

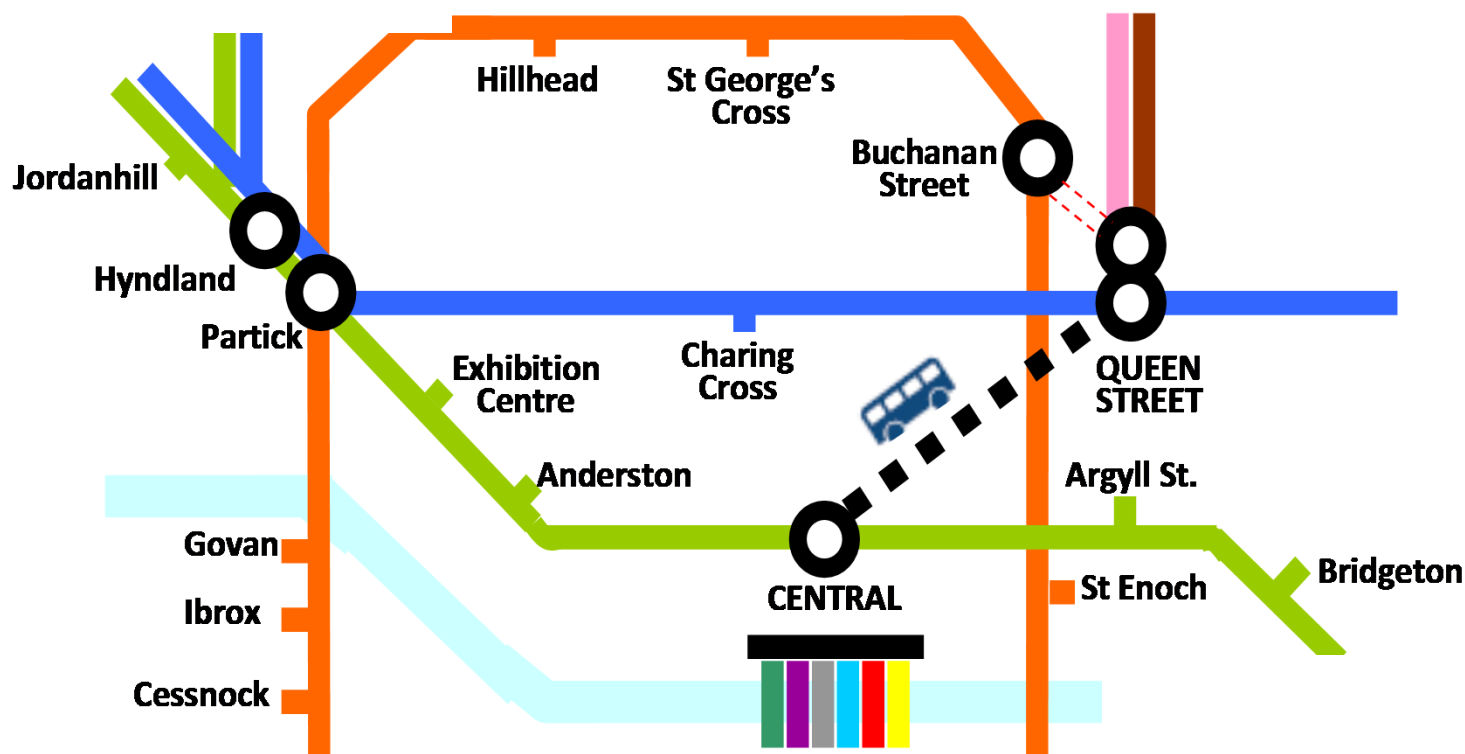
# Health Inequalities: Where do they come from and what can we do about them?

Voluntary Health Scotland  
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Clare Beeston: NHS Health Scotland



# Each stop on the Argyll line travelling East represents a drop of 2 years in male life expectancy



Source: McCartney G. Illustrating Glasgow's health inequalities. *JECH* 2010; doi 10.1136/jech.2010.120451

