

Violent Deaths Among Adults 55 Years and Older

- From 2004 to 2014, 2,541 violent deaths occurred among persons 55 years and older; 76% were suicides, 13% homicides, 10% undetermined, and 1% were unintentional firearm deaths.
- The mean age of victims was 67 years; victims ranged in age from 55 to 101; 51% of the deaths were among persons 55-64 years of age.
- The violent death rate among persons 55-64 years steadily increased from 23.7 per 100,000 population in 2004 to 33.7 in 2014 (Figure 1).
- Annual violent death rates varied dramatically from year to year among the 75-84, and 85 and older age groups (Figure 1).
- 76% of older adults who died were males.
- The rate of suicide among older adult males increased with increasing age while the male homicide rate decreased with increasing age (Figure 2).
- The rate of suicide among older adult females decreased with increasing age while the female homicide rate stayed consistent with increasing age (Figure 2).
- Among older adult males, the suicide rate increased from 31.1 per 100,000 in 2004 to 39.6 in 2014 (Figure 3).
- For 10% of the deaths, the manner (intent) was undetermined; 65% were among persons 55-64 years of age. 53% of undetermined manner deaths were males and 47% were females.
 - Among females, 52% of undetermined deaths involved poison.
 - Among males, 36% of undetermined deaths involved poison.

Figure 1. Age-Specific Violent Death Rates, Oklahoma, 2004-2014

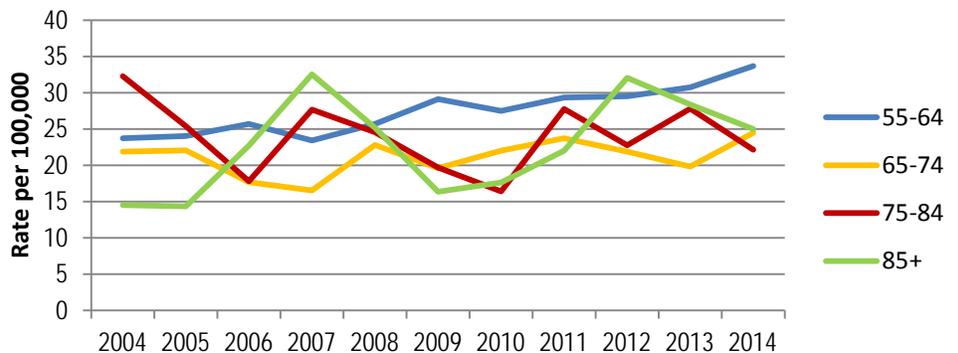


Figure 2. Older Adult Suicide and Homicide Rates by Age and Gender, Oklahoma, 2004-2014

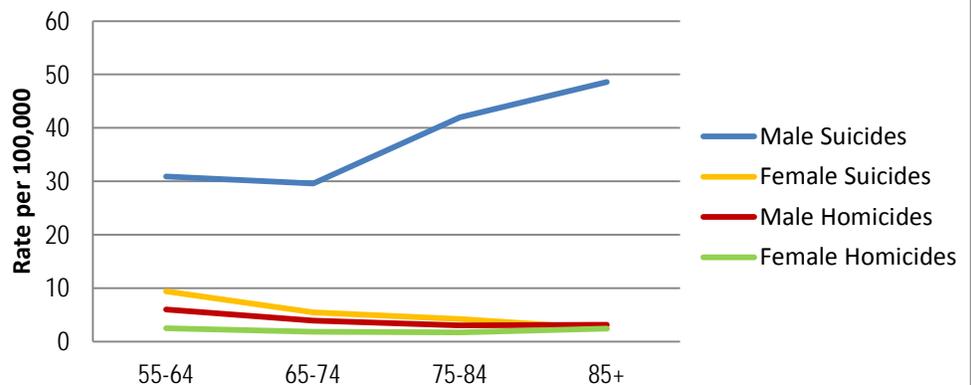
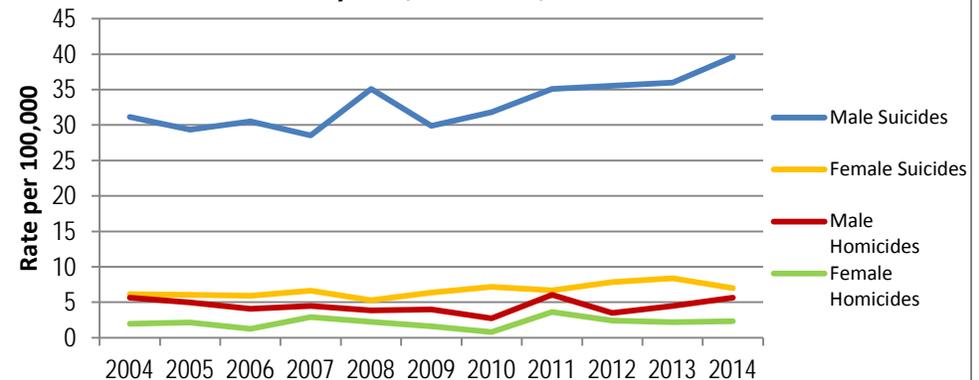


Figure 3. Gender-Specific Older Adult Suicide and Homicide Rates by Year, Oklahoma, 2004-2014



- The rate of older adult violent death among whites (7.0) was almost two times higher than the rate for American Indians (3.7) and 2.6 times higher than the rate for African Americans (2.7) (Table 1).
- Among males, the leading circumstances of suicide were physical health problem (54%), depressed mood (38%), and mental health problem (29%) (Figure 4).
- Among females, the leading circumstances of suicide were mental health problem (54%), physical health problem (45%), and depressed mood (43%) (Figure 4).
- Females more often had a history of suicide attempt than males, 22% and 8%, respectively.
- A suicide note was left by 37% of females and 31% of male suicides.

