth by sex and area of residence, Hackney and England, 2021, and City of London, 2013 to 2017. (2, 3)



HEALTHY LIFE EXPECTANCY

Men are also likely to **live for a shorter amount of time in good health**. (4) In Hackney, a man born between 2018 and 2020 could expect **1.3 years less of good health** compared to a woman. (2) However, when we combine the number of years that a person can expect to live in good health with their overall life expectancy, women tend to live longer lives, but they also tend to have more time in poor health.

Figure 2. Average number of years spent in full health by sex and area of residence, 2018 to 2020. (2)



In 2019, the main factors that caused death at an early age in England were deaths from **cancer** and cardiovascular diseases. (5)

In 2019, the most **reasons** for a **shorter life in good health** were ongoing health issues like **cancer**, as well as poor recent **mental health** and emotional wellbeing. (5)

In line with this, Movember focuses on raising awareness about **mental health, suicide prevention, prostate cancer, and testicular cancer**. The report below explores these topics within the context of Hackney and the City of London.

MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE



Mental health encompasses **emotional, psychological, and social wellbeing**, and shapes how people think, feel, and interact with the world around them. This not only affects a person's own life but also impacts their family, community, and society as a whole.

It's important to focus on men's mental health because gender-based stereotypes often make men feel like they have to hide their feelings and can't ask for help. When left untreated, mental health problems can worsen and, sadly, even lead to suicide. When we talk about men's mental health, we **challenge outdated beliefs, encourage open conversations**, and help men to **take charge of their wellbeing**. This benefits individuals but also plays an important role in the broader effort to address mental health issues across all people.

MENTAL HEALTH

Residents age 16+ with a common mental health issue

24% Hackney

13% City of London

In 2017, the proportion of adults diagnosed with common mental health problems like depression and anxiety was around 24% in Hackney and 13% in the City of London. This compared to 19% in London and 17% in England. However, these numbers might be an underestimate because not everyone seeks help when they experience mental health issues. (7)

As of 2022, 1.9% of men in Hackney and 0.8% of men in the City of London had a severe mental illness (SMI) recorded on their patient record. This aligns with estimates for the English population as a whole. (7)

Nationally, about 14% of men had moderate to severe depressive symptoms between September and October 2022. (6) In line with common mental health trends, we would expect higher figures in Hackney and lower figures in the City of London. However, in April 2022, only 11% of men in Hackney and 7% of men in the City of London who were registered with a GP in North East London had been officially diagnosed with depression. This difference between expected and confirmed depression cases shows that many men suffer in silence, without getting diagnosed and the support they need. (7)

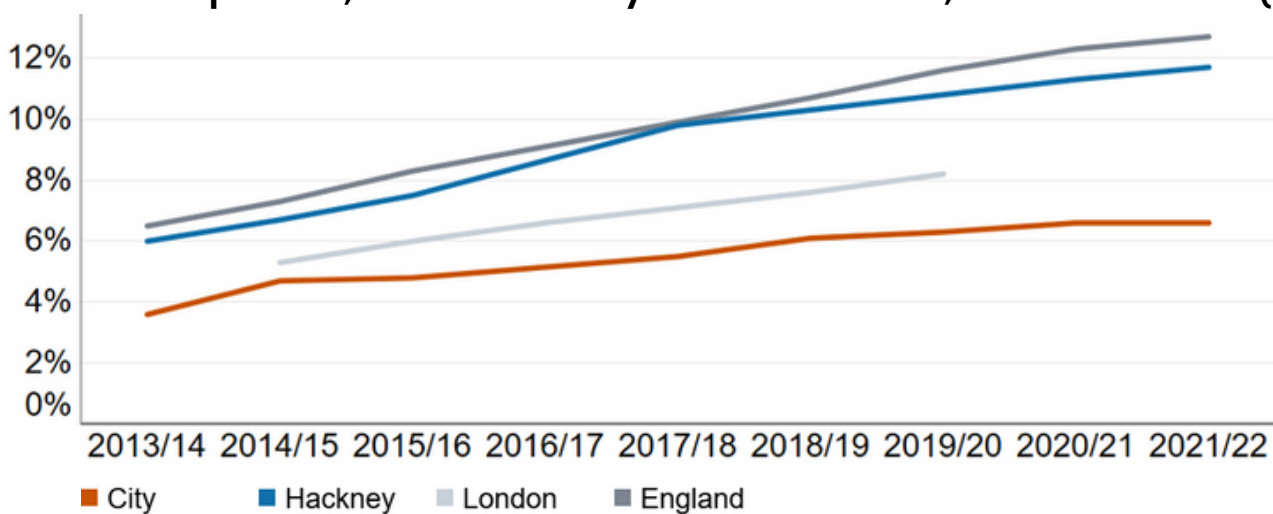
Figure 3. Comparison of estimated depression in the population aged 16+ to recorded depression on GP records by area of residence, 2022. (2)



MENTAL HEALTH OVER TIME AND BY POPULATION GROUP

In the past eight years, **the number of adults* in Hackney and the City of London registered with depression by their GP has nearly doubled**. This reflects both higher need and more people seeking help, indicating a somewhat positive change.

