

Suicide

and Self-Inflicted Injuries in South Carolina



South Carolina Violent Death Reporting System

The South Carolina Violent Death Reporting System (SCVDRS) combines data from law enforcement reports, death certificates, and coroner/medical examiner reports (including toxicology) to pool data on violent deaths and their circumstances into one anonymous database. SCVDRS data includes decedents who were fatally injured and died within South Carolina whether or not they were South Carolina residents. South Carolina residents who were fatally injured or died outside of South Carolina are not included in this report. Therefore, SCVDRS death counts and rates may differ from South Carolina DHEC Vital Statistics and other death sources.

Suicide is a significant public health problem. Suicide rates continue to increase nationally and in South Carolina. In the United States, South Carolina ranks 29th in the nation in suicide rates, 26th in teen suicides ages 12-19, and 39th in drug-related suicides (CDC WISQARS - NVSS, 2021).

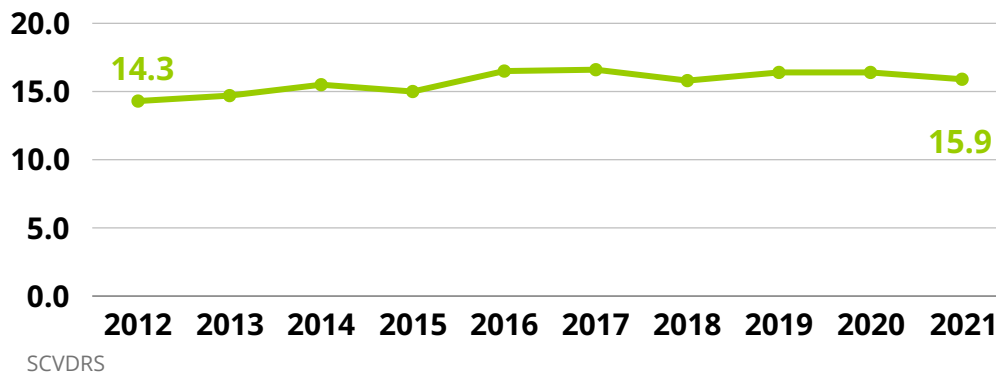


In 2021, there were **823** suicides in South Carolina. The rate of suicide increased by **9.8%** over the last 10 years.

Suicide is the **12th** leading cause of death in the state.

Suicide, by Year

Rate per 100,000 population

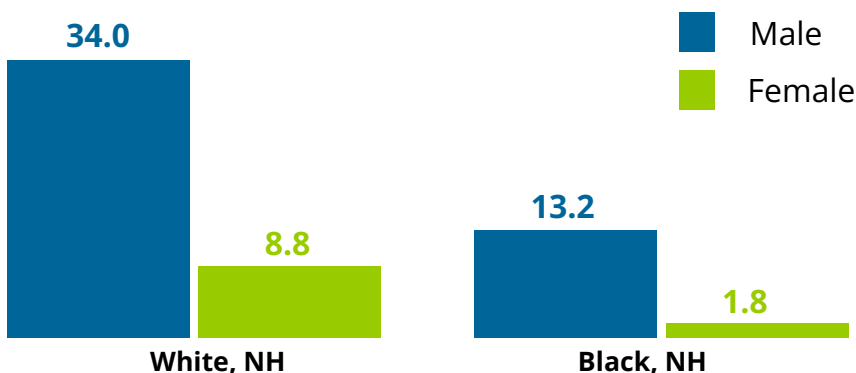


The South Carolina suicide rate is **26.6% higher** than the Healthy People 2030 target and **11.7% higher** than the national rate.

Suicide by Demographics

Suicide, by Race/Ethnicity and Sex

Rate per 100,000 population



4,159

individuals died by suicide in South Carolina from 2017-2021. **Non-Hispanic White males** had the highest rate of suicide, which was over **3 times higher** than the suicide rate among non-Hispanic White females.

SCVDRS, 2017-2021
Note: NH = non-Hispanic.

80%
are males

vs.