Older adults more often used a firearm as the method of suicide compared to persons less than 55 years of age, 76% and 54%, respectively.

- The most common method of suicide among older adult victims was firearms (76%), followed by poisoning (11%), and hanging (9%); whereas among persons less than 55 years of age, firearms (54%), hanging (26%), and poisoning (15%) were the most common methods of suicide.
- Older adult males more often died by suicide compared to females, while older adult females more often died by homicide and undetermined manner than males (Figure 5).
- 22% of the older adult victims had a positive blood alcohol content (BAC) at the time of death; 14% of BACs were ≥ 0.08 mg/dL.
- 39% of older adult victims were veterans including 44% of suicide and 21% of homicide victims.
- 42% of older adult victims were married, 31% divorced/separated, 19% widowed, and 7% were single/never married.



Race/Ethnicity	All Violent Deaths	Suicide Rate	Homicide Rate
White	7.0	5.5	0.8
American Indian	3.7	2.2	0.7
African American	2.7	0.8	1.5
Hispanic**	0.9	0.5	0.2

*Rate per 100,000 population.
**Hispanic ethnicity is not a racial category.

Figure 4. Older Adult Suicide Circumstances, Oklahoma, 2004-2014

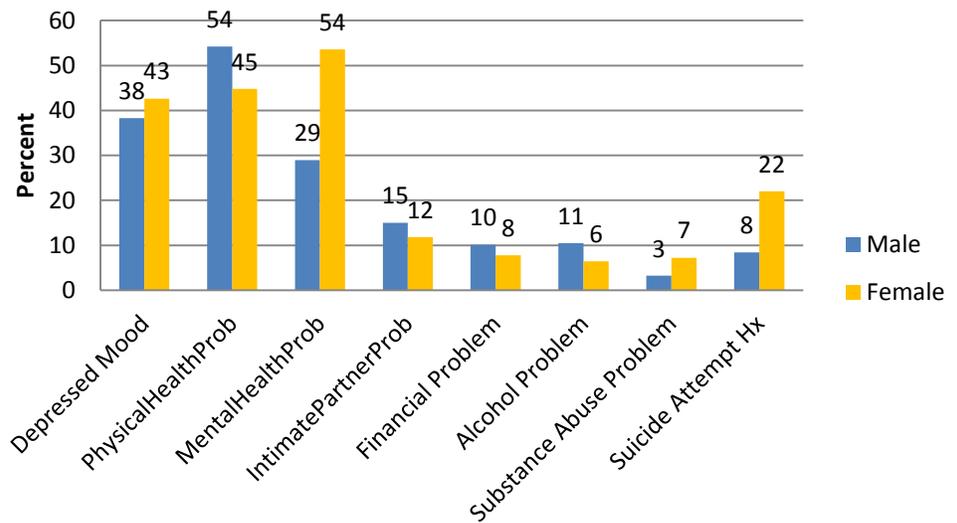
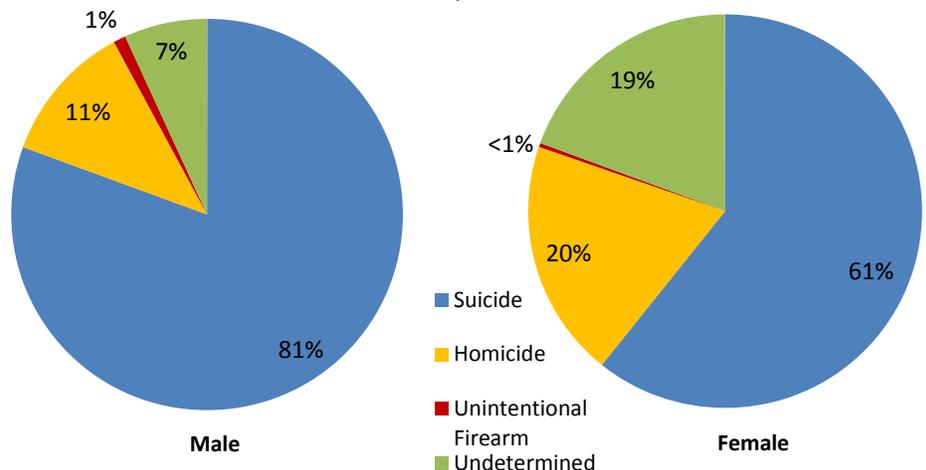


Figure 5. Older Adult Manner of Violent Death by Gender, Oklahoma, 2004-2014



The Oklahoma Violent Death Reporting System (OKVDRS) is a statewide surveillance system for suicides, homicides, undetermined manner deaths, unintentional firearm injury deaths and legal intervention deaths. Data are collected from medical examiner reports, death certificates, law enforcement reports, and child fatality review data. The data are included in the National Violent Death Reporting System and can be accessed at <http://www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/>.