Understanding Society User Support - Support #2245

Women diagnosed with breast cancer since previous wave in wave 10

04/23/2025 04:51 PM - Jella-Rike Spijkervet

Status:	Feedback		**Start date:**	04/23/2025
Priority:	Normal		**% Done:**	80%
Assignee:	Jella-Rike Spijkervet			
Category:	Questionnaire content			

Description

For my research I am looking into the relation between socio-economic status and breast cancer. Therefore, I want to select all women who have had breast cancer. I am doing so by using the cancertypn_3 variable. This is existent for waves 10-14. I have two questions about this.

First, is it really the case that before wave 10 it is unknown whether or not women/participants have had cancer? Or is there another variable that was used previously?

Secondly, In waves 11-14, there were approximately 50 women who were diagnosed with breast cancer since the previous wave. However, in wave 10, there are almost 400 women who were diagnosed with breast cancer since the previous interview. As the interval between all waves is the same, I am wondering how there can be such a big difference in incidence of breast cancer in wave 10 compared to the later waves.

Thank you in advance

History

#1 - 04/25/2025 05:45 PM - Understanding Society User Support Team

Many thanks for your enquiry. The Understanding Society team is looking into it and we will get back to you as soon as we can. We aim to respond to simple queries within 48 hours and more complex issues within 7 working days.

Best wishes,
Understanding Society User Support Team

#2 - 04/28/2025 11:42 AM - Understanding Society User Support Team

- File FAQ_HCONDS v.20230814.pdf added

- Category set to Questionnaire content

- % Done changed from 0 to 80

Hello,

You're correct that CANCERTYPN_3 (breast cancer) is available from Wave 10 onwards, but cancer data was collected before Wave 10 as well, just in a less detailed form.

Before Wave 10, new entrants reported whether a doctor had ever told them they had 'cancer or malignancy' (HCOND13), while continuing sample members only reported cancers newly diagnosed since the last interview (HCONDN13). However, no information on cancer type (e.g. breast cancer) was collected until Wave 10 introduced the follow-up variable CANCERTYPN to specify this.

As for your second question: the spike in breast cancer reports in Wave 10 is expected. Wave 10 marked a redesign in the health section: all continuing participants were asked whether they had ever been diagnosed with cancer, regardless of whether they had mentioned it in earlier waves. This led to a one-time catch-up effect where many prevalent (not just newly diagnosed) cases were captured. In contrast, Waves 11–14 only record new diagnoses since the previous wave, which explains the much lower numbers. You can check this by comparing the universe in different waves: (in the PDFs available here Main Survey Questionnaires - Understanding Society):

Wave 10:

If (Ff_Ivlolw = 1 | Ff_Everint = 1) // interviewed at prior wave or has been interviewed previously And If (HCondEVER = 13) // Ever diagnosed with cancer or malignancy

Wave 11-14:

If (ff_ivlolw = 1 | Ff_everint = 1) // interviewed at prior wave or has been interviewed previously And If (HCondNEW = 13) // Diagnosed with cancer or malignancy since last interview

I'd also recommend checking the attached FAQ about health questions in UKHLS. The document explains in detail how these questions have been asked over the course of the study.

Best wishes,
Piotr Marzec
UKHLS User Support

#3 - 04/28/2025 11:42 AM - Understanding Society User Support Team

- Private changed from Yes to No

#4 - 04/30/2025 10:37 PM - Understanding Society User Support Team

- Status changed from New to Feedback

Files

FAQ_HCONDS v.20230814.pdf	316 KB	04/28/2025	Understanding Society User Support Team