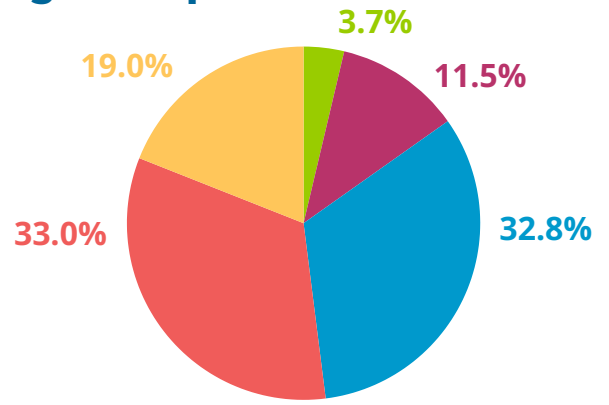
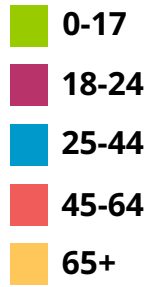
20%
are females

Four out of five suicide deaths were among males. **White males aged 35-44** were the most at risk group.



From 2017-2021, **25 to 44 year olds** and **45 to 64 year olds** represented the highest percentage of suicides.

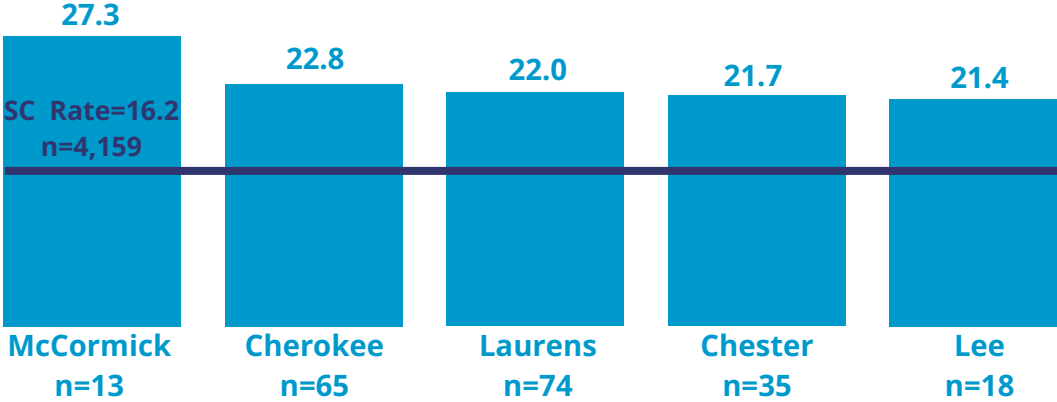
Suicide, by Age Group



SCVDRS, 2017-2021

Counties with the Highest Suicide Rates

Rate per 100,000 population



SCVDRS, 2017-2021

Counties with the **highest number** of suicides include: **Greenville** (n=430), **Charleston** (n=332), **Horry** (n=332), **Spartanburg** (n=292), and **Richland** (n=269).

The Impact of Suicides and Self-Inflicted Injuries

Every day in South Carolina, on average, 12 emergency department visits and 5 inpatient hospitalizations occur for intentional self-harm injuries, and two people die by suicide.

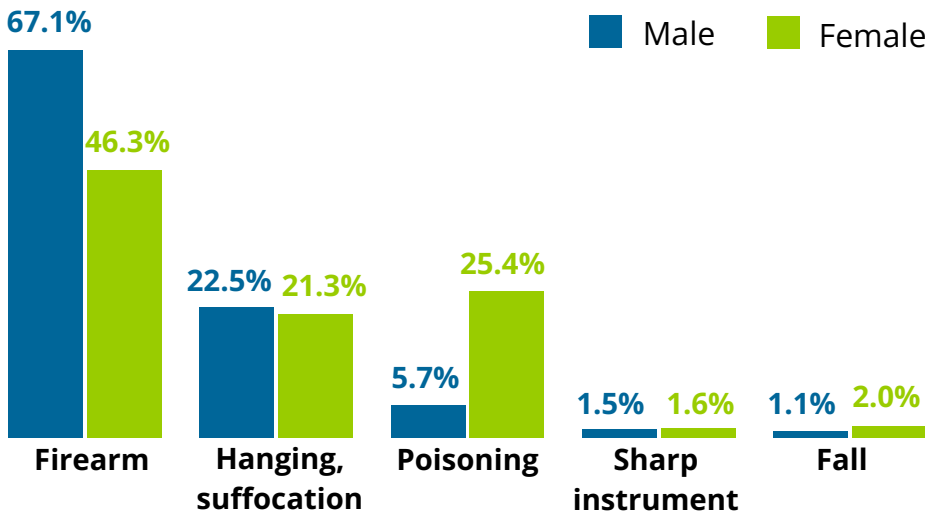


Hospital and ED charges for self-inflicted injuries in 2021 included:
 \$87.0 million in hospital inpatient charges with an average cost of \$51,130
 \$31.5 million in ED charges with an average of \$6,980

