About this Release

The report includes information on rates, causes and associated factors for all stillbirths, neonatal deaths (up to 28 days of age), post-neonatal infant deaths (from 28 days to one year) registered in 2012 and for late fetal deaths (pregnancy losses from 20 to 23+6 weeks gestation). The incidence of certain specified congenital anomalies is also reported.

Key Points

The numbers and rates of stillbirths, perinatal deaths and infant deaths have been falling for many years and in 2012 were the lowest ever recorded.

- **Rates of stillbirths and deaths:**
  - Stillbirth rate 4.7 per 1000 births
  - Neonatal death rate 2.6 per 1000 live births
  - Perinatal mortality rate 6.5 per 1000 births
  - Post-neonatal deaths 1.2 per 1000 live births
  - Infant mortality rate 3.7 per 1000 live births

- **Total births and deaths in 2012:**
  There were 58,301 live and stillbirths registered in Scotland in 2012. This is 588 fewer than were registered in 2011 and continues the slight decline in births since 2008.
  A total of 656 deaths were notified to the Scottish Stillbirth and Infant Death Survey, comprising 164 late fetal deaths, 274 stillbirths, 148 neonatal deaths and 69 post-neonatal deaths.

- **Causes of stillbirths and neonatal deaths:**
  Abnormalities of the placenta accounted for 40% of stillbirths and premature birth was associated with 50% of neonatal deaths. Antepartum haemorrhage and congenital anomalies were other important causes of both stillbirth and neonatal death.
• **Other findings:**
  - Multiple pregnancy is the single biggest risk factor for both stillbirth and neonatal death, but numerically, deaths from multiple pregnancies are few compared with singleton pregnancies.
  - Advanced maternal age, obesity, deprivation, smoking, alcohol consumption, substance misuse and lack of maternal employment were all associated with an increased probability of fetal and infant deaths.
  - Rates of postmortem examination and of placental histology were good, especially for stillbirths.
  - The majority of all deaths were discussed at a perinatal mortality forum though a root cause analysis of each death was much less often performed.

• **NHS Board variations:**
  Within one NHS board area, mortality rates of stillbirth and neonatal deaths have been higher than the rest of Scotland in recent years. In the absence of an obvious explanation, the NHS board will investigate this further.

• **Commentary:**
  Commentary is provided on the declining mortality rates, on pointers for further improvement and on the future of data collection and reporting.

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**Further Information**

Further information can be found in the [Full Publication Report](#) or on the [ISD website](#).