

The Leading causes of mortality in London



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Introduction

It is important to understand the leading causes of mortality in London to enable the development of a public health plan to estimate the burden of disease, with a focus on prevention.

Mortality data is available in the public domain from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) Nomis official census and labour market statistics. They are not routinely published in an accessible format, so this project improves the availability of information and analysis for health service decision makers.

Aim To identify the leading causes of death in London.

Methods A descriptive study based on analysis of Nomis data for recent years by sex and age group. Deaths were categorised using the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-10) based on a list developed by the World Health Organization (WHO).

[Leading causes of death in England and Wales \(revised 2016\) – ONS](#)

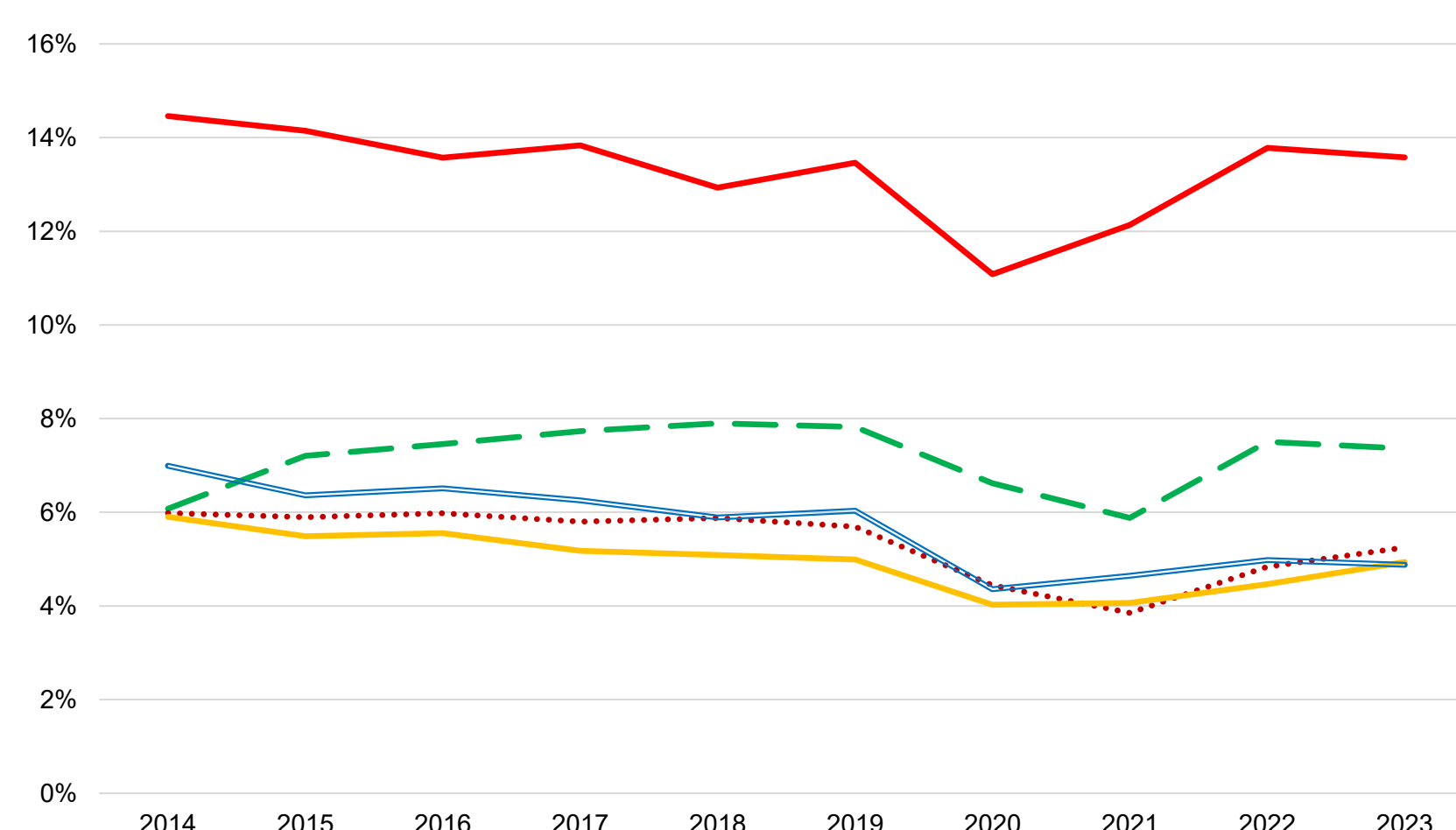
Results The leading causes of death in London in 2023 were:

Males: Ischaemic Heart Disease, Dementia and Alzheimer Disease, and Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease contributing to 14% (3,637), 7% (1,971), and 5% (1,406) respectively (numbers in brackets).

Females: Dementia and Alzheimer Disease, Ischaemic Heart Disease, and Cerebrovascular Disease contributing to 14% (3,587), 7% (1,816), and 5% (1,370) of deaths, respectively.