SCVDRS, 2021; SC RFA, 2021

Incident Characteristics of Suicides

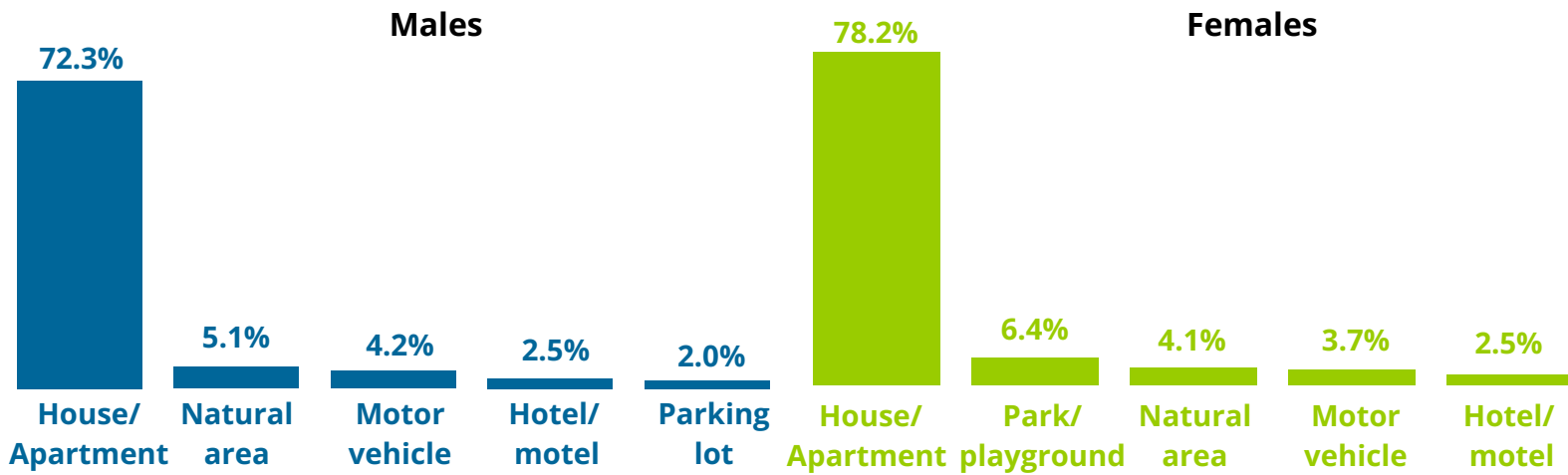
Top 5 Injury Mechanisms of Suicides



Firearms were the most common weapon used in suicides, accounting for over **60%** of suicides from 2017-2021.

