



Publication Summary

The Scottish Suicide Information Database Report 2014

Based on 2009-2012 death registrations

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About this Release

As previously published by the National Records of Scotland (NRS), there were 3,059 deaths from 'probable suicide' (intentional self-harm and undetermined intent) registered in Scotland between January 2009 and December 2012. Further details of these individuals, including prior contact with a range of health services, are included in the Scottish Suicide Information Database (ScotSID) and reported here.

Key Points

Who they were

- Almost half the probable suicide deaths were of people aged 35-54 years.
- There were a greater proportion of single or divorced individuals compared to the general population of Scotland.
- Almost three-quarters of probable suicide deaths were male.
- Over a quarter of females who died were mothers who had given birth to one or more children who would be under the age of 16 at the time of their mother's suicide.
- Among people of employment age, around two-thirds were in employment, with a wide range of occupations recorded.

Where they lived

- There was a strong deprivation effect, with the suicide rate more than three times higher in the most deprived fifth of the population than in the least deprived fifth (25 compared with 8 per 100,000 population respectively).
- The rates in most NHS board areas did not differ significantly from the Scottish average, but Forth Valley appeared to have a relatively low rate.

What happened

- Almost three-quarters of suicidal acts occurred in a private dwelling.
- For males, the most common method used was 'hanging, strangulation and suffocation'. For females, the most common was 'poisoning'; this includes drug overdose.

Previous contact with health services

- Over half (58%) of the Scottish residents in ScotSID had at least one mental health drug prescription dispensed in the community within the 12 months before death. This suggests that they were receiving care for a mental health problem or illness from a healthcare professional such as their GP or staff at an outpatient clinic.
- At least 20% had been offered a psychiatric outpatient appointment during the 12 months before death; records show that 16% attended their appointment and 4% did not attend.
- Nearly one-third of all cases (32%) had been an inpatient/daycase in a general hospital within the 12 months before death, and 14% of all cases had had a diagnosis of injury/poisoning. Over half of these patients (9% of all ScotSID cases) were recorded as having intentionally self-harmed.
- A&E records showed that 16% attended A&E in the 30 days before death, and 25% attended within the three months before death. These figures exclude attendances which were likely to have resulted from the suicidal act.

Future work

- Analysis of ScotSID will be developed further to examine healthcare pathways and contact with more than one health service, and to identify further characteristics of individuals with particular risk of suicide. This information will assist health professionals and others to identify opportunities for intervention to reduce future loss of life through suicide.

Background

'Probable suicide' deaths in this report are of people aged 5 years and over, and are coded as 'intentional self-harm' and 'undetermined intent'. The latter category is based on old coding rules as defined by NRS. More information can be found on the [NRS website](#).

The overall aim of ScotSID is to provide a central repository for information on all probable suicide deaths in Scotland, in order to support epidemiology, policy-making and suicide prevention.

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Further Information

Further information can be found in the [full report](#)  [2218Kb] or on the [ISD website](#).

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. www.isdscotland.org/