PENNSYLVANIA VIOLENT DEATH REPORTING SYSTEM

SUICIDE DEATHS IN PENNSYLVANIA, 2017

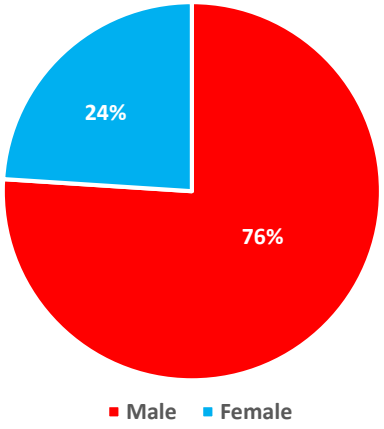
BACKGROUND

The Pennsylvania Violent Death Reporting System (PAVDRS) collected death certificate data about 1,851 suicide deaths (1,413 males and 438 females) from 49 counties in 2017. PAVDRS also collected reports from coroners/medical examiners and law enforcement partners in 24 of the counties, including: Adams, Allegheny, Armstrong, Berks, Blair, Carbon, Chester, Clinton, Delaware, Fayette, Forest, Greene, Indiana, Jefferson, Lancaster, Lehigh, Luzerne, Montgomery, Northampton, Philadelphia, Schuylkill, Westmoreland, Wyoming and York*. PAVDRS worked closely with the Bureau of Health Statistics and Registries, coroners, medical examiners, and law enforcement to gather detailed information about each violent death. Below are some results of those collaborations.

In 2017, at least 36 suicide deaths occurred every week in Pennsylvania.

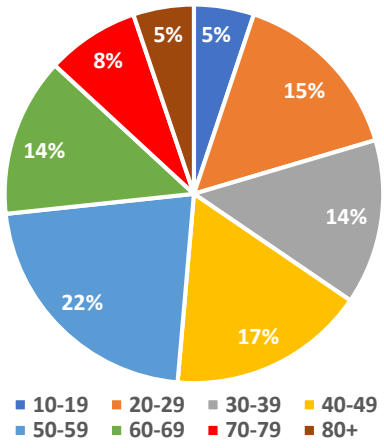
Characteristics of Suicide Victims

Sex of Victims:

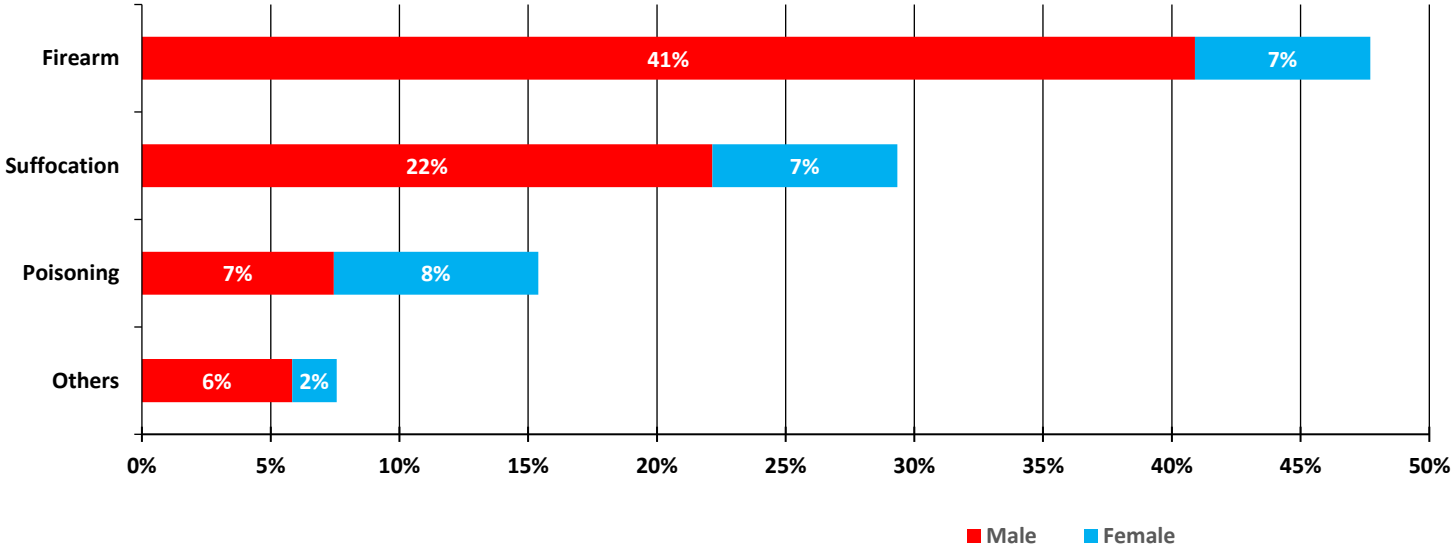


- Data from the 24 counties showed that males were over 3 times more likely to die by suicide than females. Nationally, males die by suicide at a rate more than 3½ that of females[1].
- People between 40-49 years of age were almost 4 times more likely to die by suicide than those aged 10-19 in Pennsylvania in 2017.
- Overall, suicide rates in Pennsylvania were slightly lower than the national average:
  - **Pennsylvania Rates**: 13.8 deaths per 100,000 population (males 21.4 and females 6.6).
  - **National Rates**: 14.0 deaths per 100,000 population (males 22.4 and females 6.1)[1].

Age of Victims:



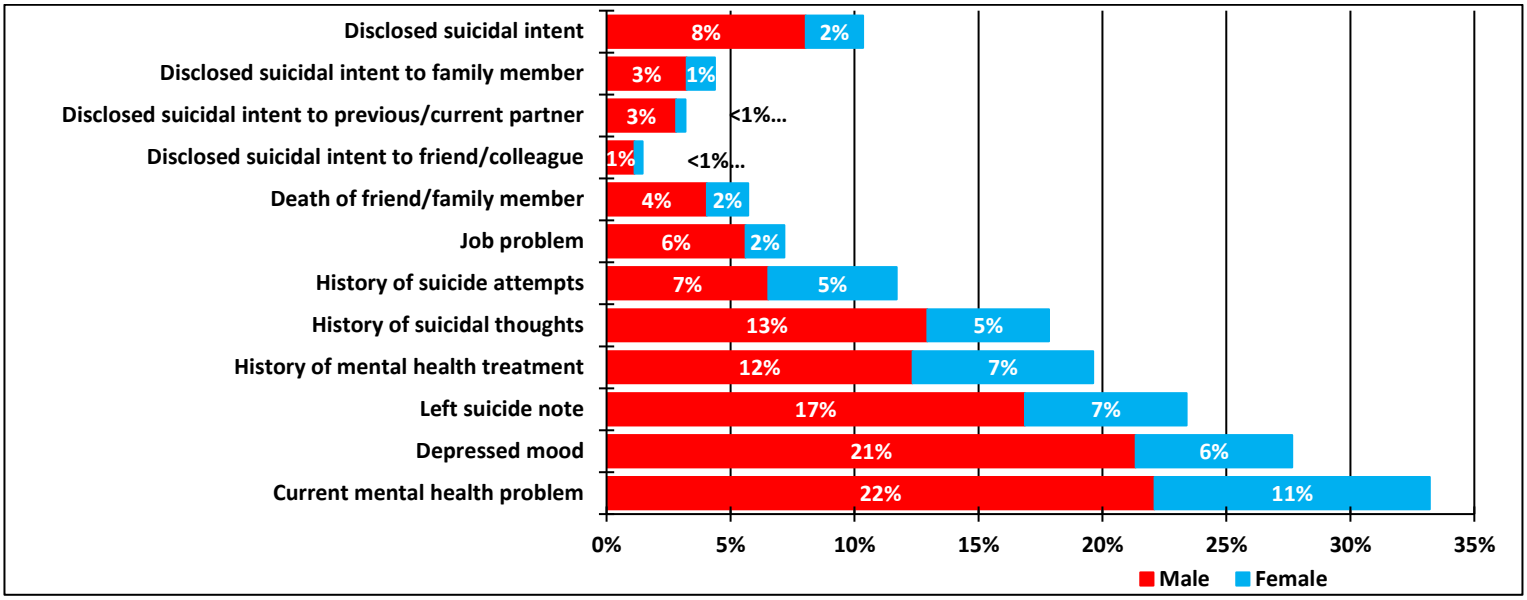
Leading Cause of Suicide Deaths by Sex:



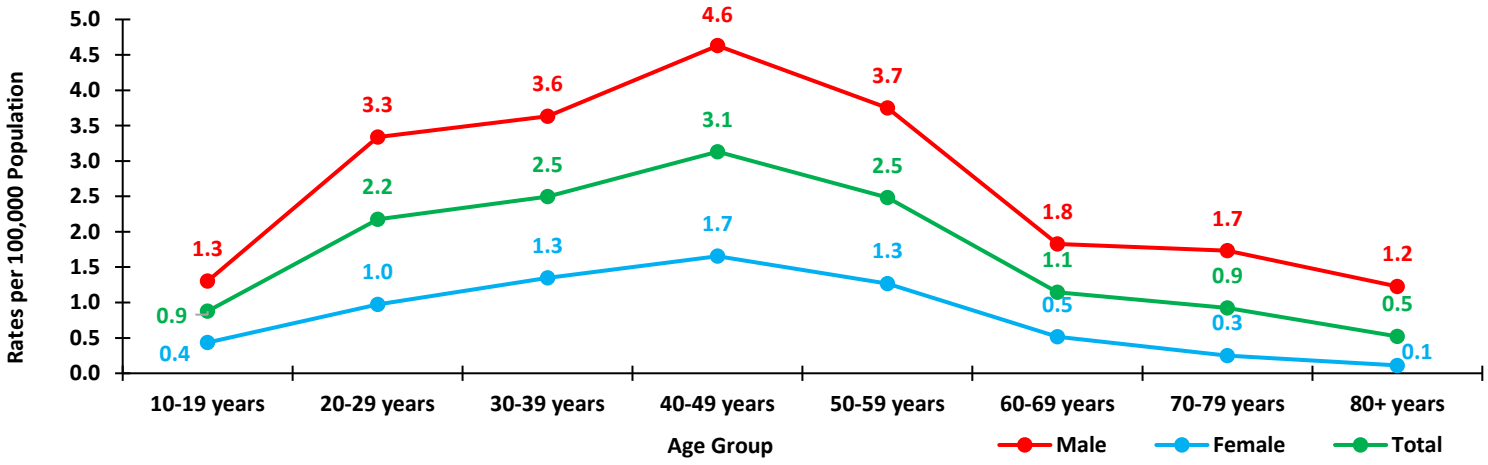
This report was supported by Cooperative Agreement Number CE19-1905 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The findings and conclusions in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Most Common Precipitating Circumstances:



Age-adjusted Rates:



*Death certificates were also collected from Beaver, Bedford, Bradford, Bucks, Cambria, Clarion, Columbia, Crawford, Cumberland, Dauphin, Erie, Franklin, Huntingdon, Lackawanna, Lawrence, Lebanon, Lycoming, Monroe, Perry, Pike, Potter, Somerset, Union, Washington, and Wayne counties. Death certificates from all 49 counties represent 92% of all suicide deaths in Pennsylvania. The statistics displayed on this factsheet represent those 49 counties and rates were calculated using the entire state population. The content of this report **does not** represent the entire state of Pennsylvania. More counties are anticipated to report in 2018.

1. National Center for Health Statistics, "Suicide Mortality in the US, 1999-2017. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Nov. 2018. Accessed on July 10, 2020 from https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/databriefs/db330.htm#ref3

The PAVDRS program is a state level surveillance system funded and overseen by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). It is part of the larger National Violent Death Reporting System (NVDRS). There is a Violent Death Reporting System in all 50 states and some US territories. The PAVDRS program collects data on suicides, homicides, deaths of undetermined intent, and accidental firearm deaths. The program is required to collect data directly from death certificates, coroners/medical examiners, and law enforcement. These sources contribute to a comprehensive understanding of each violent death. PAVDRS/NVDRS data is used for research, policymaking, and, ultimately, to develop violence prevention programs and strategies that will enhance community safety. For more information about the PAVDRS program, please call 717-787-5900 or email RA-DHPAVDRS@pa.gov

This report was supported by Cooperative Agreement Number CE19-1905 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The findings and conclusions in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.