

Mortality rate



Question1 Strengths: Unadjusted mortality rates are easier to calculate than adjusted mortality rates (Dever, 1991, p. 209). These are also called crude rates and are extensively used throughout the world for making comparisons at international level as a health indicator although there are some limitations to it. Dever (1991, p. 210) states that “ To make statistically valid comparisons...crude rates may be used if it is reasonably certain that the age and sex structures of the population under investigation are similar.”

Weaknesses: Taylor (1989, p. 10) asserts that using crude mortality rates for comparisons is dangerous. Adjusting the mortality rates is important if we have to compare populations of age-sex groups or belonging to different time periods. “ In order to avoid errors in interpretation, mortality rates must be adjusted to a common population with a known age structure” (Hispanic Health Homepage, 2001). Thus, we standardize the mortality rates. This also called adjustment to calculate mortality rate and its significance is seen when we observe that there are many diseases that occur at different rates in different ages. For examples, cancer occurs most often in elder people while physical injuries happen to younger age group within the same population. So, when we age-adjust the statistics, we can tell what health conditions the population is suffering from and what are the mortality rates when compared with other populations (Department of Health, 1999). If we use unadjusted mortality rates, then this comparison is not possible and it also becomes difficult to interpret the differences between the mortality rates of different populations or different time periods. Question2 Adjusted and unadjusted mortality rates are useful for healthcare organizations in decision making process in that when a speedy result is required in making comparisons of health conditions or mortality, then crude or unadjusted

rates are sufficient. On the other hand, when an accurate interpretation of difference between the health conditions among different populations occurring at same time period or different is required, then adjusted mortality rates are considered to get accurate results. Mortality rates, crude or adjusted, help the organizations to make decisions about giving people access to medicine and providing them purified drinking water and sanitation. Information about various diseases that can occur at different age levels within a population can be attained and this information is very crucial while making clinical decisions. So, both kinds of mortality rates can be used as health indicators in a population depending upon the requirements of the health organization. “ Mortality data represent essential elements for the quantification of health problems” (Epidemiological Bulletin, 2003), therefore they help in making decisions about health of a population. Mortality rates help an organization determine its health priorities and make strategies accordingly so that those priorities are brought to reality. These strategies are about analyzing what factors cause mortality rates to shoot up and what can be done to counter those factors. These health priorities and decisions are very important for the population in the short and long run and are very beneficial for the overall health and well-being of the society. References Department of Health. (1999). Age-Adjusted Rates - Statistics Teaching Tools. Retrieved July 19, 2011, from <http://www.health.state.ny.us/diseases/chronic/ageadj.htm> Dever, G. E. A. (1991). Community Health Analysis: Global Awareness at the Local Level. USA: Jones & Bartlett Learning. Epidemiological Bulletin. (2003). Techniques to Measure the Impact of Mortality: Years of Potential Life Lost. Retrieved 20 July, 2011, from http://www.paho.org/english/dd/ais/be_v24n2-APVP.htm Hispanic Health <https://assignbuster.com/mortality-rate/>

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