

How many Ohioans died by suicide and homicide?

Bulletin 8: August, 2008

The Office of Program Evaluation and Research, at the Ohio Department of Mental Health, has developed this Data Bulletins series to characterize individuals receiving services in Ohio's public mental health system and to highlight important mental health issues for the system and the overall Ohio population. The purpose of Bulletin 8 is to provide information about the number of Ohioans who either died by suicide or homicide.

MH Boards by Geographical Classification¹

The Ohio Department of Development, using U.S. Census data and the Appalachian federal designations, created a geographical classification for Ohio's 88 counties to help analysts compare population shifts across county types. Since local MH board areas can include multiple counties, the scheme has been adapted so that all counties within the board area carry the same classification. The board categories are Appalachian, Rural, Metropolitan, Suburban, and Mixed. A mixed board area includes two county types, such as a rural and suburban. Board areas comprised of Appalachian and rural counties are classified as Appalachian.*

Suicide and Homicide Deaths²

The Ohio Department of Health Division of Vital Statistics collects and compiles data from various legal documents, e.g., birth certificates and death certifications. The information presented in this bulletin uses the cause of death data that the Division of Vital Statistics collected from death certificates and aggregated by three-year totals.

In Ohio, 321,650 people died within a three-year period beginning in January 2004 and ending in December 2006. Of the deaths that occurred during this three-year period, suicides were listed as the cause for 3,957 or 1.2% of the deaths, while homicides were the cause for 1,856 or 0.6% of the deaths.

Table 1 shows suicide and homicide deaths by geographical MH board type. For the state, there were 34.5 suicides and 16.2 homicides per 100,000 people. Rural (37.0) and Appalachian (36.5) board areas had the highest number of suicides per 100,000 people, while mixed board areas (30.9) had the lowest. Metropolitan (23.6) and Appalachian (10.1) board areas had the highest number of homicides per 100,000 people, and mix board areas (6.6) had the lowest.

The ratio of suicides to homicides was also computed to compare suicides to homicides. For the state, the ratio of suicides to homicides was 2.1. Rural areas had the highest ratio of suicides to homicides, which was 5.2, and metropolitan board areas had the lowest ratio at 1.5. Mixed (4.7), suburban (4.5), and Appalachian (4.4) areas were about the same magnitude.

Table 2 shows the suicide and homicide deaths for five metropolitan county areas. Of the five selected areas, Montgomery County (38.0) had the highest ratio of suicides per 100,000 people. Only Cuyahoga County (33.7) had fewer suicides per 100,000 people than the statewide average. Hamilton County (32.3) had the highest homicides per 100,000 people; this rate was twice the statewide average. Summit County (16.5) had the fewest homicides per 100,000 people. Summit County had the highest ratio of suicides to homicides at 2.3 and Hamilton County had the lowest at 1.1.

Board	Total Suicides	Suicides Per 100,000 People	Total Homicides	Homicides Per 100,000 People	Ratio of Suicides to Homicides
Cuyahoga	443	33.7	358	27.2	1.2
Franklin	383	35.0	324	29.6	1.2
Hamilton	293	35.6	266	32.3	1.1
Montgomery	206	38.0	146	26.9	1.4
Summit	204	37.4	90	16.5	2.3
Statewide	3,957	34.5	1,856	16.2	2.1

*An Ohio map, depicting the counties that fall into these categorizations, can be found at: <http://www.mh.state.oh.us/oper/research/publications/data-bulletins/1-counties.pdf>

Sources of Information:

¹ Ohio Department of Development, Office of Strategic Resources, Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Areas

² Ohio Department of Health, Information Data Mart, last updated December 2007.

For more information:

For more information about this Bulletin, please contact Dee Roth, OPER Office Chief. Contributor: Helen Anne Sweeney. Version 1.0, August 4, 2008

For other Bulletins in this series:

Other bulletins in this series can be found at <http://www.mh.state.oh.us/oper/research/publications/data-bulletins/index.html>.

Board Geographical Classification	Total Suicides	Suicides Per 100,000 People	Total Homicides	Homicides Per 100,000 People	Ratio of Suicides to Homicides
Appalachian	611	36.5	138	10.1	4.4
Rural	284	37.0	55	7.2	5.2
Metropolitan	2,136	34.6	1,461	23.6	1.5
Suburban	584	34.0	129	7.5	4.5
Mixed	342	30.9	73	6.6	4.7
Statewide	3,957	34.5	1,856	16.2	2.1