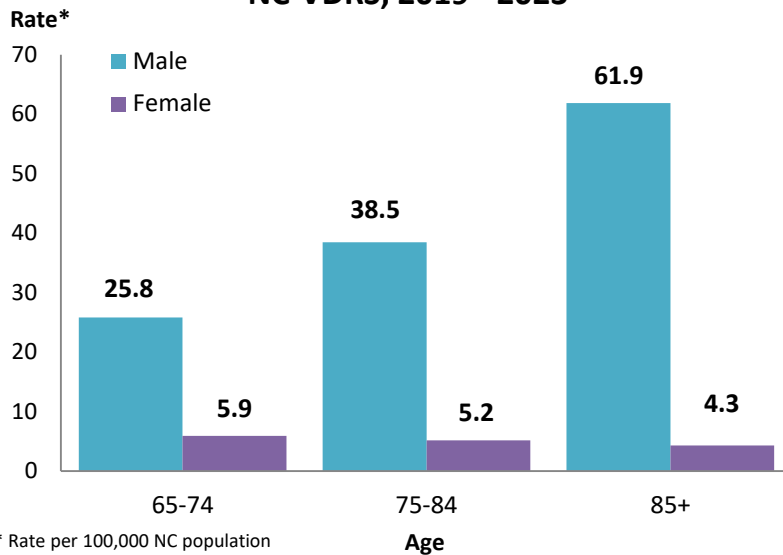


NC Violent Death Reporting System

SUICIDE AMONG OLDER ADULTS IN NORTH CAROLINA, 2019 - 2023

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 uses 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://injuryfreenc.dph.ncdhhs.gov/About/ncVDRS.htm>.

Older Adult Suicide Rates* by Age Group: NC-VDRS, 2019 - 2023



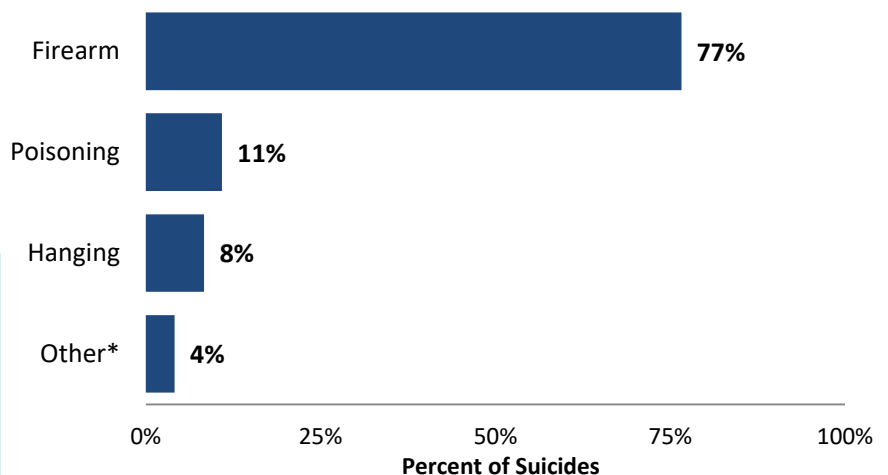
- From 2019 to 2023, 1,872 North Carolina residents ages 65 and older died as a result of violence. Of these violent deaths, 1,568 were suicide (83.8%).
- The suicide rate among older adults was 17.4 suicides per 100,000 population.
- Eighty-two percent (82.3%) of suicides among older adults were among 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-three (92.4%) percent of older adult suicide victims were identified as non-Hispanic (NH) White, 5.1 percent were NH Black, and the remaining 2.5 percent were identified as NH Asian, NH American Indian, or Hispanic.

- Overall, the most common method of suicide among older adults was firearms (76.6%), followed by poisoning (10.9%) and hanging/strangulation/suffocation (8.4%).

- Four percent (4.1%) of suicides involved a method other than firearms, poisoning, or hanging/strangulation/suffocation.

