



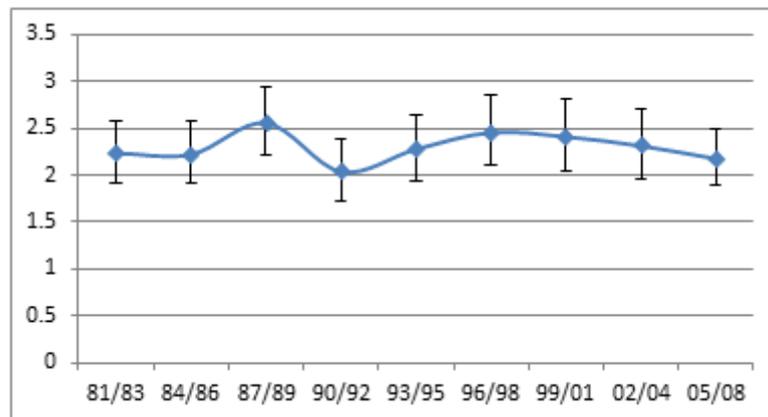
NICPR

Welcome to the Northern Ireland Cerebral Palsy Register newsletter

This short quarterly newsletter will address areas of practice and research that have been raised by stakeholders. Each edition will have a specific focus, starting with '**prevalence of cerebral palsy**'. Look out for future editions focused on classification systems, swallowing and feeding, sleep and physical activity.

Prevalence of Cerebral Palsy: Northern Ireland

The Prevalence of CP in Northern Ireland has remained stable over the past 30 years. From 1981-2008, there were approximately 57 cases of congenital CP diagnosed every year. The figure below shows the trend in prevalence rates in Northern Ireland.



Prevalence of CP per 1,000 live births by birth period. Estimates and 95% CI intervals are reported (Poisson exact estimates). Source: NICPR Report 2016.

Prevalence rates:

International data

Sellier et al, on behalf of the Surveillance of Cerebral Palsy in Europe Network (SCPE), collated data from 20 population-based European registers to monitor prevalence of CP from 1980-2003.

Analyses of trends were conducted in four birthweight groups: <1000g (extremely low birthweight, ELBW); 1000 to 1499g (very low birthweight, VLBW); 1500 to 2499g (moderately low birthweight, MLBW); and >2499g (normal birthweight, NBW). Key findings included:

- Non-significant decreasing trend in prevalence of CP in NBW children
- Significant decreases in prevalence of CP in MLBW and VLBW children
- Stable trend in prevalence of CP in ELBW children
- Overall prevalence of CP decreased from 1.90 to 1.77 per 1000 live births
- Prevalence of moderate-to-severe CP decreased in NBW, MLBW and VLBW children, and remained stable in ELBW children

Similar overall trends have been reported in the 2013 Australian CP Register report; although decreasing prevalence of CP in ELBW children was observed in the Australian data.

You can access the SCPE publication for free [here](#).



Practice Implications

International registry studies present an encouraging picture for parents and clinicians. Given the decreased neonatal mortality of at least 50% across Europe over the past 20 years and the increase in proportion of babies born at less than 750g, an increasing trend in overall prevalence of CP, and of moderate-to-severe CP, may have been anticipated: instead, decreasing prevalence has been observed.

The reduction in prevalence of CP reflects developments in neonatal care over the past 30 years; and mirrors longitudinal MRI data that report a decrease over time in periventricular leukomalacia (PVL) in children born preterm. PVL is typically bilateral and gives rise to bilateral spastic CP; hence a reduction in rates of PVL may result in a decrease in the prevalence of CP, particularly bilateral spastic forms.

Effects of cooling would not have been accounted for in the study by Sellier et al (2016) as only data from the birth years 1980-2003 were included.

Knowledge of prevalence rates of CP internationally, and regionally may help when planning local health and social care services.



We welcome your comments

Feedback and suggestions for further content are welcome at NICPR@qub.ac.uk at any time - we look forward to hearing from you!