# What do we mean by health inequalities?

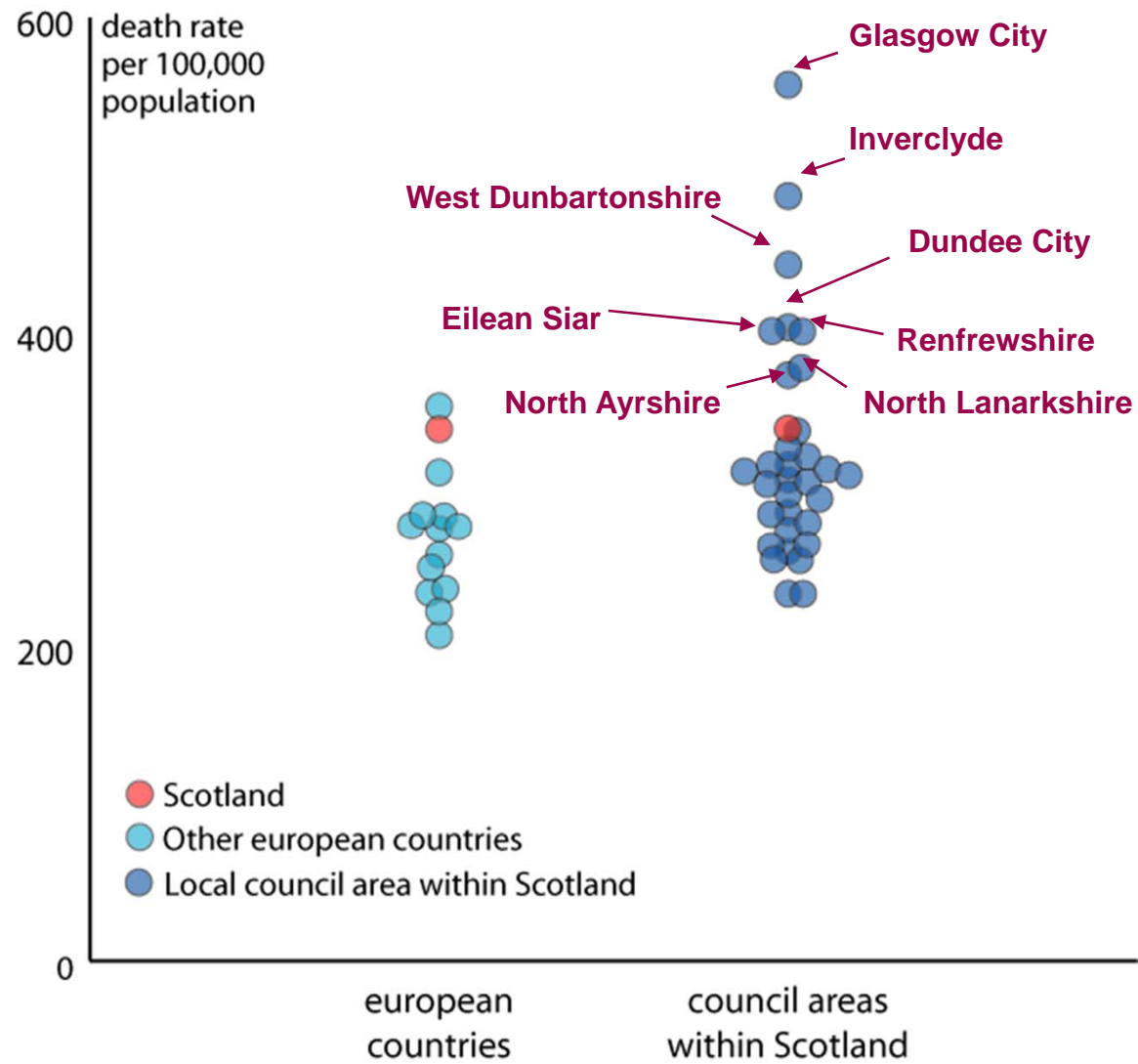
Health inequalities are:

- **Unfair differences in health within the population across social classes and between different population groups**

These unfair differences:

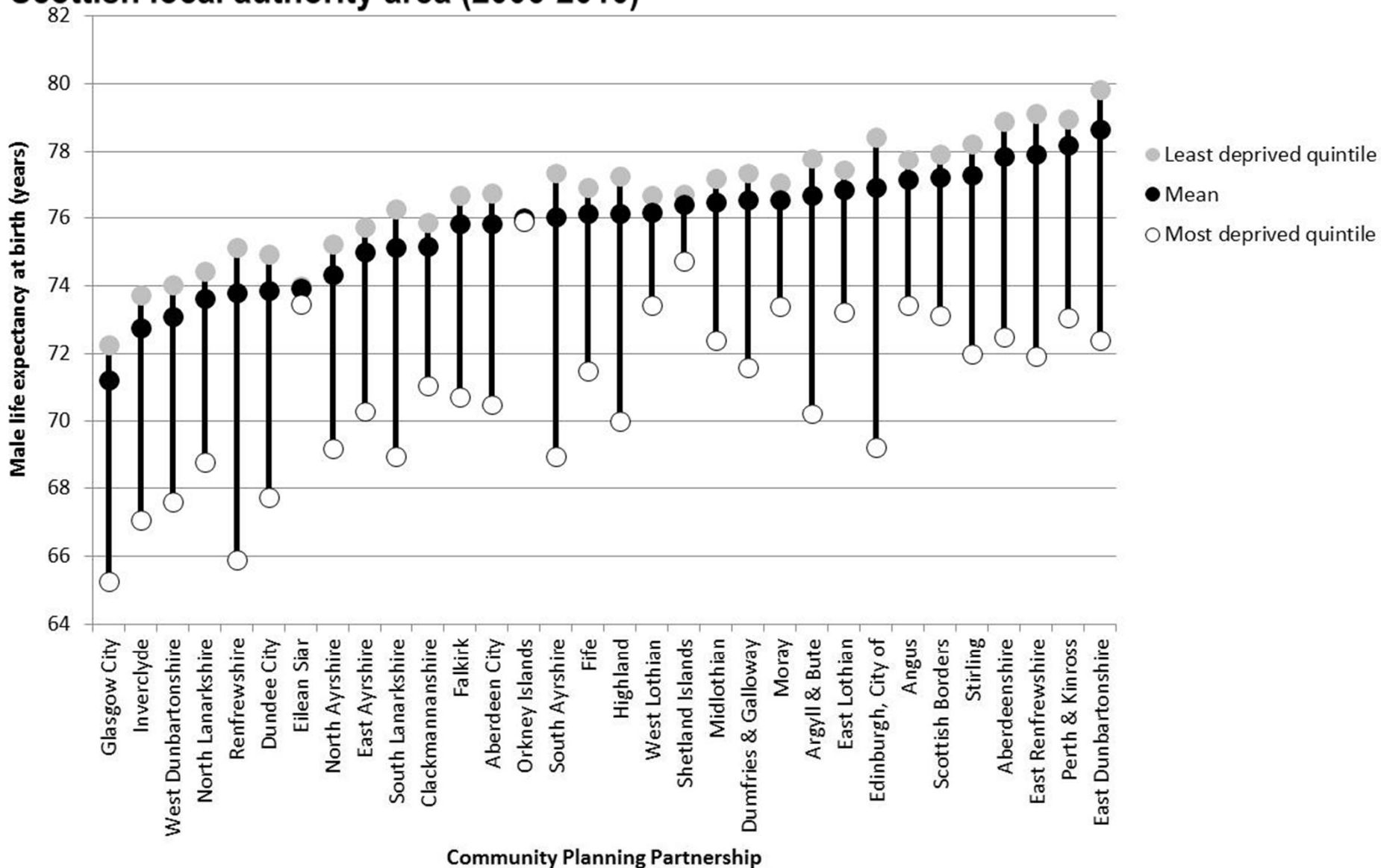
- **Are not random, or by chance, but largely socially determined**
- **Not inevitable and can be prevented.**