Figure 4. Proportion of the adult population (18+) registered with a GP with recorded depression, over time and by area of residence, men and women. (2)



Depression rates in Hackney and the City of London vary based on **age, ethnicity, and level of deprivation**. The following groups show the biggest gaps between estimated and recorded depression rates: (6, 7)

16-29 year olds

Younger people are generally more accepting and informed about mental health, but they also face **challenges accessing support** due to long waiting lists and other challenges.

Black residents

Black residents often face the biggest gap in accessing services because of obstacles like **family and community stigmas**, as well as **cultural differences in recognising symptoms**. (9)

Most deprived

Nationally, people living in the most deprived areas were also the only population group to record an increase in depression between July-August 2021 and September-October 2022. People in these areas are **less likely to seek help, receive mental health support, or have their condition recorded**. Many prefer to use voluntary services instead of the NHS.

*Registered with a GP in North East London.

MORTALITY

People with SMIs are at a higher risk of health problems like obesity, asthma, diabetes, and heart diseases. They also go to urgent care more often and have a **higher risk of early death**. In Hackney and the City of London, adults with **SMI** were **223% more likely to die prematurely** between 2018 and 2022 compared to those without SMI. This was lower than the averages in London (389%) and England (390%). (2)

SUICIDE

Suicide is closely linked to mental health, and **mental health disorders are a significant risk factor for suicidal thoughts** and behaviors. (11)

Between July 2018 and 2023, **63 deaths** recorded among resident of Hackney and the City of London had an underlying cause* of suicide. **Older residents** and those **living in the most deprived areas** are **overrepresented** in these statistics: (10,12)

62% were recorded among men.

49% were among 50 to 69 year olds despite this age group only accounting for 21% of the total male population.

59% were among residents living in the most deprived areas

0% were recorded in least deprived areas despite 11% of all depression cases being recorded in these areas.

It's important to note that while mental health disorders are a significant risk factor for suicide, not everyone with a mental health issue will have thoughts of self-harm or suicide. Most people with mental health challenges can get better with the right treatment and support. Also, not everyone who dies by suicide has a mental health problem.

Recognising signs of distress, offering support, and connecting people with mental health professionals is vital for suicide prevention. If you or someone you know is in crisis or experiencing thoughts of suicide, help is available:

<https://hackney.gov.uk/mental-health>

*Underlying cause: the illness or injury that started the chain of events directly leading to death, or the situation of the accident or violence that caused the deadly injury.

REDUCING RISK

Personal behaviours and lifestyle choices can reduce the risk of mental health conditions

Substance use



People who use substances like alcohol or drugs are more likely to develop a wide range of health problems, including mental health issues and cancer. However, help is available locally, and information on this can be found on Hackney's Drug Support and Advice page:

<https://hackney.gov.uk/substance-misuse>

Poor nutrition



Nutrition plays a large role in mental health, affecting brain function, inflammation, weight, body image, and sleep quality. The [Healthier Together Hackney](#) referral program provides support for weight management and physical activity to help people achieve their personal goals.

Physical activity



Being active can improve mental health by reducing feelings of stress, improving sleep quality, and enhancing self-esteem. (12) Exercise can include things like walking, running, cycling or team sports. What's most effective varies from person to person.

Lack of Social Support



Building and maintaining supportive relationships can improve mental health. Residents are able to access local community activities and groups to improve their wellbeing and social connections. Information about these is available on Hackney's Being Sociable page:

<https://hackney.gov.uk/being-sociable>

PROSTATE AND TESTICULAR CANCER



Prostate and testicular cancers are important health issues for men. Prostate cancer is the most common male cancer (excluding skin cancer), and testicular cancer, though less common, can be particularly aggressive if not detected early. Both cancers highlight the importance of regular health check-ups and self-examinations.

