



**WIRRAL
INTELLIGENCE
SERVICE**

Abortion Statistics for Wirral: Review 2012-2017

Wirral Intelligence Service

November 2018

Abortion Statistics for Wirral: Review 2012-2017

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Background to JSNA – Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

What is a JSNA?

A Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, better known as a JSNA, is intended to be a systematic review of the health and wellbeing needs of the local population, informing local priorities, policies and strategies that in turn informs local commissioning priorities that will improve health and wellbeing outcomes and reduce inequalities throughout the Borough.

Who is involved?

Information from Council, NHS and other partners is collected and collated to inform the JSNA and this reflects the important role that all organisations and sectors have (statutory, voluntary, community and faith) in improving the health and wellbeing of Wirral's residents.

About this document

This JSNA section looks to contain the most relevant information on the topic and provides an overview of those related key aspects

How can you help?

If you have ideas or any suggestions about these issues or topics then please email us at wirralintelligenceservice@wirral.gov.uk or go to <https://www.wirralintelligenceservice.org/>

Version Number	Date	Authors
1.0	November 2018	Matthew Ray (Author) and John Highton (Reviewer) - Wirral Intelligence Service

Content overview

Abstract	This report presents statistics on abortion published by the Department of Health for the period 2012 to 2017, for Wirral. The report also compares current Wirral data (2017) with regional localities as Cheshire, Warrington & Wirral NHS Area Team and Merseyside as well as England.
Intended or potential audience	External <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group• Wirral Community Trust Internal <ul style="list-style-type: none">• DMT• Wider Public Health team
Links with other topic areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sexual Health• Children & Young People

Wirral JSNA: Abortion Statistics for Wirral: Review 2012-2017

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Introduction

This report presents statistics on abortion published by the Department of Health for the period 2012 to 2017, for Wirral. The report also compares current Wirral data (2017) with regional localities as Cheshire, Warrington & Wirral NHS Area Team and Merseyside as well as England.

Legal Abortion Rates

The total number of abortions in Wirral in 2017 was 1,236, compared to 1,187 in 2016. Table 1 below shows the actual number of abortions from 2012 to 2017.

Table 1: Total number of legal abortions, 2012 to 2017

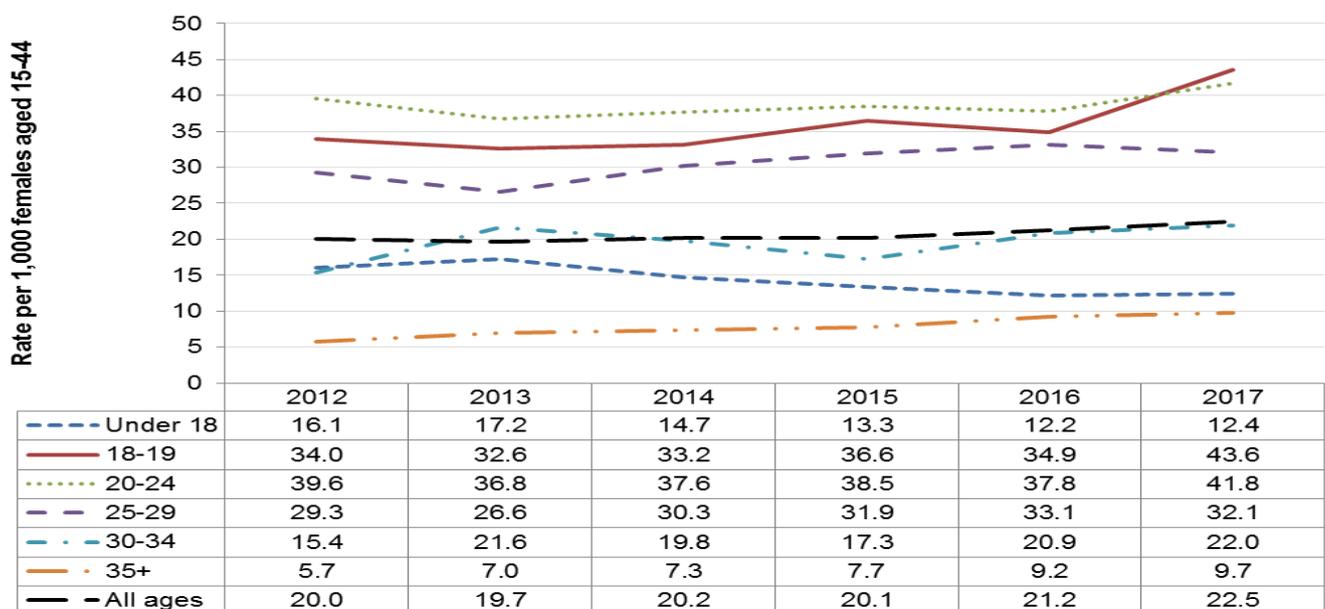
Year	England	CWW	Merseyside	Wirral
2012	176,480	3,502	4,924	1,112
2013	177,016	3,517	4,817	1,139
2014	176,238	3,508	4,958	1,152
2015	177,535	3,587	5,084	1,145
2016	177,350	3,659	5,129	1,187
2017	181,281	3,704	5,152	1,236

