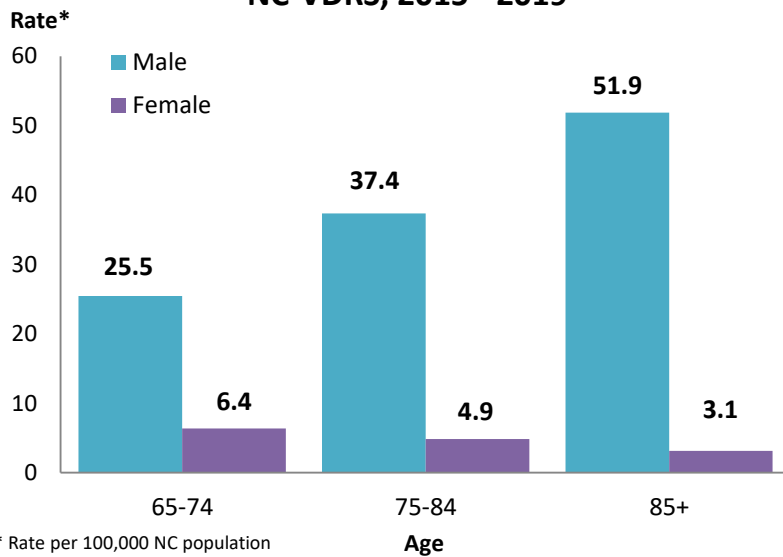


NC Violent Death Reporting System

SUICIDE AMONG OLDER ADULTS IN NORTH CAROLINA, 2015 - 2019

The North Carolina Violent Death Reporting System (NC-VDRS) is a CDC-funded statewide surveillance system that collects detailed information on violent deaths that occur in North Carolina including: homicide, suicide, unintentional firearm deaths, legal intervention, and deaths of undetermined intent. NC-VDRS triangulates information from death certificates, medical examiner reports, and law enforcement reports to understand and aid in the prevention of violent deaths. For more information, please visit <https://www.injuryfreenc.ncdhhs.gov/About/ncVDRS.htm>.

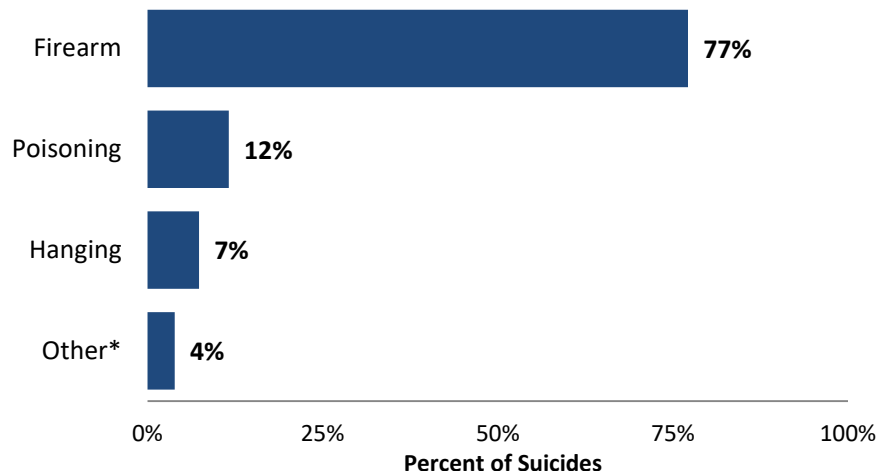
**Older Adult Suicide Rates* by Age Group:
NC-VDRS, 2015 - 2019**



- From 2015 to 2019, 1,761 North Carolina residents ages 65 and older died as a result of violence. Of these violent deaths, 1,361 were suicide (77.3%).
- The suicide rate among older adults was 16.7 suicides per 100,000 population.
- Eighty-two percent (81.4%) of suicides among older adults were among males.
- The suicide rate peaked among males 85 and older, and the suicide rate was consistently higher for males compared to females for all age groups.
- Among females, the suicide rate peaked among those ages 65-74.

- Ninety-four (93.8%) percent of older adult suicide victims were identified as non-Hispanic (NH) white, 4.0 percent were NH Black, and the remaining 2.3 percent were identified as NH Asian, NH American Indian, or Hispanic.

