

Nonfatal Intentional Self-Harm and Health Care Usage in Maine



BACKGROUND

- Maine has a suicide rate of 22.7 suicide deaths per 100,000 population, with an average of 260 people dying by suicide each year.¹
- People with a history of self-harm are at a greater risk of subsequent self-harm and suicide than the overall population.^{2,3}
- Maine's rate of suicide-related Emergency Department (ED) visits increased by 30% between 2017 and 2023 (128 and 167 per 10,000 ED visits, respectively).⁴

STUDY DESIGN

- Analyzed Maine All Payer Claims Data (APCD) for medical and behavioral health care received by insured Mainers before and after incidents of nonfatal intentional self-harm.
- Identified 1,848 insured Mainers who had received care at an ED or inpatient hospital for a self-harm event from 2017 to 2019.
- Examined health care claim history in one year before and after self-harm event.

DEMOGRAPHICS

44% of individuals in the sample were between the ages 10-19

Females 10-19 years old had the most self-harm events:

31% of the total sample
(n=575; rate=772 per 100k)

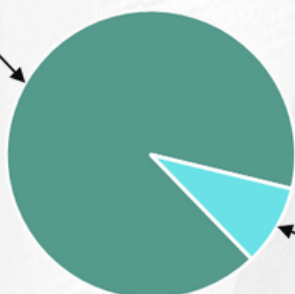
Females were more likely than males to have a self-harm event:



177 vs. 99
per 100,000 population



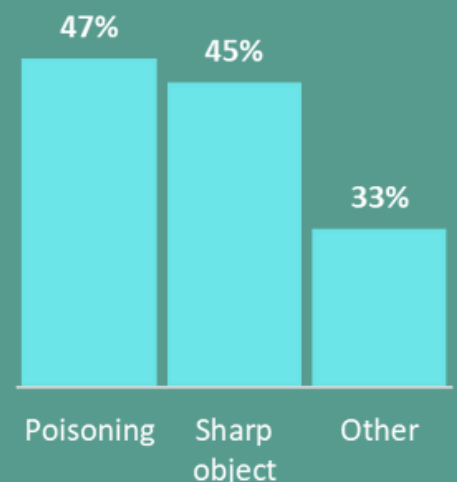
91% had a mental health diagnosis before the self-harm event



9% did not have a mental health diagnosis before the self-harm event

SELF-HARM METHODS

The most common means of self-harm were poisonings by drugs or nonmedical substances (n=872) and sharp objects (n=837)



Almost all people who had a self-harm event visited a health care provider, indicating there are many opportunities to intervene and potentially reduce the rate of self-harm and suicide.

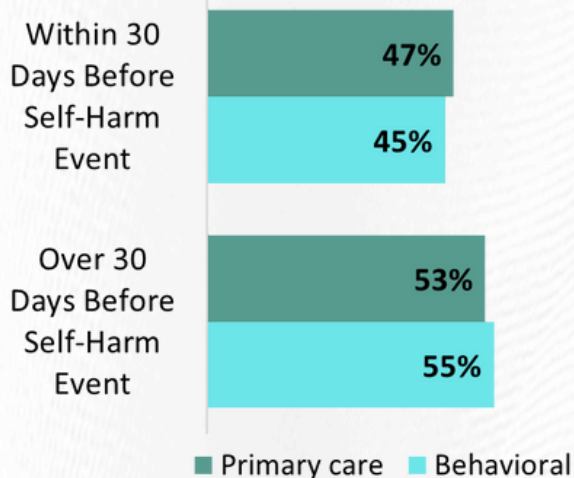
VISITS WITH HEALTH CARE ONE YEAR BEFORE SELF-HARM

99% had at least one visit with a health care provider in the year before the self-harm event

Percent who saw provider type:

91% Primary care **76%** Behavioral Health

Of those who had a health care visit, the visit closest to the self-harm occurred:



Average Number of Visits Before Self-Harm:

9 Primary care **46** Behavioral Health

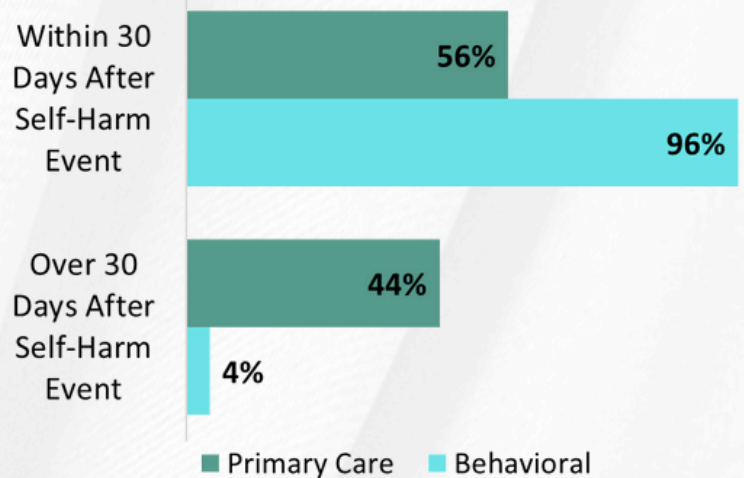
VISITS WITH HEALTH CARE ONE YEAR AFTER SELF-HARM

99% had at least one visit with a health care provider in the year after the self-harm event

Percent who saw provider type:

92% Primary Care **90%** Behavioral Health

Of those who had a health care visit, the first visit after the self-harm occurred:



Average Number of Visits After Self-Harm:

9 Primary care **44** Behavioral Health

CONCLUSION

- Insured people in Maine have frequent visits with health care providers surrounding a self-harm event.
- There are more opportunities to help people who are at risk of self-harm and suicide.
- Health care settings should be better equipped to assess and treat mental health needs.

To learn more visit www.maine.gov/suicide or contact tsup.dhhs@maine.gov

For suicide prevention materials visit www.maine preventionstore.com

Call, text, or chat the Maine Crisis Line at 988. Free. Confidential. Available 24/7.

Data for these analyses were approved for use under MHDO's authorized data release #2022020201 and a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Maine Health Data Organization and the University of Southern Maine to support research and workforce training in health data analytics. Data Sources: Maine All Payer Claims Data, 2016-2020; Rural/Urban Commuting Areas (RUCA); Population estimates from US Census Bureau; 1. CDC WISQARS; 2. Chan et al. (2018); 3. Skegg (2005); 4. NSP ESSENCE

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