Source: [Department of Health & Social Care](#), 2018

Note: Cheshire, Warrington & Wirral (CWW) are Clinical Commissioning Groups localities (also known as "Area Teams") grouped together under the national code (Q44) as per NHS England definition.

Actual figures are useful to report on but this report uses rates as in figure 1, 2, 3 and 4 below. A crude rate per 1,000 females is a better statistical way of comparing different areas/geographies than the actual number/count of legal abortions.

Figure 1: Rate of legal abortions by age group and all age (15-44 years), Wirral, 2012 to 2017



Source: [Department of Health & Social Care](#), 2018

Note: Individual age group rates are calculated as a crude rate per 1,000 females in the age bracket using ONS mid-2015 population estimates. The all age rate is an age-standardised rate per 1,000 females ages 15-44, using the European Standard Population 2013

Historically between 2012 and 2016 those aged 20-24 had the highest rate of all aged groups and this age group still remain high (41.8, 2017), but in 2017, the rate in women aged 18-19 increased and is now the highest of any age band.

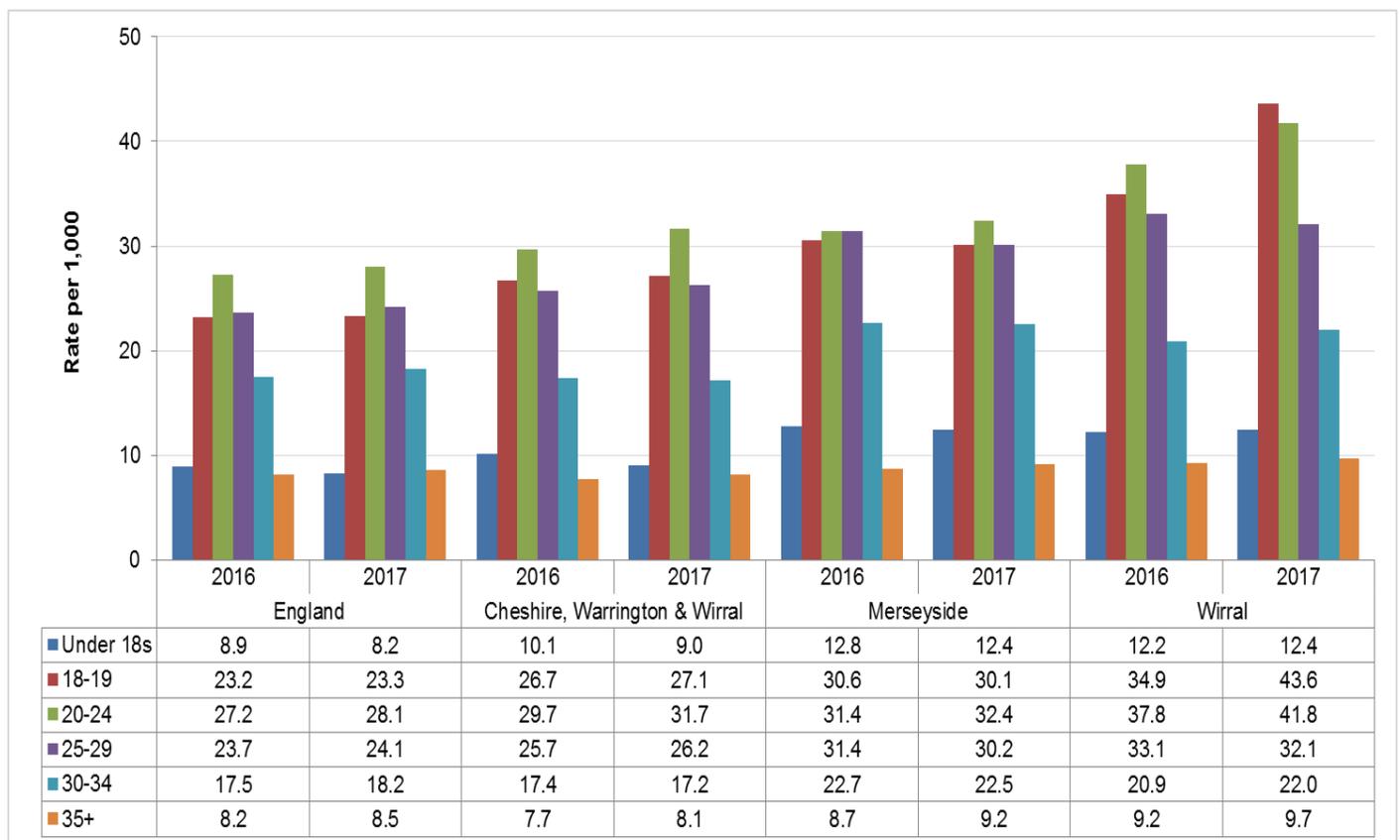
The age group with the lowest abortion rate over the same duration is those aged 35+ (5.7 in 2012, increasing to 9.7 in 2017). All age groups (excluding under 18s and 35+) showed slight decreases in 2013, before increasing again from 2014. The rate for those aged 35+ has increased annually from 5.7 (2012) to 9.7 (2017).

