Scottish Suicide Information Database
Contact with Unscheduled Care services prior to death

An Official Statistics publication for Scotland

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About this release

This release by Information Services Division (ISD) presents the information held on the Scottish Suicide Information Database (ScotSID) for suicides between 2011 and 2018, with particular focus on prior contact with unscheduled care services. The unscheduled care services included in this report are NHS 24, the Scottish Ambulance Service and GP Out-of-Hours.

Main Points

• During the period 2011-2018, 5,982 individuals aged 5+ years and residing in Scotland died from suicide.
• Nearly one in two people (44.2%) who died by suicide were in contact with at least one unscheduled care service in the 12 months before death.
• One-third (32.8%) had at least one contact with the Scottish Ambulance Service in the 12 months before death. More people contacted the Ambulance Service than either NHS 24 or GP Out-of-Hours.

Percentage of people who died by suicide in 2011-2018¹ and had contacted unscheduled care services²,³ in the year before death, by service

![Bar chart showing contact with unscheduled care services]

Sources: National Records of Scotland death registrations, Unscheduled Care Data Mart.

¹ Probable suicides of Scottish residents aged five years and over registered between 2011 and 2018. The analysis is based on new World Health Organisation rules for coding suicide.
² Patients were counted once for each unscheduled care service with which they had contact, and might have contacted more than one service.
³ Please note that GP Out-of-Hours data are only available from April 2014.
The most common combination of services accessed in the 12 months prior to suicide was NHS 24 and Scottish Ambulance Service, found in 9.7% of cases.

People who died by suicide were significantly more likely to have had contact with an unscheduled care service in the 12 months before death than members of the general population over a similar time period. The difference between the two groups was highest for the Scottish Ambulance Service: contact with this service was almost six times more likely among those who died by suicide than in the general population.

Background
This publication focuses on the recent inclusion of information from the Unscheduled Care Data Mart into the ScotSID database. Due to its narrow focus, this release is shorter than the full ScotSID report, last published in December 2018. ISD plan to release an update to the full report in 2021. In the meantime, ISD will release one other focused publication in 2020.

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Further Information
Find out more in the full report. Data from this publication are available to download from the NHSScotland Open Data platform. For more information on ScotSID and access to previous publications, please see the Mental Health section of our website.

The next release of this publication will be late 2020.

ISD and Official Statistics
ISD is the principal and authoritative source of statistics on health and care services in Scotland. ISD is designated by legislation as a producer of ‘Official Statistics’. Our official statistics publications are produced to a high professional standard and comply with the Code of Practice for Statistics. Further information about our statistics.