



Scottish  
Community  
Mediation  
Centre

## FINDING OUT ABOUT YOUR AREA

How much do you know about the local authority area your mediation service covers? Do you know whether unemployment is high or low, or whether there is a growing amount of private rented accommodation? Are there more young people as a proportion of the population than in the local authority next to you? Is there a high level of hospital admissions for drug misuse?

Or maybe you want to find out which parliamentary constituency in your area has the highest levels of poverty, or how your local health board area compares with the rest of Scotland for levels of drug prescriptions for anxiety and depression. If you don't have any idea of the general profile of the residents in the area your service covers, how will you know if your clients are typical of the area? How will you know whether or not your service is succeeding in reaching the people who really need you?

It is easier than you might think to get this information. All you need is a computer with internet access and a couple of hours. Go to Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics at <http://www.sns.gov.uk/>. This is the Scottish Government's resource for a range of community statistics - it is very easy to use for basic information and not too daunting for even some quite detailed and specific comparisons. As a start, go to the homepage, click on *Standard Reporter* and then click on *Area Profile*. This takes you to a screen which asks you to *Choose Area Type*. Select *Local Authority* from the drop-down menu, and then select your own authority from *Choose Specific Area*.

Now click *Get Report* - you have immediate results for a whole range of information about your local population.

The *Standard Reporter* section also has lots of other useful functions like mapping how things have changed in your area - you could, for instance, find out if the proportion of social rented housing has changed much in the last five years. You can also map your area against other areas or against Scotland as a whole. For even more detailed information try the *Specialist Reporter* function.

The data available is not comprehensive by topic, although it is being regularly added to. If you are looking for information on issues such as disability or ethnicity try going to the Scottish Government website <http://www.scotland.gov.uk>, clicking on *Topics* (third along on banner menu at top of page) and then clicking *Statistics* in the *Topics Index*. Happy hunting!