Comparatively, in those age Under 18, the abortion rate has decreased from 16.1 (2012) to 12.4 (2017). This is the only age group in which a decrease in rates has been observed.

Comparing 2016 and 2017 data for Wirral with regional and national areas (Figure 2), it is apparent that Wirral's trend in rates for Under 18s is not consistent with other areas; England saw a decrease between 2016 and 2017 (8.9 to 8.2 per 1,000 respectively), Cheshire, Warrington & Wirral saw a decrease from 10.1 to 9.0 per 1,000 and Merseyside from 12.8 to 12.4 per 1,000.

Between 2016 and 2017, all age groups aged over 18 saw an increase in the abortion rate in Wirral. These patterns are also discernible in Cheshire, Warrington and Wirral, Merseyside and England (excluding under 18's).

Figure 2: Rate of legal abortions by age group, Wirral, regional comparators and England, 2016 and 2017



Source: [Department of Health & Social Care](#), 2018

Note: Individual age group rates are calculated as a crude rate per 1,000 females in the age bracket using ONS mid-2015 population estimates.

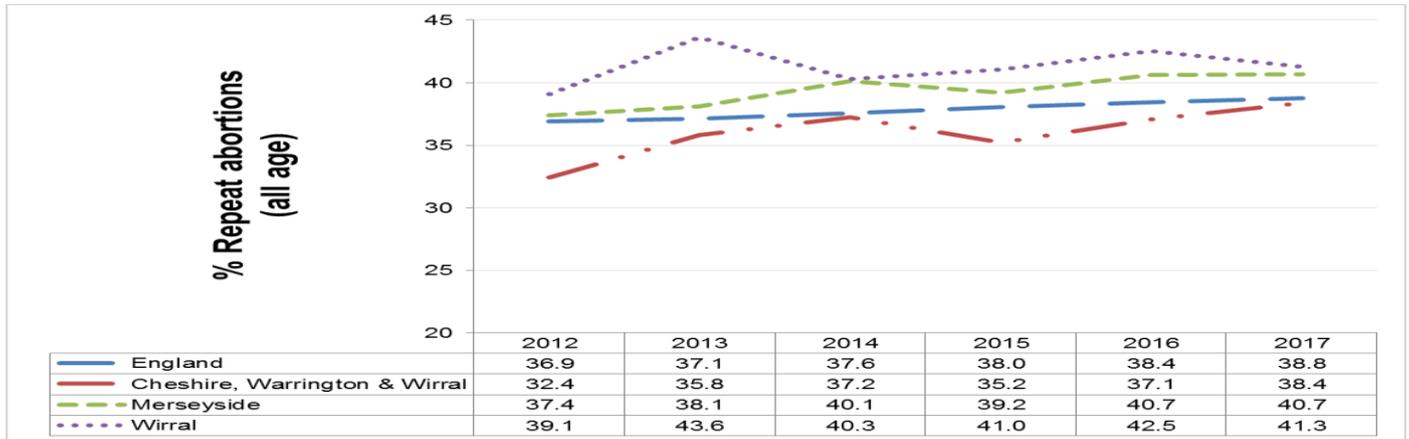
Note: The Department for Health & Social Care continue to use mid 2015 population estimates to calculate the latest abortion rates. Age standardised rates are using 2013 European Standardised rates accordingly.