PROSTATE CANCER

The prostate is a small gland in the pelvis and is part of the male reproductive system. It's about the size of a walnut and surrounds the urethra, located between the penis and the bladder. (14)

In the UK, prostate cancer is the most common type of male cancer. Roughly **1 in 6 UK** men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer in their lifetime. (15)

159
cases locally
in 2020

Male genital organ cancer accounted for 33% of all new male malignant cancer cases recorded among Hackney and City residents in 2018. This includes testicular and penile cancer, but the majority of cases are thought to be attributed to prostate cancer. (16)

North East London recorded a slightly lower rate of prostate cancer than the national average in 2020 at **137 new cases per 100,000** population compared to the national average of **144 cases per 100,000** population. (16)

A person's risk of developing prostate cancer depends on various factors. The following non-modifiable factors can increase a person's risk of developing prostate cancer: (15, 16)

AGE

97% of all cases diagnosed among residents of North East London in 2019 were among those aged 50 and over.

ETHNICITY

Prostate cancer is more common in black men than white men and less common in Asian men.

FAMILY HISTORY

Men with a father or brother that has had prostate cancer are at a slightly increased risk themselves.

MODIFIABLE FACTORS*

While new evidence suggests obesity may increase prostate cancer risk, no modifiable factors have been definitively linked to prostate cancer.

*Modifiable risk factors are those factors that we can do something about through changes to our behaviour, lifestyle, or through medical intervention

Prostate cancer survival in the UK has tripled in the last 50 years. This is mostly thought to be caused by an increase in PSA testing*, which can result in earlier diagnosis.

In the 1970s, 25% of men diagnosed with prostate cancer in the UK survived for at least ten years post-diagnosis, compared to 84% in 2010. (15)

In North East London, between 2015 and 2019, 89%* residents survived for at least four years following a prostate cancer diagnosis. (17)

117

deaths locally Jul
2018 - Jun 2023

In Hackney and the City of London, there were 117 deaths attributed to prostate cancer between July 2018 and June 2023.


13%


of all cancer
deaths


These made up 13% of all male cancer-related deaths, even though prostate cancer accounted for about 33% of all male cancer cases. This suggests that, while prostate cancer is common, it tends to be less deadly than some other types of cancer. (10)

SYMPTOMS

In order for prostate cancer to be detected earlier, it is important that its symptoms are well known. **Key symptoms include:** (14)

 **Frequent
nightly toilet
trips**

 **Difficulty
peeing**

 **A change in
your flow
when you pee**

 **Peeing more**

These symptoms have been promoted as part of the North East London Cancer Alliance's '**It's not a game**' [campaign](https://nelca.mypsatests.org.uk/Information/). This campaign also provides free PSA home testing kits: <https://nelca.mypsatests.org.uk/Information/>

The North East London Cancer Alliance is also running a **Cancer Awareness in Schools** project as part of awareness raising activities, focusing on signs, symptoms, body examination and screening programmes: <https://wearecatts.co.uk/about/>

Once detected, treatment depends on the cancer's size, whether it has spread, and the patient's overall health. For more information about treatment types available, visit [Cancer Research UK's Treatment for Prostate Cancer page](#).

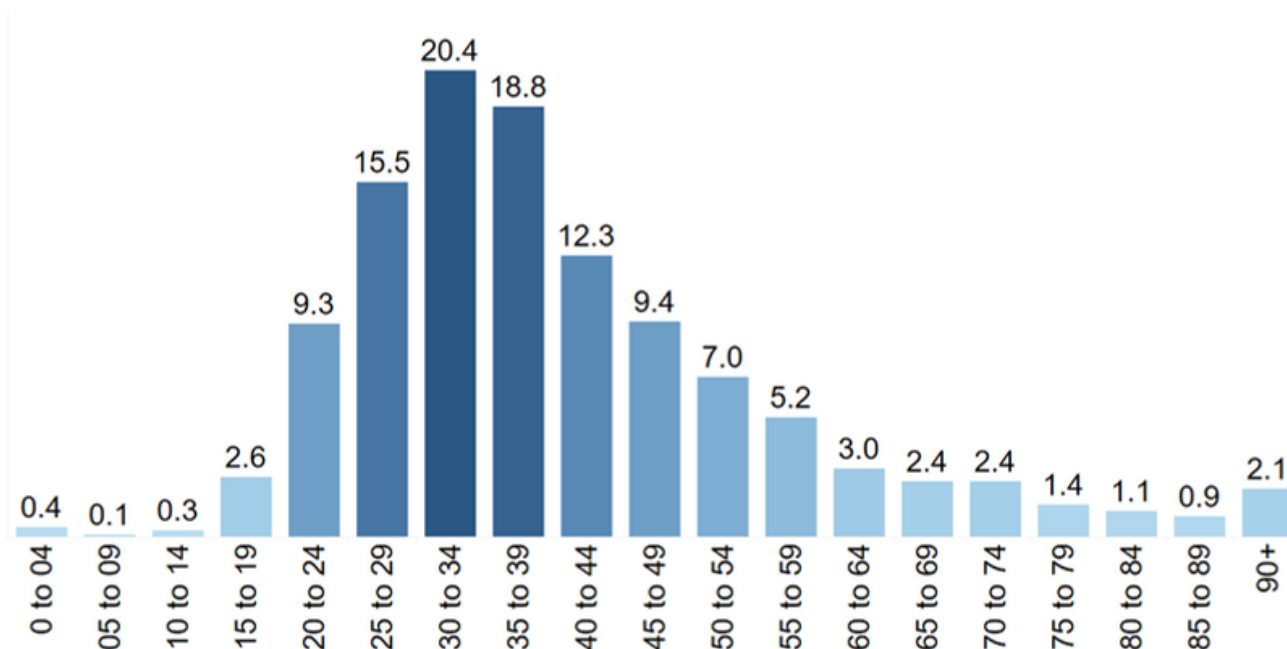
*PSA testing is a blood test to help detect prostate cancer which can be completed at a GP surgery.