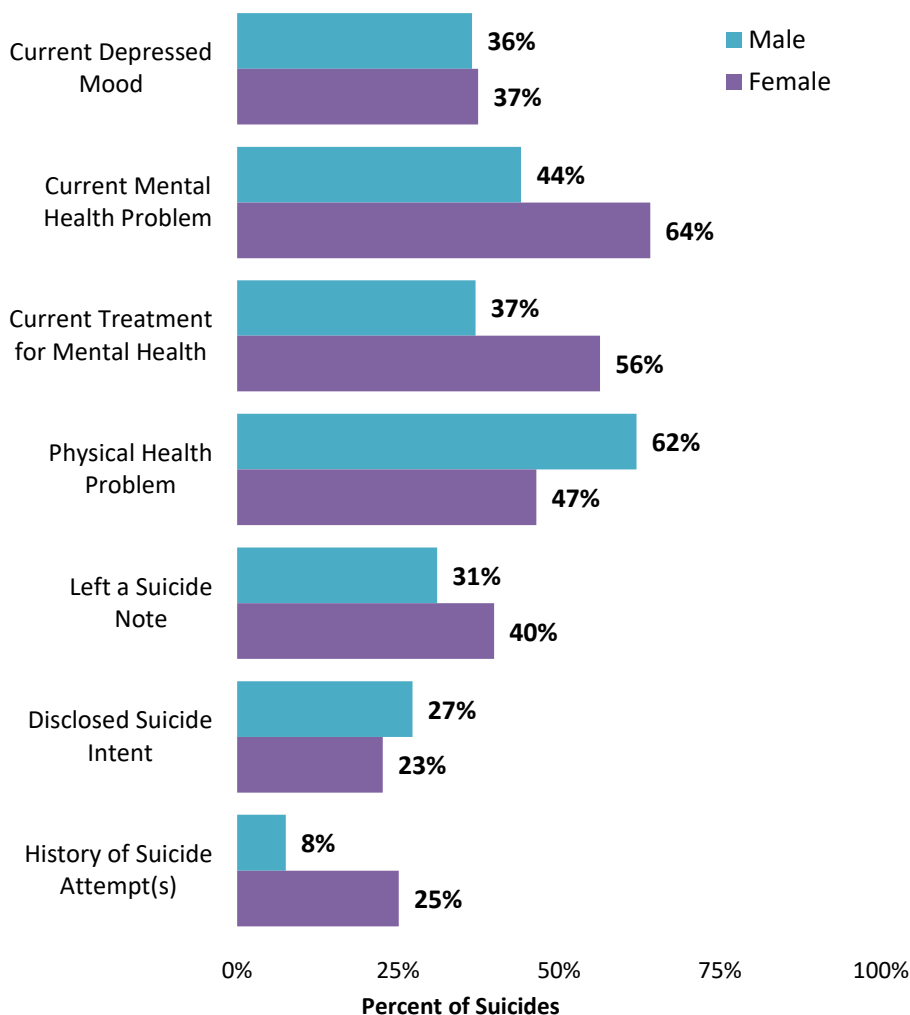
Elder Suicide Method of Death: NC-VDRS, 2015 - 2019



*Other methods include: sharp instrument, fire/burns, motor vehicle and other.

- Overall, the most common method of suicide among older adults was firearms (77.1%), followed by poisoning (11.6%) and hanging/strangulation/suffocation (7.3%).
- Four percent (3.9%) of suicides involved a method other than firearms, poisoning, or hanging/strangulation/suffocation.

Older Adult Suicide Circumstances*: NC-VDRS, 2015 - 2019



- Over one-third (36.5%) of older adult male suicide victims with circumstance information were characterized as having a current depressed mood at the time of death compared to 37.5% of females.
- Sixty-four percent (64.2%) of older adult female and 44.1% of elder male suicide victims had a current mental health problem when they died by suicide.
- Twenty-five percent (25.1%) of older adult females had a history of prior suicide attempts, whereas only 7.6% of older adult males had a history of prior suicide attempts.
- Sixty-two percent (62.0%) of males and 46.5% of females had a physical health problem.

*Circumstances are known for 97% of males (n=1072) and 96% of females (n=243).

More information on suicide prevention efforts can be found at:

State Resource Partners

**N.C. Division of Mental Health,
Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services**
<https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/mhdddsas>

North Carolina Office of the Chief Medical Examiner
<https://www.ocme.dhhs.nc.gov/>

North Carolina Mental Health, Substance Use, and Aging Coalition
<https://www.med.unc.edu/aging/cgac/mental-health/>

N.C. Division of Aging and Adult Services
<https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/daas>

National Resources

The Suicide Prevention Resource Center
<http://www.sprc.org/>

The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
<https://afsp.org/>

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
(for suicide crisis calls) 1-800-273-8255

The North Carolina Violent Death Reporting System is supported by Cooperative Agreement 5 NU17CE924955-02-00 8/16/21 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

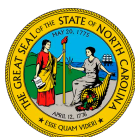
N.C. Division of Public Health / www.publichealth.nc.gov / Injury Epidemiology & Surveillance Unit/ 919-707-5425
N.C. Violent Death Reporting System / 919-707-5432

State of North Carolina / Department of Health and Human Services / www.ncdhhs.gov
N.C. DHHS is an equal opportunity employer and provider.

FINAL DATA 2019

Please see the NC-VDRS 2018 Annual Report for additional data and technical information:

<https://www.injuryfreenc.ncdhhs.gov/DataSurveillance/ViolentDeathData.htm>



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**
Division of Public Health

