



## Understanding ABS Causes of Death data to support regional approaches to suicide prevention

Access to suicide data is vital to inform suicide prevention policy, strategy and activities at a national, state and regional level.

Access to timely, accurate suicide and mental health data enables Primary Health Networks (PHNs) and others working in regional suicide prevention to respond to trends in suicide and self-harm, and support planning and evaluation of services.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) provides independent and reliable data that can be used to inform suicide prevention efforts in Australia. The Causes of Death data is an important annual data set for suicide prevention.

## Causes of Death data

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) releases an annual [Causes of Death](#) data which contains data on suicide deaths in Australia.

The Causes of Death data includes the number of deaths by suicide, at national and state and territory levels, by sex, selected age groups, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status.

Data on risk factors and comorbid conditions co-occurring with suicide deaths are also provided.

The Causes of Death data is sourced from the eight state and territory [Registrars of Births, Deaths and Marriages](#) and supplemented with information from the [National Coronial Information System](#) (NCIS), including police, pathology, toxicology and coroners' reports. This data is coded by the ABS according to the [International Classification of Diseases](#) (ICD-10) and compiled into aggregate statistics.

## What data is available?

The ABS Causes of Death data release includes preliminary suicide death data for the year prior and revised suicide data for the two years before.

Yearly Causes of Death data are released 9-10 months following the end of the reference year, for example, deaths data up to the end of 2023 were available in October 2024. This is due to the time taken to undergo coronial processes and investigations to classify suicide deaths.

Some deaths occurring in preceding years may be registered at a later time period due to coronial processes and are included in the data for the registration year. This may impact correct interpretation of the data.

The Causes of Death data set includes:

- Suicides by sex
- Suicides by age
- Suicides by state or territory

- Suicides by country of birth
- Suicides and risk factors by remoteness
- Risk factors associated with suicides.

## Causes of Death

In 2025, the ABS commenced a data release that is specific to PHN regions. Taken from the Causes of Death data, the suicide death data for PHNs is categorised by:

- Numbers
- Crude death rate
- Age standardised death rate.

PHN specific suicide data are based on ABS Causes of Death data which, due to coronial processes, can change with revision. Caution is encouraged when using this data. The [Causes of Death methodology](#) provides more detailed information about the release, including data collection, data coding, the revisions process, and technical notes relating to quality improvement processes that impact how data is interpreted over time.

## Where can I find more information?

Visit the [Life in Mind website](#) to learn more and access PHN specific suicide data.

For data support specific to your PHN region, please visit ABS [consultancy services](#).

## Support



When exploring suicide data, it is important to remember that people, families and communities impacted by suicide in Australia are behind the numbers. The reasons people take their own life are complex, and often there is no single reason why a person attempts or dies by suicide.

Need help now? [Visit Life in Mind Australia](#)