Elder Suicide Method of Death: NC-VDRS, 2019 - 2023



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

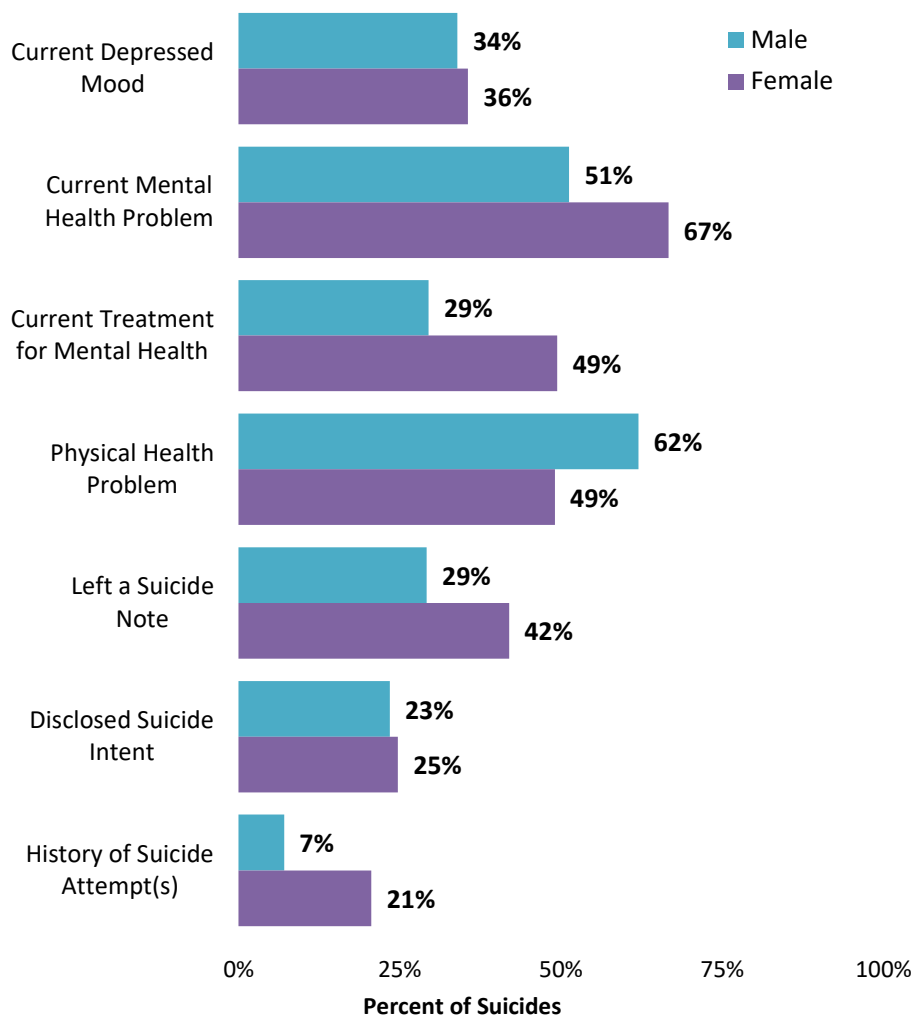
If you or someone you know needs support now,

988
SUICIDE & CRISIS
LIFELINE



**call or text 988
or chat
988lifeline.org**

Older Adult Suicide Circumstances*: NC-VDRS, 2019 - 2023



- Over one-third (33.9%) of older adult male suicide victims with circumstance information were characterized as having a current depressed mood at the time of death compared to 35.6% of females.

- Sixty-seven percent (66.7%) of older adult female and 51.3% of older adult male suicide victims had a current mental health problem when they died by suicide.

- Twenty-one percent (20.6%) of older adult females had a history of prior suicide attempts, whereas only 7.1% of older adult males had a history of prior suicide attempts.

- Sixty-two percent (62.0%) of males and 49.1% of females had a physical health problem.

*Circumstances are known for 98% of males (n=1258) and 96% of females (n=267).

More information on suicide prevention efforts can be found at:

State Resource Partners

**Division of Mental Health,
Developmental Disabilities and Substance Use Services**
<https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/mhddsus>

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

North Carolina Center for Aging and Health
<https://www.med.unc.edu/aging/>

Division of Aging
<https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/daas>

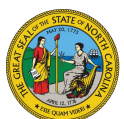
National Resources

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

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

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
call or text 988
or chat 988lifeline.org

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NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**
Division of Public Health
Injury and Violence Prevention Branch



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

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

FINAL DATA 6/16/2025

Please see the NC-VDRS 2023 Annual Report for additional data and technical information:

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