

HOW RELEVANT ARE "HEALTH OF THE NATION" TARGETS FOR SMALL ISLAND COMMUNITIES?

Dr. David Jeffs

Health Promotion Officer and STAFF of Jersey Health Promotion Unit

Because of their defined and relatively static populations, island communities provide good opportunities for measuring and evaluating Public Health interventions.

However, the small numbers present challenges in the statistical validity of any changes demonstrated.

The "Health of the Nation" targets present a case in point.

The publication "Health for Guernsey People" attempts to compare Health in Guernsey against the "Health of the Nation" targets in the five main priority areas.

The use of five year means, and calculation of confidence intervals overcomes some of the problems of small numbers in several of these areas.

It is concluded that small island communities do not preclude a comparative approach to target setting.