Repeat Abortions

Repeat abortions: All ages

The below chart shows the percentage of abortions in women aged 15-44 years, who had had one or more previous abortions.

Figure 3: Rate (%) of repeat abortions (aged 15-44), Wirral, regional comparators and England, 2012-17



Source: [Department of Health & Social Care](#), 2018

Notes:

Individual age group rates are calculated as a crude rate per 1,000 females in the age bracket using ONS mid-2015 population estimates. The all age rate is an age-standardised rate per 1,000 females ages 15-44, using the European Standard Population 2013

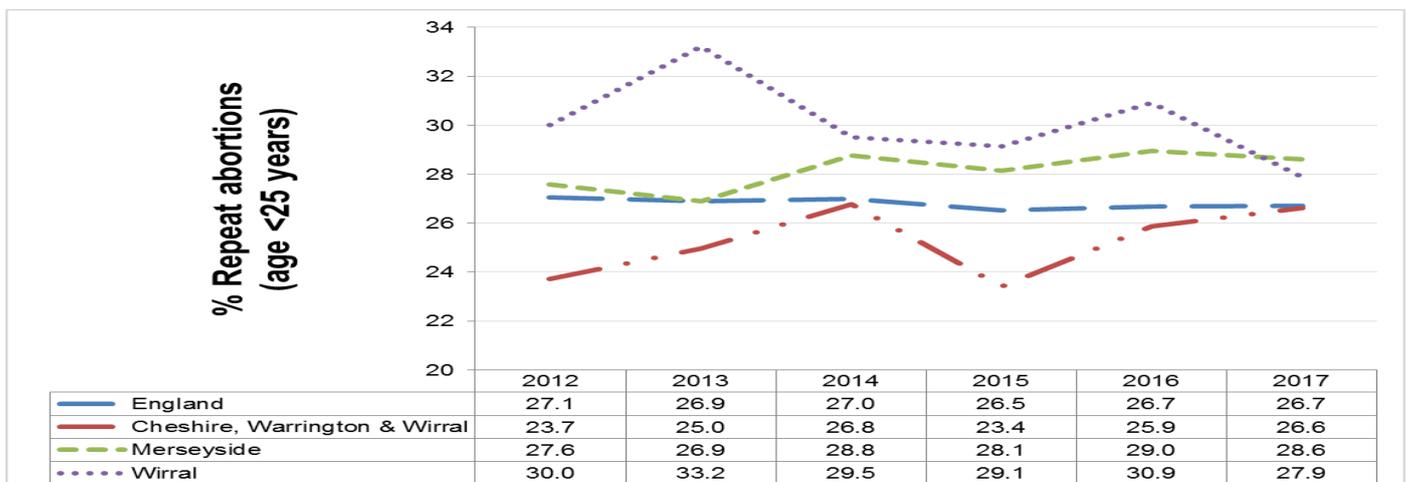
The Department for Health & Social Care continue to use mid 2015 population estimates to calculate the latest abortion rates. Age standardised rates are using 2013 European Standardised rates accordingly.

As Figure 3 shows, Wirral has consistently had a higher repeat abortion rate than Cheshire, Warrington & Wirral, Merseyside and England and this was still the case in 2017.

Repeat Abortions: Under 25 years

The below chart shows the percentage of abortions in women aged under 25 years, who had had one or more previous abortions.

Figure 4: Rate (%) of repeat abortions (in under 25s) Wirral, regional comparators and England, 2012-17



