

Intentional Self-Harm

fast facts

On average, 49 residents of Newfoundland and Labrador intentionally take their own lives each year. Known risk factors that affect the risk of suicide include psychiatric disorders, mental illness, drug misuse, cultural, family and social situations and genetics. This fast facts presents information on suicide deaths that occurred in Newfoundland and Labrador between 1997 and 2012.

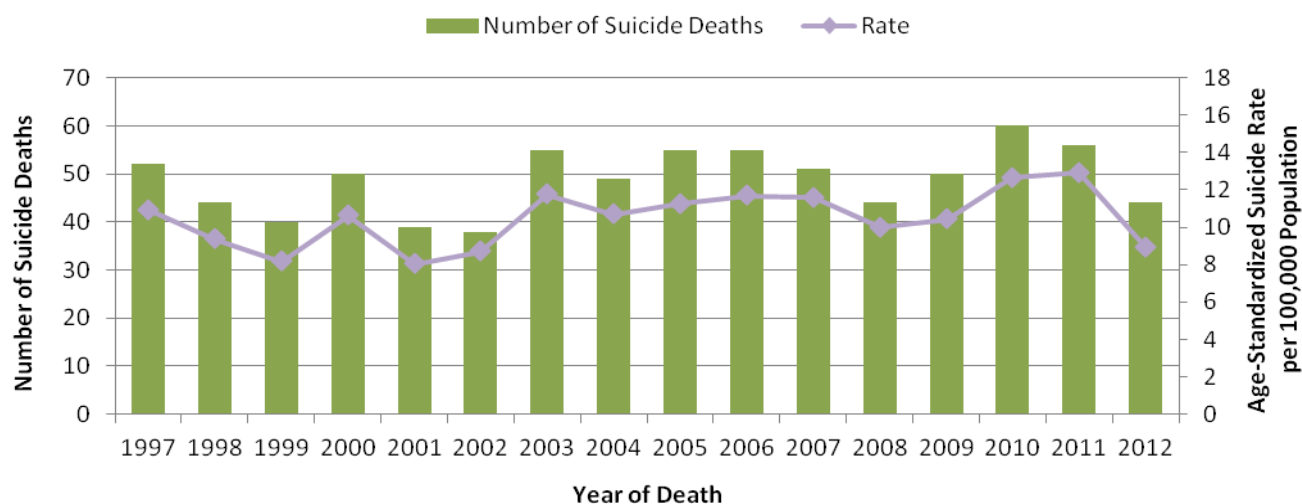
Sources: Newfoundland and Labrador Centre for Health Information Suicide Database; Canadian Mental Health Association

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From 1997 to 2012, there were 782 deaths due to suicide in Newfoundland and Labrador. The average age of individuals who committed suicide over this 16-year period was 41.9 years. The age-standardized¹ rate of suicide ranged from a low of 8.0 per 100,000 population to a high of 12.9 per 100,000 population. In 2012, the age-standardized suicide rate for the province was 8.9 per 100,000 population.

Age-Standardized¹ Suicide Rate, Population Aged 10 Years and Older, Newfoundland and Labrador, 1997-2012

