Deaths from Suicide: A Look at 18 States

WISCONSIN, 2013-2014

Size
Divided into 72 counties covering 54,000 square miles

Population
20th most populated state with 5.8 million residents

Race/ethnicity of state population
82% White non-Hispanic, 7% Black, 7% Hispanic or Latino, 3% Asian/Pacific Islander, 1% American Indian/Alaska Native; 2% two or more races

NVDRS participation
Wisconsin Violent Death Reporting System (WIVDRS) joined the NVDRS in 2003; first year of data collection in 2004

A LOOK AT SUICIDE IN WISCONSIN

MANNER OF DEATH

LEGAL INTERVENTION 1%
UNDETERMINED 4%
UNINTENTIONAL FIREARM 1%
SUICIDE 78%
HOMICIDE 16%

SUICIDE METHOD By Sex

SUICIDE AND NON-SUICIDE* FIREARM DEATH RATES By Age and Sex

10-24 YRS 25-44 YRS 45-64 YRS 65+ YRS

TYPES OF VIOLENT DEaths IN WISCONSIN

• Nearly all (94%) violent deaths occurring in Wisconsin in 2013-2014 were classified as suicide or homicide.
• Suicide was the most common manner of violent death in Wisconsin (N=1605, 78%), occurring five times more often than homicide (N=326, 16%).
• The remaining deaths from violence were attributed to undetermined manner (N=87, 4%), legal intervention (N=22, 1%), and unintentional firearm death (N=11, 1%).

SUICIDE IN WISCONSIN

• State rates. Wisconsin’s suicide rate* in 2013-2014 was 14.0/100,000, a 19% increase from 11.8 in 2004-2005 and a 4% increase from 13.4 in 2009-2010.
• State/U.S. comparison. The suicide rate in Wisconsin was 6% higher than the U.S. suicide rate (13.2) and was the ninth highest of all NVDRS states.
• Race/ethnicity. Suicide victims were 91% White, 3% Hispanic, 3% Black, 1% Asian/Pacific Islander, 1% American Indian/Alaska Native, 1% two or more races, and <1% other/unknown.
• Sex. Males accounted for 80% of suicide victims (25.7/100,000 ages 10+) and females accounted for 20% (6.3/100,000 ages 10+). The suicide rate among males was highest for those ages 45-64 (31.4/100,000). For females, the suicide rate was also highest among those ages 45-64 (8.2/100,000).

*All rates in this profile are occurrent ratios based on the number of resident and non-residents deaths that occurred in the state per 100,000 resident population.
SUICIDE METHODS
- Firearms were used in 49% of suicides, followed by hanging/strangulation/suffocation (27%) and poisoning (17%).
- Use of a firearm was the most common method for males (55%), and poisoning was the most common method for females (39%). Males ages 65+ had the highest firearm suicide rate (20.5/100,000). (See infographic)

ADDITIONAL SUICIDE DEMOGRAPHICS
- Veterans. Seventeen percent (17%) of suicide victims were identified as veterans (served in the U.S. Armed Forces) on the death certificate, including 50% of victims ages 65+.
- Sexual orientation. Nineteen (19) victims were identified as gay, lesbian, or bisexual.
- Homeless status. Sixteen (16) victims were identified as homeless at the time of death.
- Marital status. Thirty percent (30%) of victims were married, 38% were never married, 24% were divorced, 5% were widowed, and 3% had another or unknown marital status.
- Education level. Among victims ages 25+, 44% were a high school or GED graduate, 9% had less than a high school education, 46% had some college or a college degree, and 1% had an unknown education level.

SUICIDE CIRCUMSTANCES
- In 97% of Wisconsin’s deaths by suicide, circumstances were documented in the records (N=1562).
- The most frequently cited circumstances were current depressed mood (58%), current or past mental health treatment (50%), current mental health problem (49%), history of suicidal thoughts or plans (46%), relationship problems (46%), a recent/imminent crisis (45%), intimate partner problem (35%), job and/or financial problems (31%), and suicide intent disclosed (30%). A suicide note was left in 40% of the incidents.
- The most frequent or notable circumstances by age group are shown in the chart below.