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International Journal of Population Data Science

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Detecting Care Homes: Using Residential Anonymous Linking Fields to Identify Care Homes in Administrative Data

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Background

Demographic profiling is an important aspect of anonymised healthcare research used to identify populations of interest. Typically, administrative data is used in conjunction with patient registers to create cohorts, but it can be a time consuming process.

Objectives

We aim to create and apply a method of identifying care homes using existing administrative data. We also aim to test the accuracy of our method by comparing the results to a pseudonymised national care home registry. This will allow us to prove whether proxy methods may be of sufficient accuracy for data linkage research in the future.

Methods (including data)

Our method uses quantifiable characteristics from longitudinal data to identify potential care homes. This includes the number and age of occupants, current residence and rate of change of occupancy.

Conclusions

This method is a reproducible process that would be of particular benefit for projects where a registry is not available, or where time or cost would limit the availability. This method can also be generalised to any communal establishment, where often the identification of vulnerable populations (antibiotic resistance, infectious disease etc.) is particularly beneficial.

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