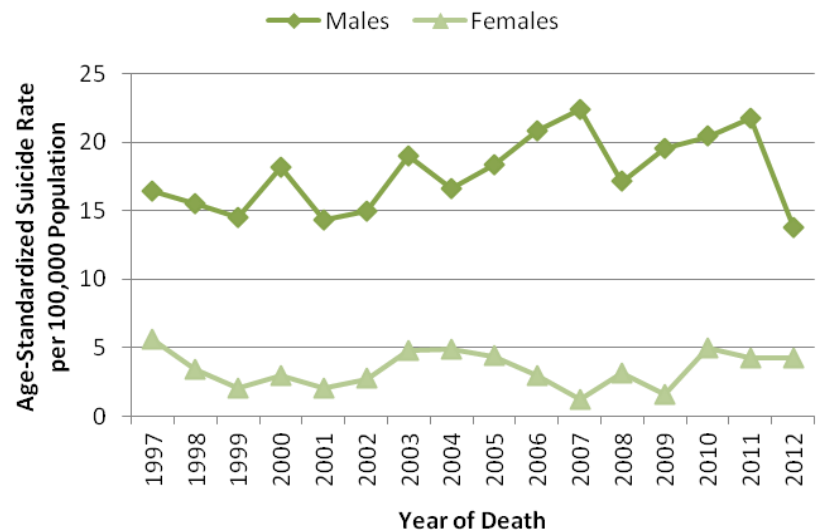


Sources: Newfoundland and Labrador Centre for Health Information Suicide Database 1997-2012; Statistics Canada Population Estimates 1997-2012

¹ Age-standardized to the 1991 Canadian population. An age-standardized rate is a rate that has been adjusted by using a standard population in order to remove or minimize the effects of differences in age composition when comparing rate for different populations.

Newfoundland and Labrador males are more likely to commit suicide than Newfoundland and Labrador females. Between 1997 and 2012, 649 males and 133 females committed suicide in the province, resulting in a male to female ratio of roughly 5:1. While the age-standardized suicide rates for males were considerably higher than those for females, the suicide rates fluctuated for both sexes across the time period. In 2012, the age-standardized suicide rate was 13.8 and 4.2 per 100,000 population for males and females, respectively.

Age-Standardized Suicide Rate by Sex, Population Aged 10 Years and Older,



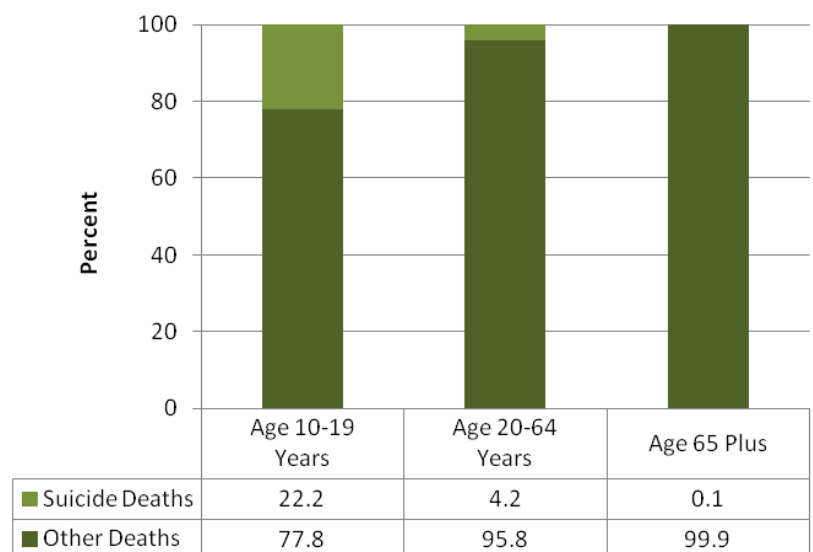
Sources: Newfoundland and Labrador Centre for Health Information Suicide Database 1997-2012; Statistics Canada Population Estimates 1997-2012

Suicide accounted for 22.2% of the number of deaths to youth (aged 10-19 years) between 1997 and 2012. This rate fluctuated from a low of 20.3% between 1997 and 2000 to a high of 27.3% between 2009 and 2012.

The proportional mortality ratio decreased with age with suicide accounting for 4.2% of deaths among adults aged 20-64 years and only 0.1% of deaths among seniors.