Source: [Department of Health & Social Care](#), 2018

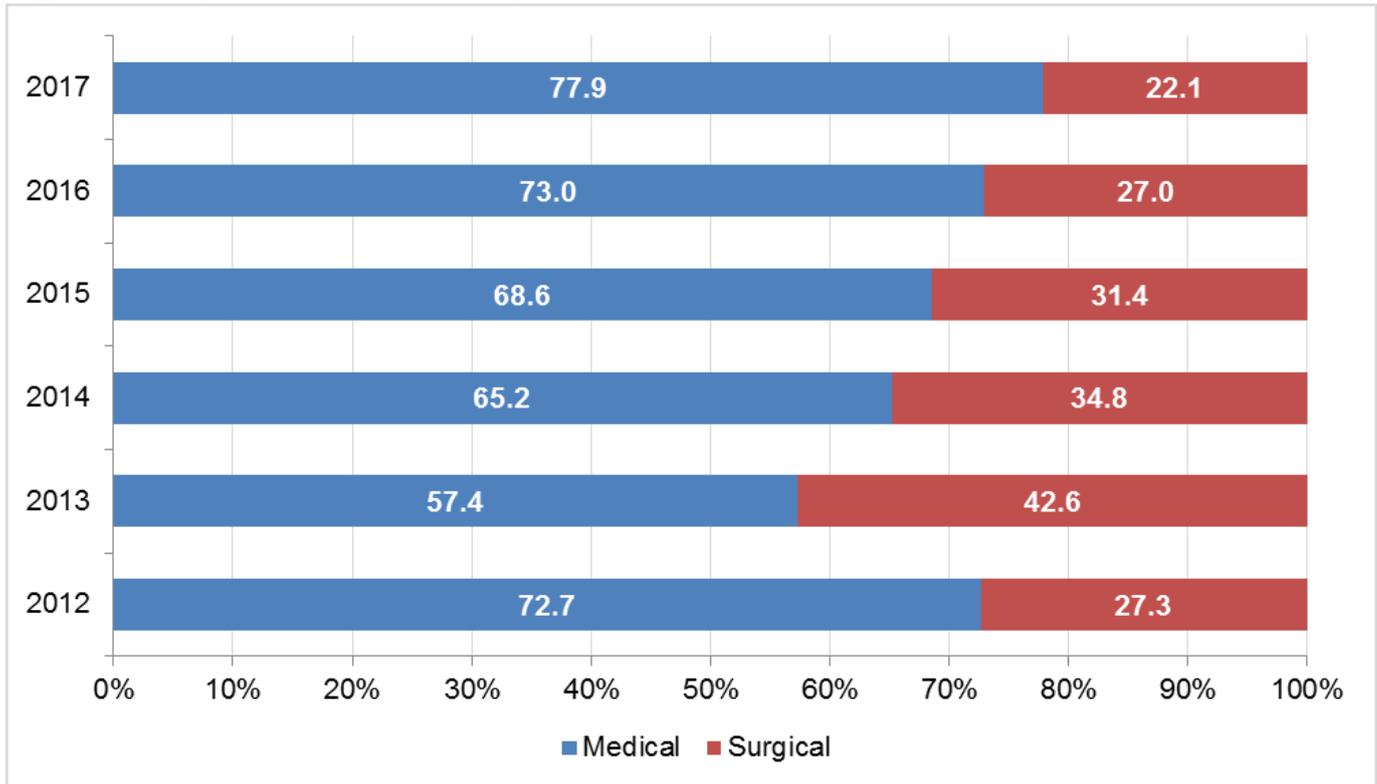
Notes: Individual age group rates are calculated as a crude rate per 1,000 females in the age bracket using ONS mid-2015 population estimates. The all age rate is an age-standardised rate per 1,000 females ages 15-44, using the European Standard Population 2013. *The Department for Health & Social Care continue to use mid 2015 population estimates to calculate the latest abortion rates. Age standardised rates are using 2013 European Standardised rates accordingly.

Figure 4 shows that the rate of repeat abortions in those aged under 25 years fluctuates substantially for smaller areas. However, despite this, Wirral's repeat abortion rate for this age group was consistently higher than England and Cheshire, Warrington & Wirral between 2012 and 2016. In 2017 however, for the first time Wirral had a lower rate than Merseyside (27.9 compared to 28.6).

Abortion Method

There are two different methods of abortion, medical and surgical, depending on the gestation period and other circumstances relating to an individual.