# All cause death rates, men 0-64y, 2001



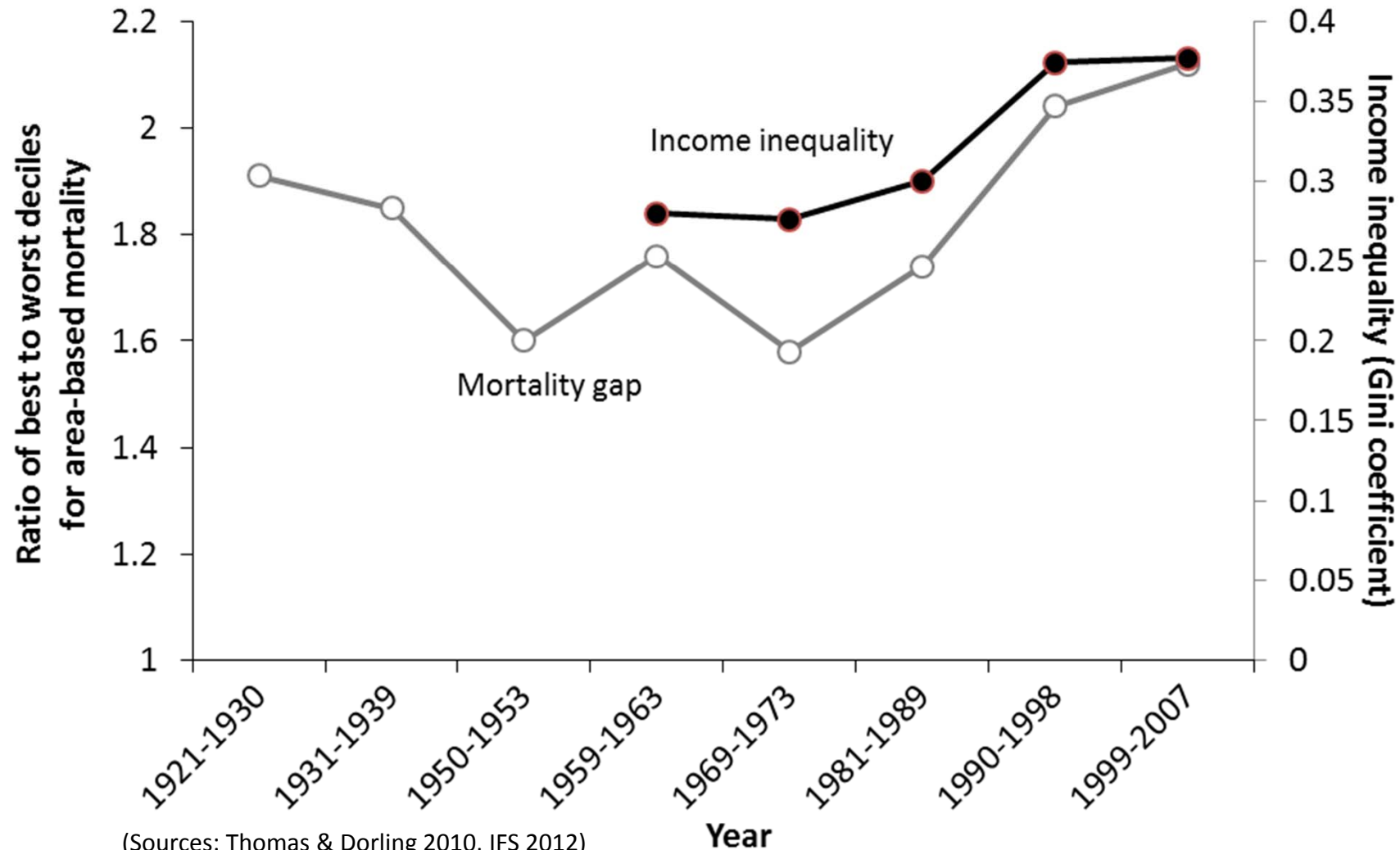
Source: Alastair H Leyland, Ruth Dundas, Philip McLoone & F Andrew Boddy. Inequalities in mortality in Scotland 1981-2001. Glasgow, MRC SPHSU, 2007.

## Male life expectancy at birth in the most and least deprived quintiles within each Scottish local authority area (2006-2010)