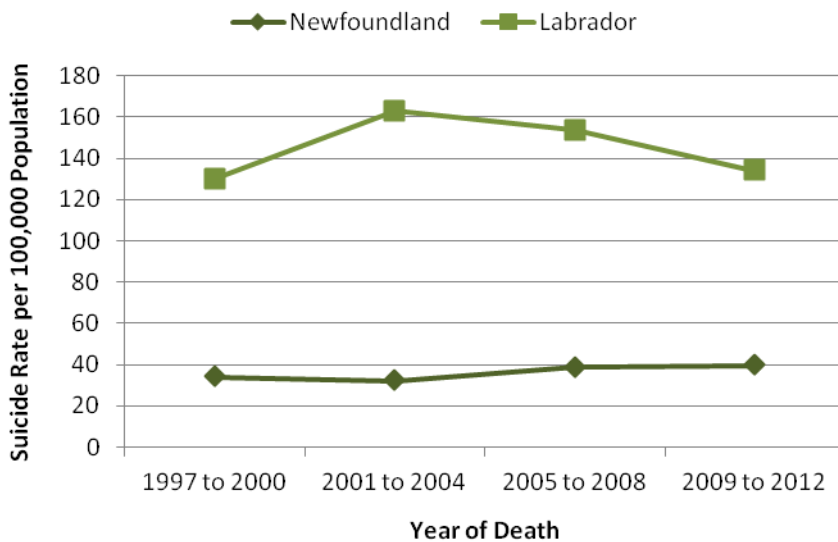
Proportional Mortality Ratio¹ by Age Group, Newfoundland and Labrador, 1997-2012



Sources: Newfoundland and Labrador Centre for Health Information Suicide Database 1997-2012; NLCHI Mortality System 1997-2012

¹ Proportional Mortality Ratio is defined as the number of deaths within a population due to a specific disease or cause divided by the total number of deaths in the population during a specified time frame.

Average Suicide Rate by Geographic Region, Population Aged 10 Years and Older, 1997-2012

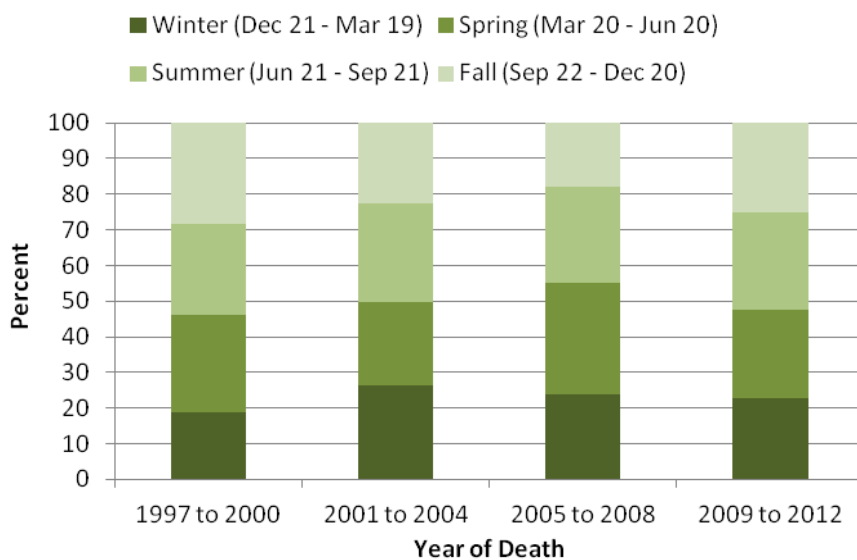


Sources: Newfoundland and Labrador Centre for Health Information Suicide Database 1997-2012; Statistics Canada Population Estimates 1997-2012

The average rate of suicide among residents of Labrador is more than three times higher than that of individuals living on the island portion of the province. Between 2009 and 2012, the average suicide rate in Labrador was 134.0 per 100,000 population while the average suicide rate in Newfoundland was 39.6 per 100,000 population.