Figure 5: Proportion of abortions, by method, Wirral, 2012 to 2017



Source: [Department of Health & Social Care](#), 2018

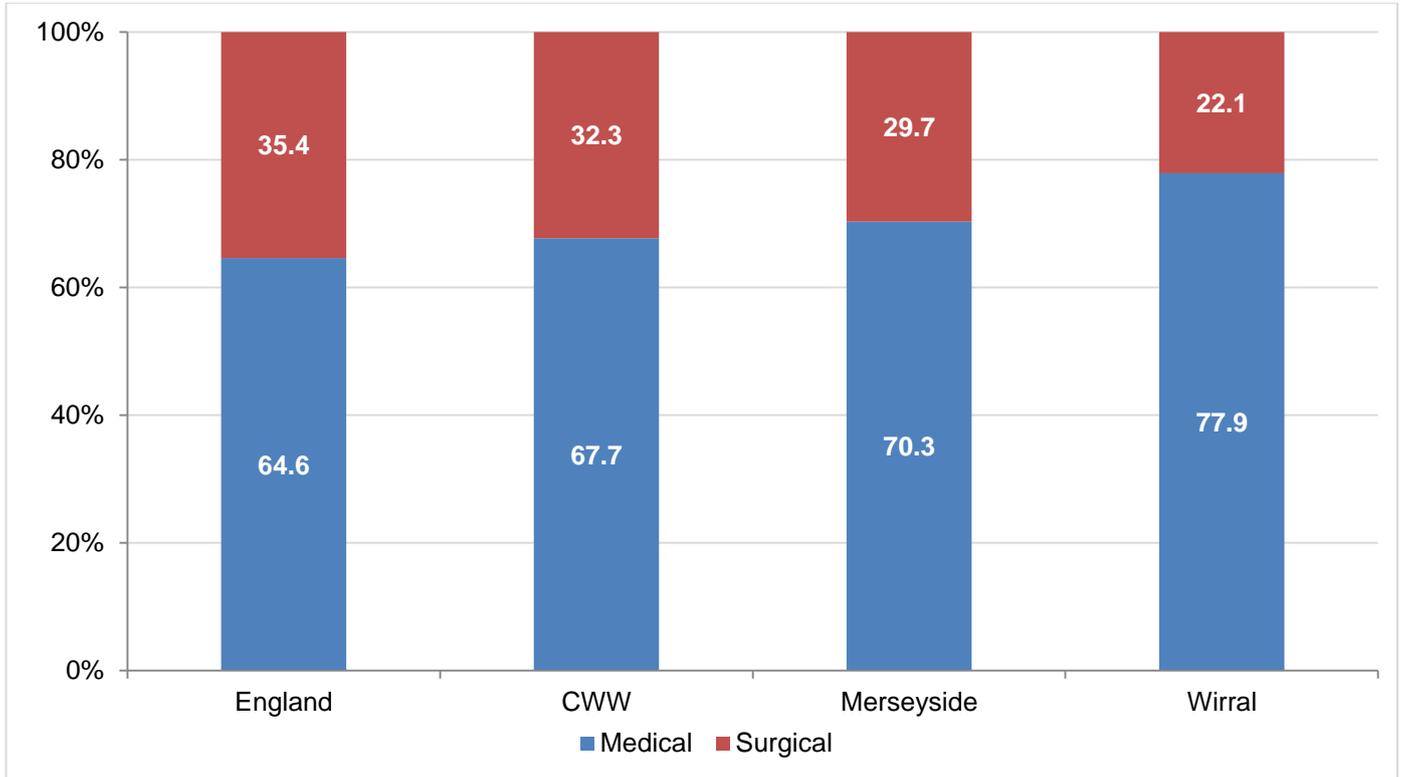
Note: For definition of medical and surgical terminology please see page 14 2.32 and 2.33 in the following report https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/714183/2017_Abortion_Statistics_Commentary.pdf

Figure 5 shows that the proportion of medical abortions decreased between 2012 (72.7%) and 2013 (57.4%) before increasing annually to 2017 (77.9%).

This can be seen in a positive light as early seeking of help and less chance of complications for an early, as opposed to a late, abortion.

The proportion of medical abortions in Wirral is substantially higher than those seen in regional comparators and England, as shows in Figure 6.

Figure 6: Proportion of abortions, by method, Wirral, regional comparators and England, 2017

