

MEDIA ALERT

Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2011 Causes of Death data

The ABS today released its 2011 Causes of Death data - which includes annual national suicide information

Mindframe will endeavour to update the website - www.mindframe-media.info - with a full analysis of the suicide data over the next two business days. However, the media should note the following information about today's publication:

- The 2011 suicide data presented in the ABS publication are 'preliminary data' and will be subject to a continued revision process. Key preliminary data include:
 - There were 2,273 deaths by suicide;
 - The age-standardised rate was 9.9 per 100,000, compared to the 2010 preliminary rate of 10.5 and 2001 rate of 12.6;
 - The 2011 age-standardised suicide rate for males was 15.2 per 100,000, compared to preliminary 2010 data of 16.4 per 100,000. For females, the age-standardised suicide rate in 2011 was 4.7 per 100,000, compared to 4.8 per 100,000 in 2010;
 - The median age of a suicide death in 2011 was 43.2 years for males, 42.6 years for females and 43.1 overall;
 - The highest standardised rate for males was in those aged 85 years and over. The lowest standardised rate was in the 15-19 year age group, however this represented a quarter of all deaths in this age group. The highest age-specific rate for females was also in those aged 85 years and over.
 - Males accounted for 76% of all suicide deaths, with suicide ranking as the 10th leading cause of death of males, and the 15th overall.

Also presented in the latest ABS publication are:

- Revised 2010 and final 2009 data;
- Included in this year's publication was a five-year aggregate of the 5–14-year-old age group. There was a total of 53 deaths by suicide of children and young people under the age of 15 between 2007 and 2011. Of these, 17 deaths (32.1%) were of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and the remaining were of non-Indigenous persons or persons for whom Indigenous status was not stated.

(To view the ABS 2011 Causes of death data [click here](#))



***Mindframe* National Media Initiative: additional notes for the media**

Suicide is a legitimate social and public interest issue for the media and it is likely that the ABS suicide data publication may generate some community and media discussion.

Please keep the following points in mind when considering suicide stories in the media:

- Comparing recent years' suicide data may be problematic due to the revisions process, so please exercise some caution to ensure the community receives accurate information;
- Remember that reports of suicide deaths can influence copycat acts in some cases. Therefore, focus on the broader suicide prevention issues, such as risk factors and providing help-seeking advice, rather than referencing individual cases or details such as methods and locations;
- People in the community who are distressed may feel more helpless, isolated or alarmed if the suicide statistics and issues are sensationalised. For example, suicide trends in Australia have fallen since the last spike in 1997, particularly among young people.
- Refer to *Mindframe's* 'Story Sources and Contacts' section (<http://bit.ly/12K5Bi3>) for a list of organisations that can comment on suicide prevention;
- Your own media codes of practice on suicide (APC, ABS, SBS etc.) are available at <http://bit.ly/15IW6NY>.

ALWAYS remember to add a 24-hour crisis service to any stories about suicide or encourage people to talk to someone, such as:

- **Lifeline: 13 11 14**
- **Suicide Call Back Service: 1300 659 467**
- **MensLine Australia: 1300 78 99 78**
- **Kids Helpline: 1800 55 1800**

For stories posted online, consider adding direct links to online services, also available on *Mindframe's* 'Story Sources and Contacts' section (<http://bit.ly/12K5Bi3>).

Should you have any further enquiries, please do not hesitate to contact the *Mindframe* project team on (02) 4924 6904 or mindframe@hnehealth.nsw.gov.au