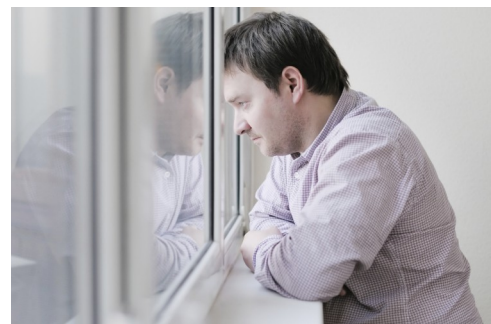


Seasonal Distribution of Suicide Death by Year, Newfoundland and Labrador, 1997-2012



Source: Newfoundland and Labrador Centre for Health Information Suicide Database 1997-2012

Overall, there is no discernible pattern in the seasonal distribution of suicide deaths in the province. However, in more recent years the majority of suicide deaths in the province occurred during the spring and summer months.



Psychiatric disorders (55.9%), mood disorders (48.3%) and marital/relationship problems (26.2%) were the most common mental health and social factors among individuals who committed suicide between 1997 and 2012. Individuals often have more than one co-existing risk factor.

Local Services:

The Mental Health Crisis Centre

47 St. Clare Avenue

St. John's, NL

24-Hour Crisis Line: 1-888-737-4668

1-709-737-4668

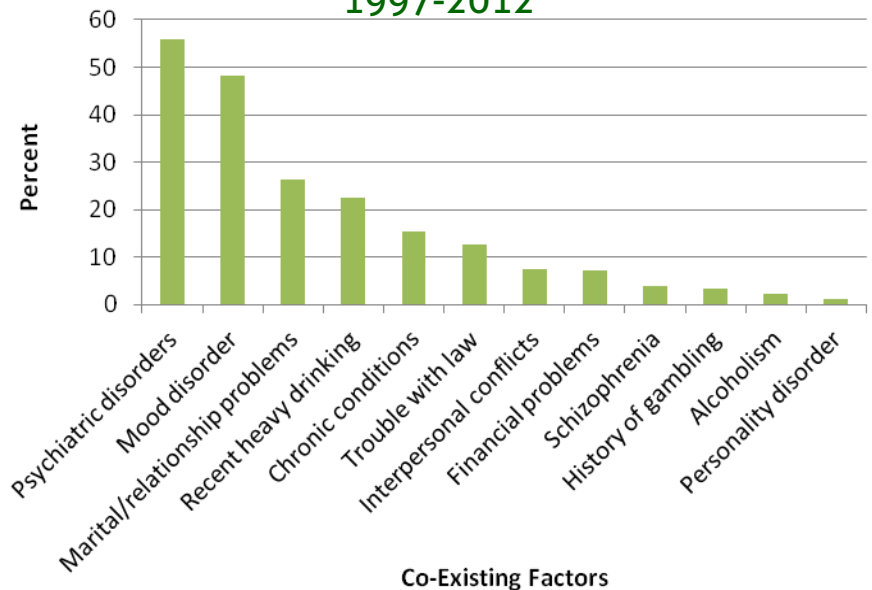
Survivors of Suicide Loss Support Group

99 Dorans Lane

St. John's, NL

1-709-726-4223

Presence of Risk Factors Among Individuals Who Died By Suicide in Newfoundland and Labrador, 1997-2012



Source: Newfoundland and Labrador Centre for Health Information Suicide Database 1997-2012

The NLCHI Suicide Database is composed of data collected from the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) and the annual mortality data files for NL derived from the Canadian Vital Statistics Death Database. Data obtained from the OCME was extracted from toxicology reports, autopsy reports, reports taken by police at the scene of death, suicide notes and medical examiner reports. These documents provided data on date, time, place and manner of death, as well as the coexisting factors listed above.

About the Centre for Health Information

The Newfoundland and Labrador Centre for Health Information (NLCHI) provides quality information to health professionals, the public, researchers and health system decision-makers. Through collaboration with the health system, NLCHI supports the development of data and technical standards, maintains key health databases, prepares and distributes health reports, and supports and carries out applied health research and benefits evaluations. The NLCHI mandate also includes the development and implementation of a confidential and secure provincial electronic health record, including the change management required to support adoption by end user clinicians.