Cohort & Longitudinal Studies Enhancement Resources – CLOSER

CLOSER is an interdisciplinary partnership of leading social and biomedical longitudinal population studies, based at UCL Social Research Institute. CLOSER is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and Medical Research Council (MRC). It aims to maximise the use, value and impact of cohort and longitudinal studies by providing high quality resources and sharing expertise to develop and support international and national projects.

CLOSER hosts a range of useful resources, such as the Learning and Training hubs, Cross-study data guides, the Discovery research tool, and much more.

Explore all the available CLOSER resources on the linked webpage here and see how this resource can help with your research.

CLOSER Discovery

One of the freely available resources is CLOSER Discovery – a tool that enables researchers to search, browse and explore questionnaires and data from the UK's leading longitudinal population studies. Users of the CLOSER Discovery feature can search through rich metadata and filter by study, topic and life stage to find the relevant data for their research. By using metadata, CLOSER Discovery allows researchers to explore and find out what's available in UK longitudinal datasets, as well as additional contextual information about the data. Researchers can explore the study's metadata to find detailed information about the questions and variables from the study of interest, covering a range of topics such as mental and physical health, housing and local environment, family, education, employment and income, pregnancy and more.

Discovery is a useful navigation tool guiding researchers through the often messy and confusing data access arrangements in place and handled by the individual datasets. It does not hold any study data and is not designed to manage complex data access processes. Discovery signposts to where access requests for each study dataset can be made, as well as directing to further information about data access arrangements, making it a valuable resource.

Some of the cohort and longitudinal studies included in the CLOSER Discovery tool are:

- 1958 National Child Development Study
- 1970 British Cohort Study
- Born in Bradford – BiB
- Avon Longitudinal Study of Parents and Children – ALSPAC
- English Longitudinal Study of Ageing – ELSA
- Millenium Cohort Study

For a full list of the 11 studies included and further information and metadata on each, check out the CLOSER webpage here.

The Discovery tool helps researchers to measure and assess how appropriate study data is for their research and whether it would be useful in answering their research question and objectives. You can explore all the available resources here.

CLOSER Cross-study data guides

The cross-study data guides are another resource available on CLOSER. These guides encourage a more standardised, harmonised measurement of different research themes both within and across studies. The cross-study guides are easily searchable, helping researchers explore and compare available measures used to assess different themes (for example cognition, physical activity, diet) used in a number of UK longitudinal studies. Explore the CLOSER cross-study data guides here.

Contact:

The CLOSER team can be contacted on 020 7612 6938 or at closer@ucl.ac.uk.

Cost:

CLOSER is a free to use online resource. Costs for accessing data however will depend on the individual study's data access arrangements. Please refer to the study's individual charging policy to find out further information about costs.

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