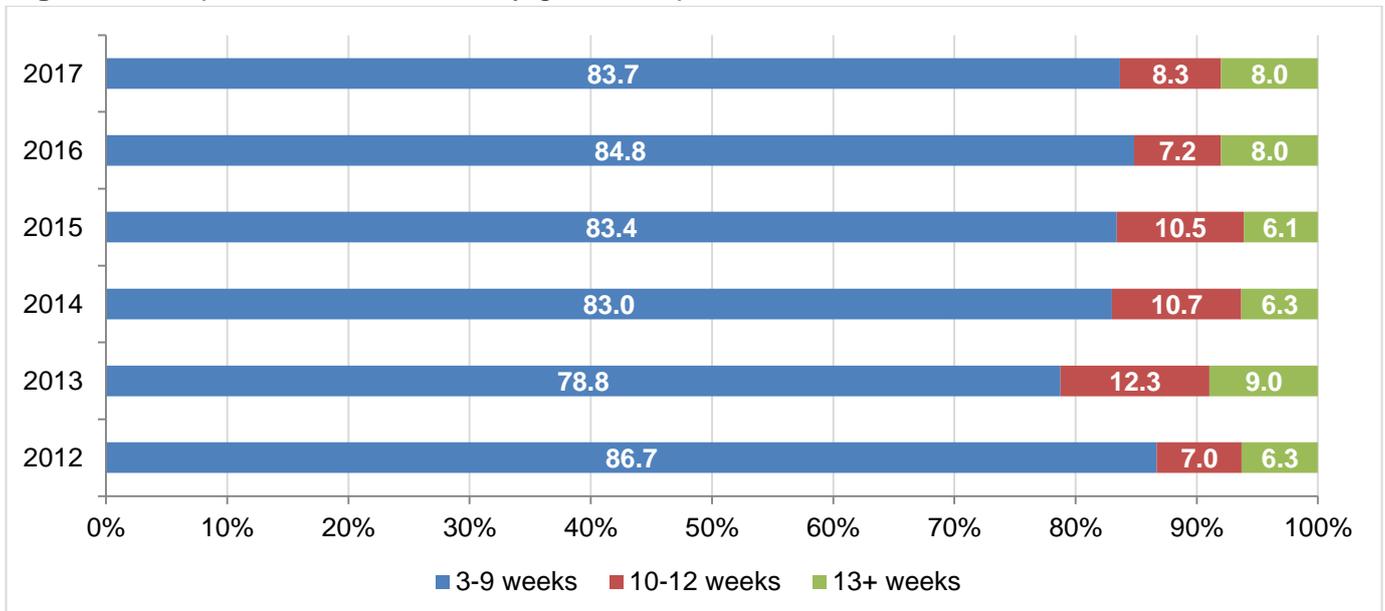


Source: [Department of Health & Social Care](#), 2018

Gestation Period

Nationally there has been an increase in abortions being performed under 10 weeks; 77% in 2017 compared to 68% in 2006. This is also apparent in rates for Wirral.

Figure 7: Proportion of abortions, by gestation period, Wirral, 2012 to 2017

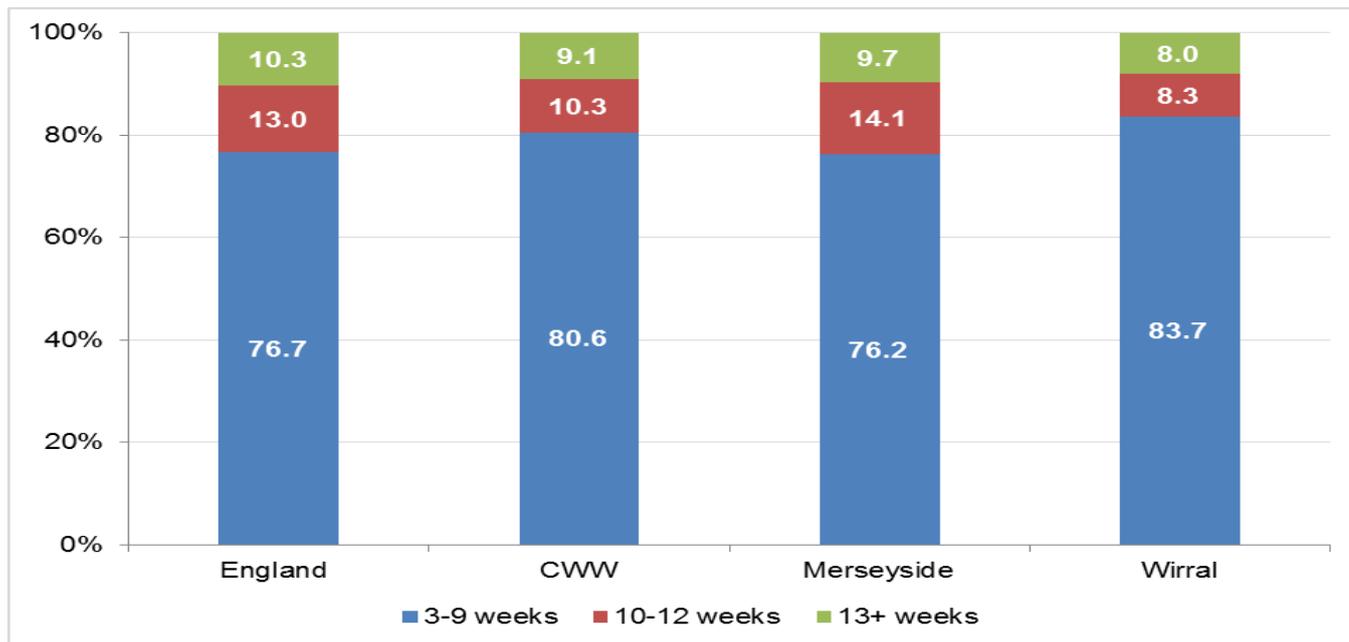


Source: [Department of Health & Social Care](#), 2018

Despite a local decrease between 2012 (86.7%) and 2013 (78.8%), abortions performed under 10 weeks have steadily increased to 83.7% in 2017 (see Figure 7). The proportion of abortions performed between 10-12 weeks has seen the greatest decrease; 12.3% in 2013 compared to 7.2% in 2016.