SCVDRS, 2017-2021

Top 5 Injury Locations of Suicides



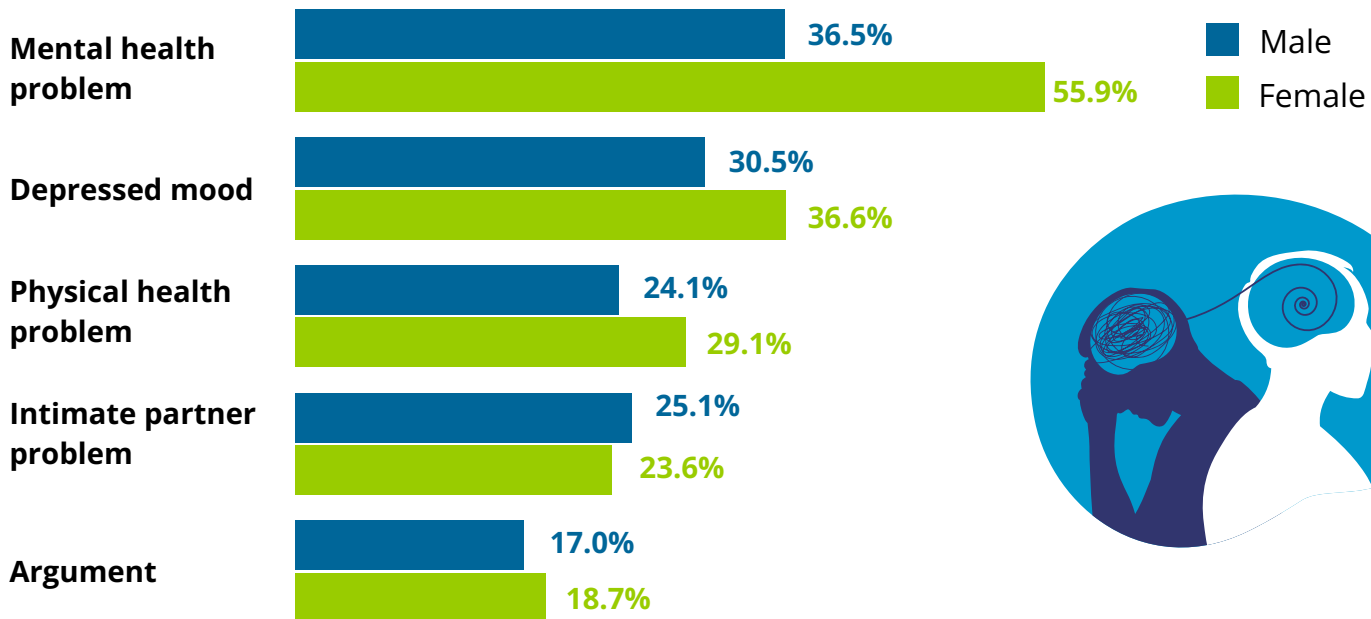
SCVDRS, 2017-2021

Note: Injury location type was unknown for 4.2% of suicide decedents.



Over **three quarters** of suicide decedents were injured in a **house or apartment**. Among non-residential injury locations, **natural area** was more common among **males** and **park/playground** was more common among **females**.

Most Common Circumstances Related to Suicide, by Sex

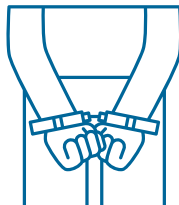


SCVDRS, 2017-2021

Note: Among suicide decedents with at least 1 known circumstance; circumstances were known for 76.1% of decedents. Decedents may have more than one known circumstance.

Mental health problem is the most common circumstance for both males and females. Over **half** of suicides among **females** and over a **third** of suicides among **males** involved **mental health problems** as a related circumstance. Nearly **1/4** of suicide decedents (24.1%) were experiencing a **crisis** at the time of their death.

Female suicide was **more** likely than male suicide to be related to depressed mood or problems with mental health, physical health, substance abuse, or family relationships.



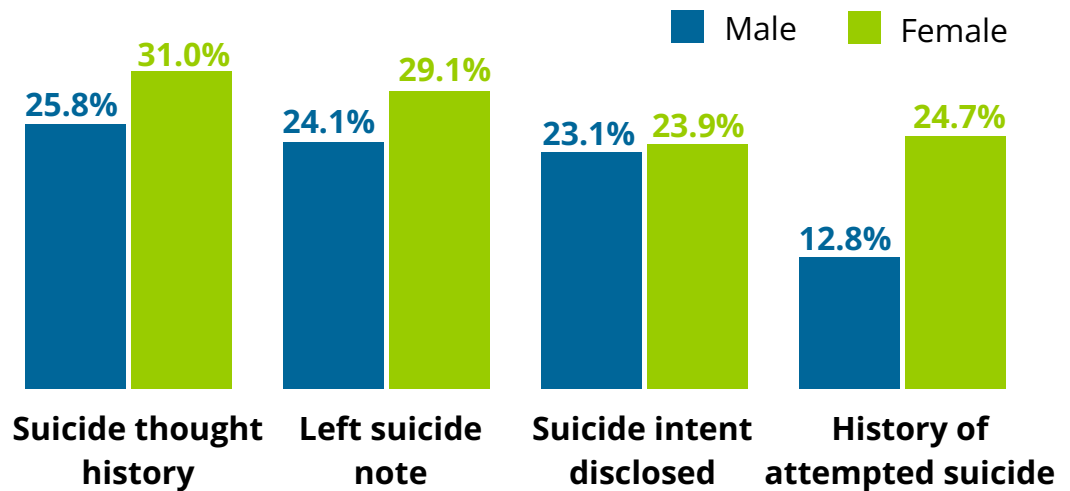
Male suicide was **more** likely than female suicide to be precipitated by another crime, perpetration of interpersonal violence, a recent criminal legal problem, job problem, or alcohol problem.