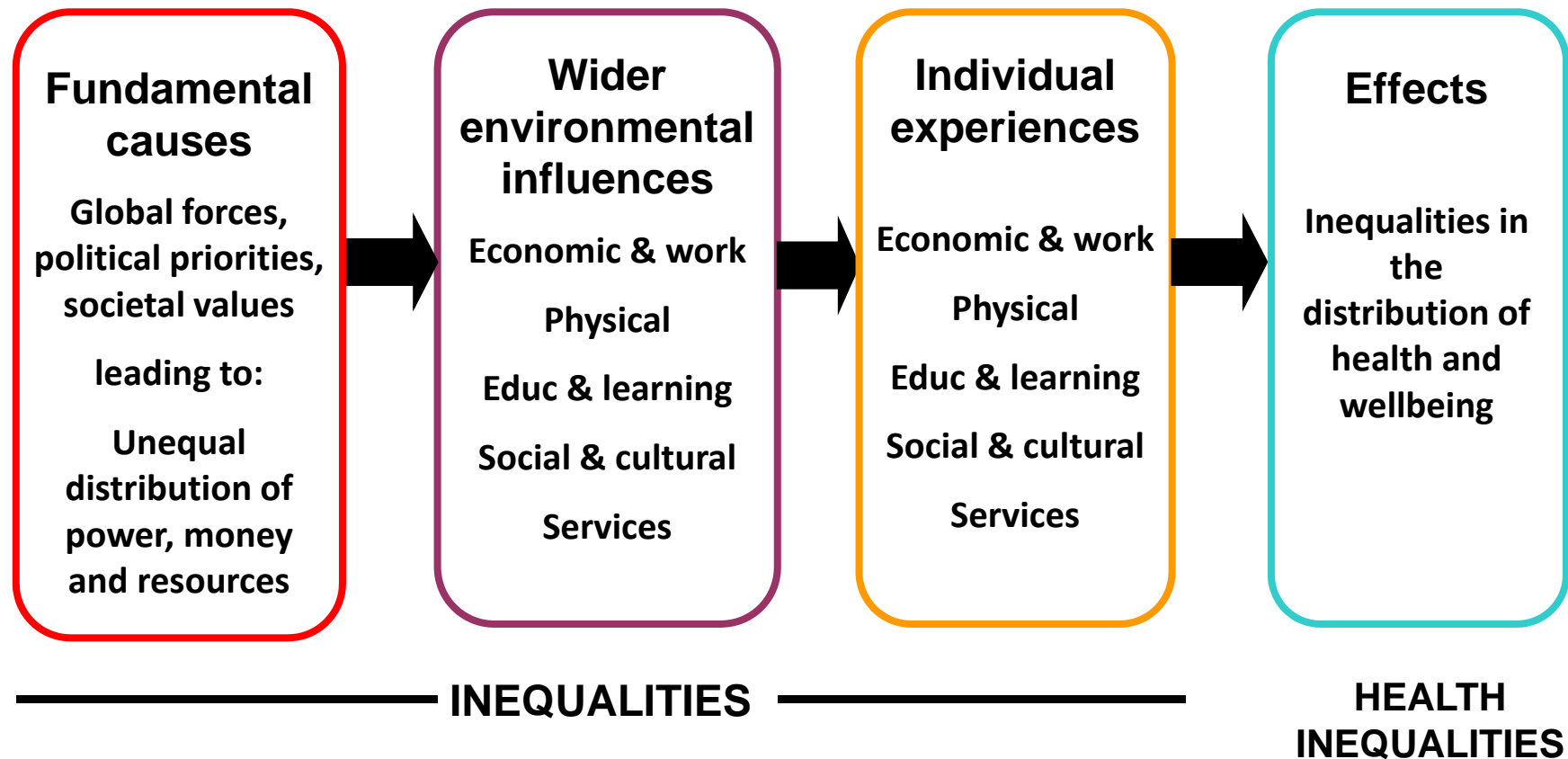
# Mortality gap between local authorities and income inequalities in GB 1921-2007

(Sources: Thomas & Dorling 2010, IFS 2012)



(Sources: Thomas & Dorling 2010, IFS 2012)

# What causes health inequalities?



# Guiding principles for effective interventions

<b>Fundamental causes (undoing)</b>	<p>Policies that redistribute power, money and resources</p> <p>Social equity and social justice prioritised</p>
<b>Wider environmental influences (prevention)</b>	<p>Use of legislation, regulation, standards and fiscal policy</p> <p>Structural changes to the physical environment</p> <p>Reducing price barriers</p> <p>Ensuring good work is available for all</p> <p>Equitable provision of high quality and accessible education and public services</p>
<b>Individual experiences (mitigation)</b>	<p>Equitable experience of socio-economic and wider environmental influences</p> <p>Equitable experience of public services</p> <p>Targeting high risk individuals</p> <p>Intensive tailored individual support</p> <p>Focus on young children and the early years</p>



# The challenge ahead

- **Policy**
- **Practice**
- **Advocacy and evidence**

**Healthy life expectancy in the most deprived 10<sup>th</sup> of Scotland is 47yrs, compared to 70yrs for those in the least deprived 10<sup>th</sup>. A difference of 23 years**

Thank you for listening

## Clare Beeston

Principle Public Health Adviser  
NHS Health Scotland  
Clare.beeston@nhs.net

<http://www.healthscotland.com>