

Publication Summary



Suicide Statistics for Scotland

Update of trends to 2012

Publication date – 27 August 2013

About this Release

This is the annual update of the suicide topic on the Scottish Public Health Observatory (ScotPHO) website. It is based on information on deaths from suicide (intentional self harm and events of undetermined intent) registered in Scotland in 2012. It includes numbers and rates at Scotland level, and by NHS board, local authority and deprivation decile. These figures are published to coincide with the release of the latest (2012) statistics on suicide by the National Records of Scotland (NRS).

'Every death by suicide is a tragedy, so it is very encouraging to everyone who is making such an effort to prevent people dying by suicide in Scotland that between 2000-02 and 2010-12 the suicide rate has fallen by 18%.'

Alana Atkinson, Choose Life National Programme.

Key Points

- In Scotland, suicide is a leading cause of mortality among people under the age of 35 years.
- There were 830 suicides (deaths from intentional self harm and events of undetermined intent combined) registered in Scotland in 2012. This figure has been calculated using the new coding rules introduced by NRS in 2010. For comparison, the estimated 2012 figure using the old coding rules is 762 suicides (68 fewer). See 'Background' for more information on the coding change.
- In 2012, the suicide rate for males was almost three times that for females.
- The suicide rate for persons in Scotland reduced by 18% in the period 2000-02 to 2010-12. The national target is to reduce the suicide rate in Scotland by 20% between 2000-02 and 2011-13.
- Suicide rates are strongly related to deprivation level. In 2008-12, the age-standardised rate was over four times higher in the most deprived tenth of the population (decile) compared to the least deprived decile (28.9 compared to 6.6 per 100,000 population respectively).

- Suicide rates vary among NHS board and local authority (LA) areas, but there is considerable year-on-year fluctuation. Between 1983-87 and 2008-2012, no NHS board or LA had a statistically significant increase or decrease in the rate for persons. In 2008-12, the only area to differ from the Scottish average for persons was Perth & Kinross LA, which was significantly lower.

Background

In 2011, NRS made a change to the way deaths are classified. This resulted in some deaths previously coded under 'mental and behavioural disorders' now being classed as 'self-poisoning of undetermined intent' and therefore included in the suicide figures. This change to classification was made to match World Health Organization (WHO) updates to codes. This publication presents 2011 and 2012 data based on the new coding rules but, for continuity purposes, it also presents some of the 2011 and 2012 data using NRS estimates based on the old coding rules.

For any analysis over time, data based on the old coding rules should be used, as 2011 and 2012 data based on new coding rules are not directly comparable. Full details on changes to the coding of causes of death between 2010 and 2011 can be found on the [NRS website](#).

See the [Choose Life](#) website for more information on the national strategy and action plan to prevent suicide in Scotland.

Contact

Queries about how the data are collected and how the coding change affected the reported number of probable suicides:

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Further Information

The publication and supporting information can be found on the [ScotPHO website](#). [Metadata and pre-release access information](#) for this publication are also available.

About ISD

Scotland has some of the best health service data in the world, combining high quality, consistency, national coverage and the ability to link data to allow patient based analysis and follow up. Information Services Division (ISD) is a business operating unit of NHS National Services Scotland - and has been in existence for over 40 years. We are an essential support service to NHSScotland and the Scottish Government Health Department and others, responsive to the needs of NHSScotland as the delivery of health and social care evolves.

About ScotPHO

The Scottish Public Health Observatory (ScotPHO) collaboration is led by ISD Scotland and NHS Health Scotland, and includes the Glasgow Centre for Population Health, National Records of Scotland and Health Protection Scotland. Our aim is to make public health information more accessible and usable to improve health and reduce inequalities in Scotland.