History and Disclosure of Suicide Decedents



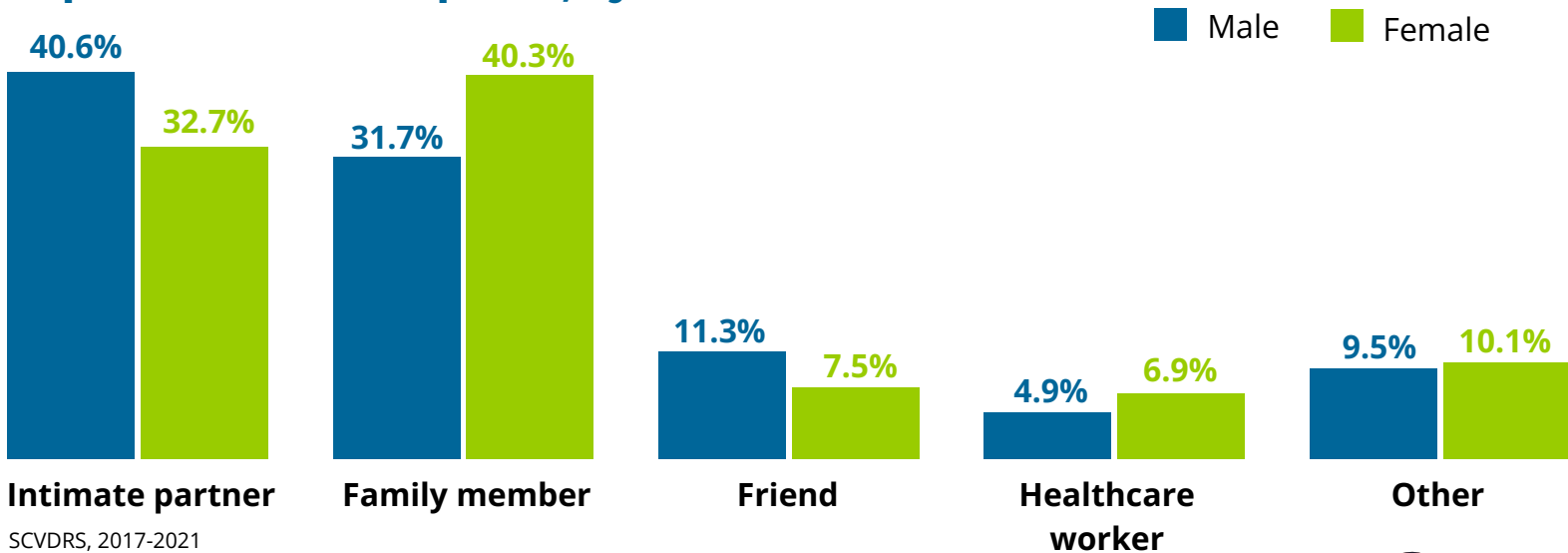
Females were **2 times more likely** to have a history of suicide attempts than males.

Circumstances Specific to Suicide History, by Sex



SCVDRS, 2017-2021

Top 5 Disclosure Recipients, by Sex



SCVDRS, 2017-2021

Males

40.6% of suicide decedents disclosed suicide intent to an **intimate partner**.



Females

40.3% of suicide decedents disclosed suicide intent to a **family member**.



SCVDRS Data Limitations

- Known circumstances leading to the suicide event are subject to the knowledge of family members, friends, and others who report to coroners and law enforcement during investigations.
- Availability of law enforcement and coroner reports for 2020 and 2021 were impacted by the pandemic, therefore, known circumstances may be underreported.

Support:

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Sources:

Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS) Fatal Injury Data, National Vital Statistics System (NVSS), 2021

South Carolina Violent Death Reporting System (SCVDRS), 2012-2021

South Carolina Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office (SC RFA) Emergency Department Visit and Hospital Discharge Data, 2017-2021