

# Arizona Violent Death Reporting System

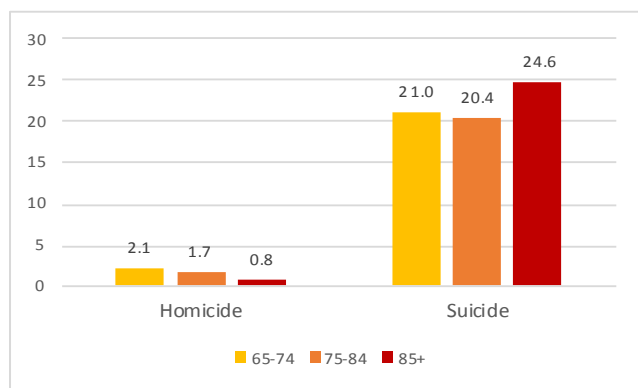
## Data-At-A-Glance, 2015: Violent Deaths among Older Adults



The Arizona Violent Death Reporting System collects violent death data from multiple sources, including death certificates issued by the Arizona Department of Health Services, police reports obtained from investigating agencies, and autopsy and toxicology reports from medical examiner offices. The purpose of the project is to assist stakeholders in strategic planning and prevention efforts aimed toward reducing the number of violent deaths occurring each year.

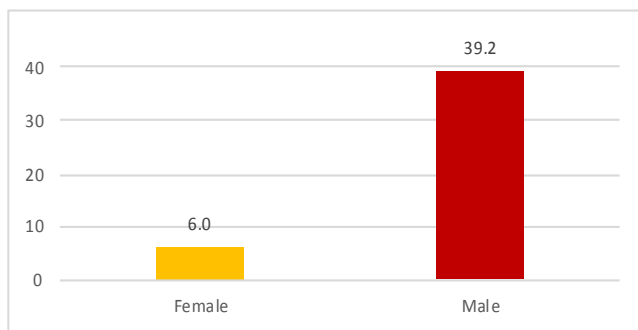
*In 2015, there were 271 known occurrent violent deaths among older adults (65 years and older) in the state of Arizona: 238 suicides, 20 homicides, 2 unintentional accidents, and 11 violent deaths of undetermined intent.*

### Homicide and Suicide Rate per 100,000 among Older Adults by Age, Arizona 2015

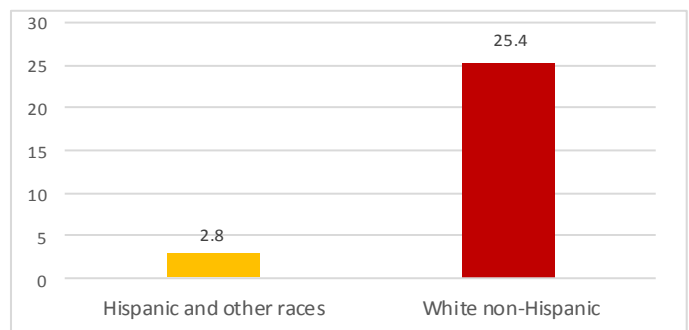


- ◆ Homicide rates were highest among older adults aged 65-74 (2.1 per 100,000 population;  $n=13$ ).
- ◆ Overwhelmingly, older adults were at greater risk of suicide, especially who are aged 85 and older (24.6 per 100,000 population;  $n=32$ ).

### Suicide Rate per 100,000 among Older Adults by Gender and Ethnicity, Arizona 2015



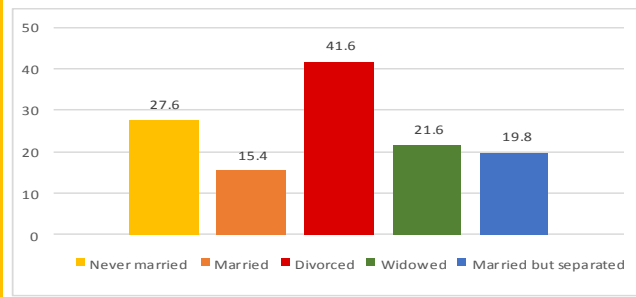
Suicide rates were higher among males (39.2 per 100,000 population;  $n=202$ ) than females (6.0 per 100,000 population;  $n=36$ ).



Suicide rates were higher among non-Hispanic whites (25.4 per 100,000 population;  $n=230$ ) than Hispanic and other races (2.8 per 100,000 population;  $n=6$ ).

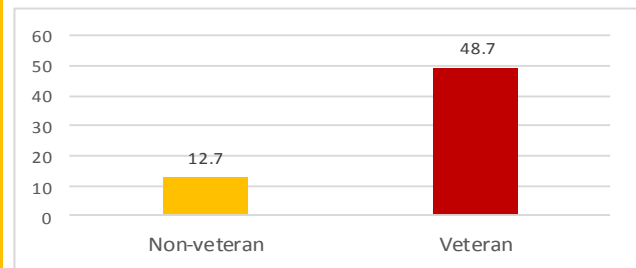
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## Suicide Rate per 100,000 among Older Adults by Marital Status, Arizona 2015



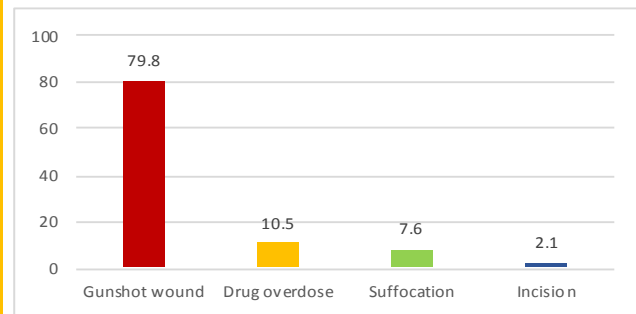
Older divorced adults were at high risk for suicide (41.6 per 100,000 population;  $n=69$ ) compared to older married adults (15.4 per 100,000 population;  $n=102$ ).

## Suicide Rate per 100,000 among Older Adults by Veteran Status, Arizona 2015



Older adults who were veterans were almost four times more at risk of suicide (48.7 per 100,000 population;  $n=126$ ) than non-veterans (12.7 per 100,000 population;  $n=109$ ).

## Method of Suicide among Older Adults (percent), Arizona 2015 ( $n = 238$ )



Nearly 80 percent of suicides among older adults in Arizona involved the use of a firearm (79.8%,  $n=190$ ). One in ten were the result of an overdose (10.5%,  $n=25$ ), including both prescription and illicit drugs. Suffocation (including hanging and asphyxia) accounted for 7.6% ( $n=18$ ) and incisions accounted for 2.1% ( $n=5$ ) of suicides.

### General Trends:

The suicide rate among older adults is high. In terms of the rate of suicides per 100,000 population aged 65 or older: among males the rate is 39.2, for those aged 85 years and older it is 24.6, for non-Hispanic whites it is 25.4, for those who were divorced it is 41.6, and for those who were veterans it is 48.7. Nearly 80% of suicides among older adults involved the use of a firearm (79.8%,  $n=190$ ).

### Prevention/Intervention Opportunity:

Primary care providers should implement routine standard screening for suicidal ideation and related issues (e.g., physical symptoms, sleep problems, depression, etc.) in order to increase an older adult's quality of life and decrease suicidal thoughts. In addition, guns for older adults suffering from depression and or suicide ideation should be carefully controlled.