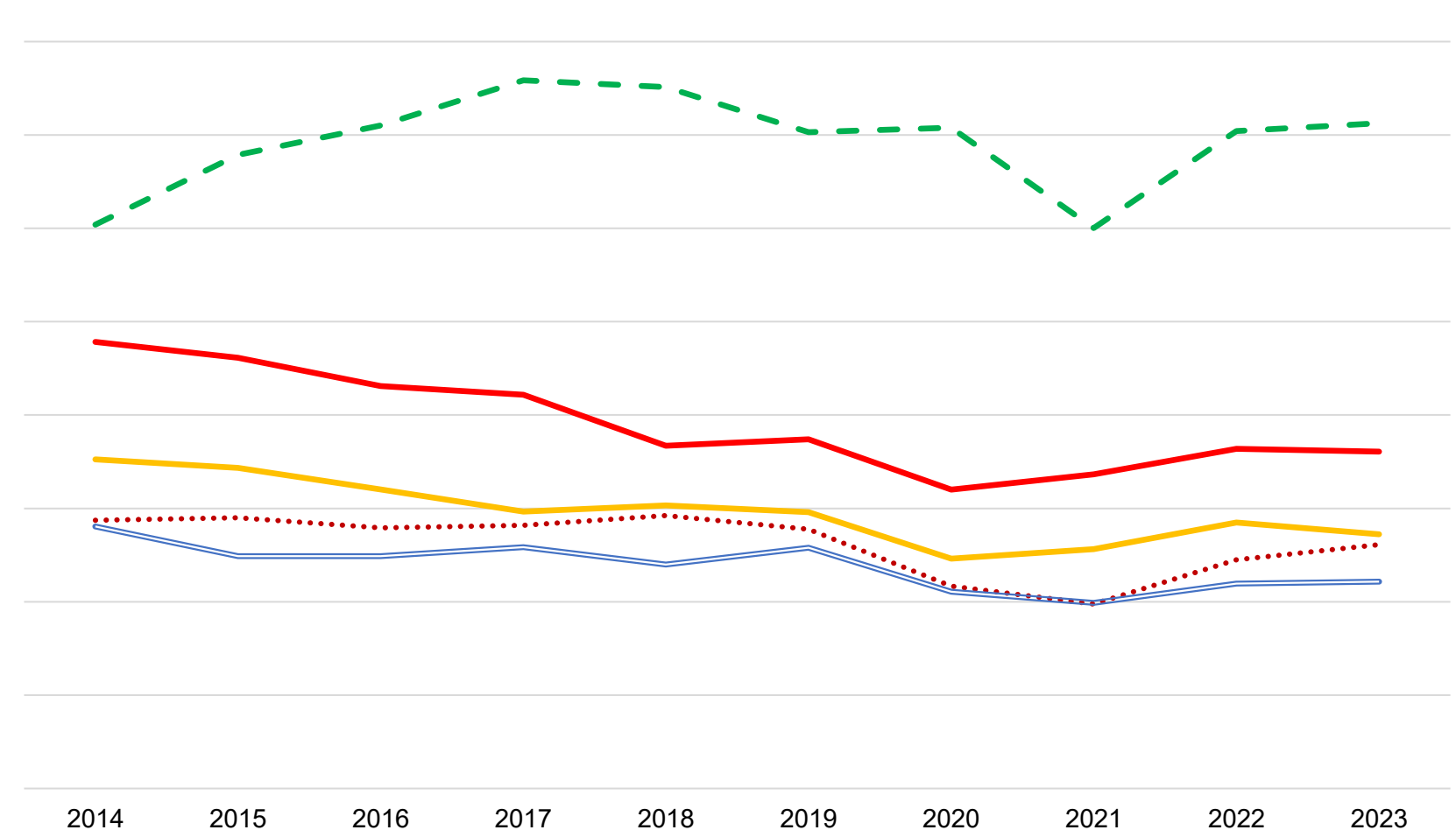
These are the leading causes for men and women of all ages and over 75 years. Suicide and undetermined death were the leading cause in younger males under 35 years.

Leading causes of death, London, 2014-2023, males



— Ischaemic heart diseases (I20–I25)
— Dementia and Alzheimer disease (F01,F03,G30)
..... Chronic lower respiratory diseases (J40–J47)
— Cerebrovascular diseases (I60–I69)
— Malignant neoplasm of trachea, bronchus and lung (C33–C34)

Leading causes of death, London, 2014-2023, females



— Dementia and Alzheimer disease (F01,F03,G30)
— Ischaemic heart diseases (I20–I25)
— Cerebrovascular diseases (I60–I69)
..... Chronic lower respiratory diseases (J40–J47)
— Malignant neoplasm of trachea, bronchus and lung (C33–C34)

In 2020, COVID-19 was the leading cause for both sexes.

Impact It is essential to understand the profile of mortality to tackle health inequalities and improve population health. This enables Londoners to live longer, healthier lives, addressing factors that impact health.

Lessons learned Many contributors to mortality are linked to avoidable, modifiable practices linked to individual behaviours, with the potential to shift ill health from hospital to community by promoting good lifestyle choices. These include quitting smoking, restricting excessive alcohol consumption, tackling physical inactivity and obesity, and improving diet.