

This report summarizes all deaths classified as suicide between January 1, 2008 and December 31, 2018. Suicide is defined as death resulting from self-inflicted injury, with the intent to cause death.

Caveats: As the BCCS operates in a live database environment, the data are considered preliminary and subject to change. These data were compiled by date of death, which may differ from the date of injury. In some cases, the death may occur months or years subsequent to injury. These statistics may vary from those reported by other agencies because of differences in data definitions or reporting standards. See p. 11 for policy changes that may have impacted the rates after 2014.^[1]

Summary:

- In 2018, there were 575 deaths by suicide equating to 12 deaths per 100,000 population.
- Individuals aged 30 to 59 accounted for 56% of deaths. The highest age-specific suicide death rate was among those 50-59 years of age (18 deaths per 100,000 in the age group).
- Males accounted for 74% of suicide deaths in 2018.
- Overall, the three most common means of suicide death in 2018 are by hanging, fire arm and poisoning.
- Means of suicide varied by gender. From 2008-2018, the most common mean of suicide for females was poisoning (37%), followed by hanging (32%). For males, hanging and fire arms accounted for 41% and 19% of deaths, respectively.
- The three townships experiencing the highest number of suicides in 2018 are Vancouver, Surrey, and Victoria.
- Fraser and Vancouver Coastal Health Authority have had the highest *number* of suicide deaths (150 and 134 deaths, respectively) in 2018, accounting for 49% of all suicide deaths during this period.
- Interior Health Authority has the highest rate of suicide deaths (16 deaths per 100,000) followed by Northern Health Authority (15 deaths per 100,000) in 2018. Overall, the rate of suicide deaths in BC was 12 deaths per 100,000 in 2018.

- Rates of suicide deaths are highest in North Vancouver Island, Northwest, Okanagan, and Kootenay Boundary Health Services Delivery Areas.
- In recent years, suicide rates in B.C. have steadily declined from its peak in 2014 (14 deaths per 100,000). Similarly, suicide rates in Canada have shown a downward trend since 2015 (12 deaths per 100,000) to 10 deaths per 100,000 in 2018.^[3] (Note: Data for Canada from 2016 to 2018 are considered preliminary due to Statistics Canada changes in methodology).^[4]

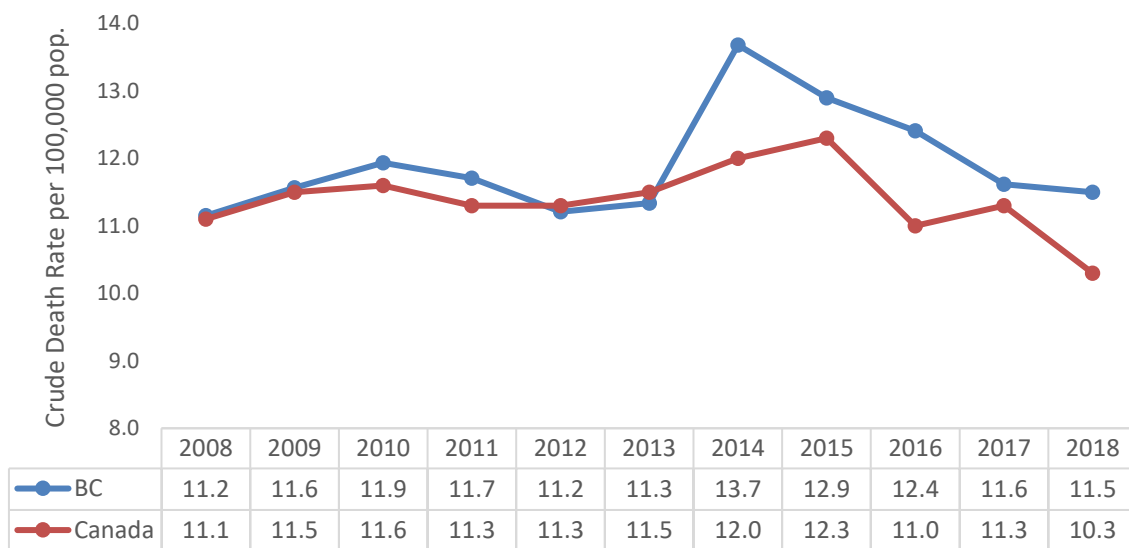


Fig. 1. Suicide Death Rate per 100,000 Population in B.C and Canada, 2008-2018^[2,3,4]