As Figure 8 shows, the proportion of abortions performed under 10 weeks is higher in Wirral, compared to regionally and nationally.

Figure 8: Proportion of abortions, by gestation period, Wirral, regional comparators and England, 2017



Source: [Department of Health & Social Care](#), 2018

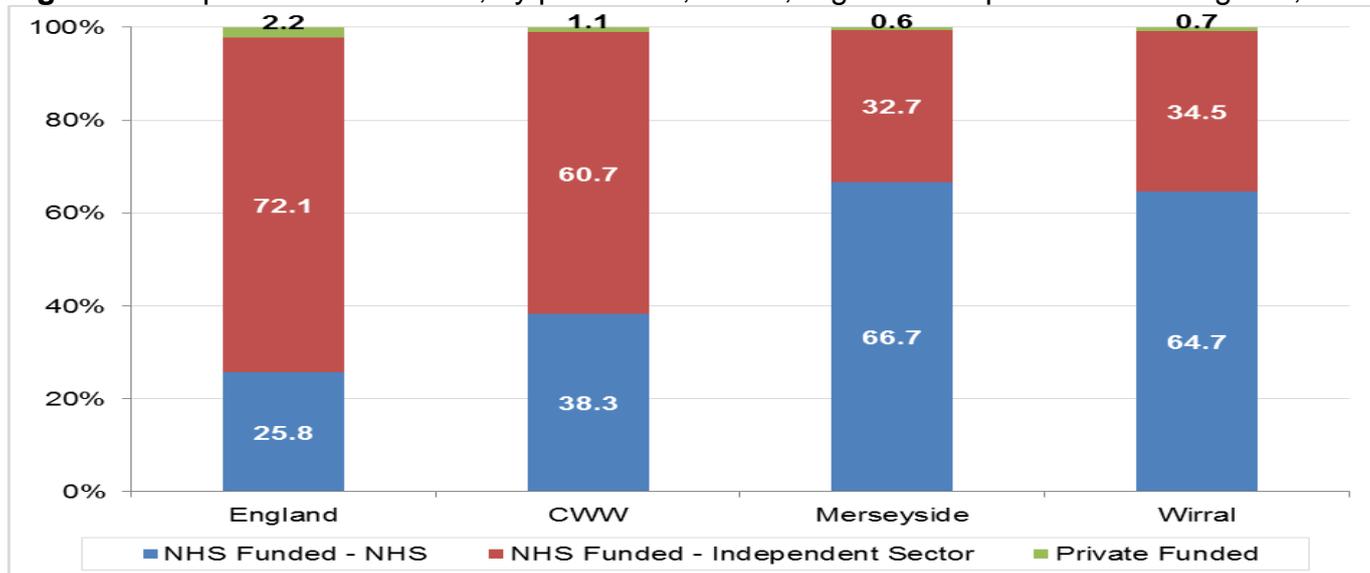
Note: Cheshire, Warrington & Wirral (CWW) are Clinical Commissioning Groups localities (also known as “Area Teams”) grouped together under the national code (Q44) as per NHS England definition.

Funding

All abortions must take place within NHS hospitals or approved independent sector clinics; at 24 weeks or over gestation, abortions must take place within an NHS hospital.

In Wirral in 2017, 99.3% of abortions were funded by the NHS; 64.7% being performed in an NHS hospital and 34.5% in the independent sector. As Figure 9 shows, the proportion of abortions being performed in an NHS hospital is significantly greater than nationally; 64.7% compared to 25.8%.

Figure 9: Proportion of abortions, by purchaser, Wirral, regional comparators and England, 2017



Source: [Department of Health & Social Care](#), 2018

Note: Cheshire, Warrington & Wirral (CWW) are Clinical Commissioning Groups localities (also known as “Area Teams”) grouped together under the national code (Q44) as per NHS England definition.

References

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Abortion Statistics, England & Wales: 2017 (2018) Department of Health, Accessed: November 2018, Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/abortion-statistics-for-england-and-wales-2017>

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