TESTICULAR CANCER

Testicular cancer is relatively rare, accounting for just 1% of all male cancers. (18)

However, testicular cancer is unique because it **mainly affects younger** men. Although relatively uncommon, it's the most common cancer recorded among men aged **15 to 49**. In the UK between 2016 and 2018, **81%** of testicular cancer cases were diagnosed in this age group. (19)

Figure 5. Age-specific incidence rates per 100,000 for testicular cancer, male population, UK, 2016-2018 (19)



Applying age-specific rates to Hackney and the City of London's population, 11 residents aged between 15 and 49 can expect to be diagnosed with testicular cancer each year. (12,19)

Other risk factors associated with testicular cancer in the UK include:

Ethnicity White men have a higher risk of developing testicular cancer than men from other ethnic groups. (18)

Deprivation Unlike most cancers, people living in the least deprived areas are more likely to get testicular cancer than those in the most deprived areas. (19)

Family history Having a close relative with a history of testicular cancer increases a person's risk of developing it. (20)

Similarly to prostate cancer, no modifiable factors have been conclusively linked with testicular cancer risk. (18)

The chances of surviving testicular cancer has increased in the last 50 years in the UK, thought to be because of advances in combination chemotherapy. In the 1970s, around 69% of men diagnosed with testicular cancer survived their disease beyond ten years, however by the 2010s this fell to roughly 98%. (18)

Testicular cancer has become one of the most treatable types of cancer, offering a good prognosis when managed well. (20).

Very few deaths from testicular cancer have been recorded among residents of Hackney and the City of London in the last seven and a half years (Jan 2015 to Jun 2023). (10)

SYMPTOMS

Like prostate cancer, survival rates for testicular cancer are influenced by the stage at diagnosis: in the UK between 2007 and 2017, people diagnosed at stage four had a 19% chance of surviving for 10 years. (21)

To detect testicular cancer early, it's important that its symptoms are well-known. **The most common symptoms include:**



hard lumps



smooth or rounded lumps



changes in size, shape, or consistency

Other symptoms include: an increase in the firmness of a testicle, a dull ache or sharp pain in the testicles or scrotum, which can come and go, and a feeling of heaviness in the scrotum. (20)

A **Testicular Cancer in Schools campaign** is about to launch in schools across North East London. Its goals include promoting self-examination, educating students, parents, and teachers, as well as implementing Testicular Health programs in schools. You can find lesson plans, videos, and resources for parents on testicular cancer at: <https://www.testicularhealth.info/educational.html>

Once detected, treatment can begin. For more information about the treatment types available, visit the [NHS Testicular Cancer Treatment page](#)

LOCAL MOVEMBER EVENTS

Join in with nearby Movember events in or around Hackney and the City of London, including:

'A Month of Naked Men in the Library'

- Location: Homerton Library, Homerton High Street, Hackney, London E9 6AS.
- Description: This is a life drawing community that meets every Thursday at the Homerton Library. In November, they are celebrating a month of drawing naked men as part of the Movember fundraising effort. More information here: <https://uk.movember.com/en/events/view/id/4qPY>

'The Great Mo~nopoly Run'

- Date: 30 November 2023, from 7 pm to 10 pm.
- Description: Join a run through central London to support Movember, with stops at locations matching the spaces on a traditional Monopoly board. Find more details here: <https://uk.movember.com/en/events/view/id/4q3a>



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