Table 1. Suicide Deaths in BC by Month of Death, 2008 – 2018

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
January	33	41	45	35	37	47	60	56	62	46	42
February	38	31	42	46	44	43	50	45	53	38	40
March	45	45	49	38	44	41	56	45	57	66	49
April	40	28	38	45	36	35	60	52	49	48	41
May	42	50	57	40	49	54	45	60	49	50	63
June	47	40	36	43	37	47	47	52	50	46	51
July	37	59	45	42	42	49	46	56	46	62	61
August	35	37	45	50	52	39	56	58	50	58	43
September	49	44	53	48	48	48	56	49	49	33	54
October	40	49	52	47	42	39	59	61	56	43	54
November	36	39	36	46	36	43	57	33	38	40	42
December	43	47	35	47	45	40	52	49	44	42	35
Total	485	510	533	527	512	525	644	616	603	572	575

Table 2. Suicide Deaths in BC by Gender, 2008 – 2018

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Female	126	113	110	134	128	143	156	147	154	142	150
Male	359	397	423	393	384	382	488	469	449	430	424
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total	485	510	533	527	512	525	644	616	603	572	575

Table 3. Suicide Deaths in BC by Age Group, 2008 – 2018

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
10-18	14	11	31	18	17	12	25	19	20	22	22
19-29	70	74	86	77	69	70	83	96	95	91	91
30-39	61	91	89	80	73	84	81	77	86	82	98
40-49	129	108	95	91	108	97	120	85	107	105	94
50-59	86	107	115	125	105	112	140	163	110	110	128
60-69	63	64	50	67	66	74	97	88	104	81	72
70-79	29	34	39	38	35	38	54	45	43	50	48
80+	33	21	28	31	39	38	43	43	38	31	21
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Total	485	510	533	527	512	525	644	616	603	572	575

Table 4. Age-Specific Suicide Death Rates per 100,000, 2008 – 2018 ^[2]											
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
10-18	2.9	2.3	6.6	3.9	3.7	2.7	5.6	4.3	4.5	4.9	4.8
19-29	10.8	11.1	12.6	11.4	10.0	10.0	11.7	13.5	13.3	12.6	12.3
30-39	10.4	15.4	15.0	13.5	12.1	13.7	12.9	12.0	13.1	12.2	14.1
40-49	18.7	15.7	13.9	13.5	16.1	14.6	18.2	13.0	16.4	16.1	14.5
50-59	13.5	16.5	17.4	18.6	15.2	15.8	19.3	22.2	14.9	15.0	17.6
60-69	14.5	14.0	10.4	13.5	12.7	13.6	17.1	14.8	16.8	12.8	11.2
70-79	10.7	12.4	13.9	13.2	11.9	12.4	17.0	13.6	12.5	13.6	12.3
80+	18.9	11.7	15.2	16.3	20.0	19.0	21.0	20.6	17.8	14.2	9.4
Total	11.2	11.6	11.9	11.7	11.2	11.3	13.7	12.9	12.4	11.6	11.5

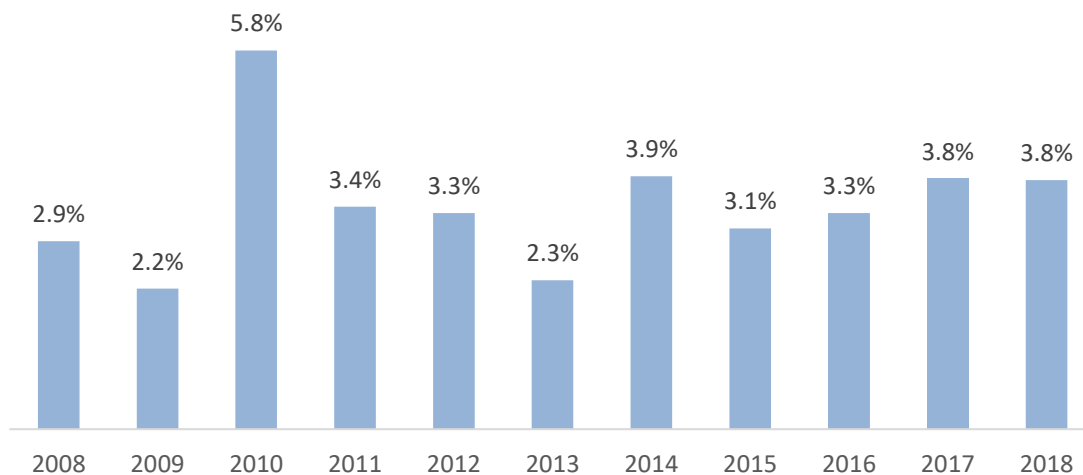


Fig. 2. Child (<19) Suicide Deaths as % of Total, 2008-2018

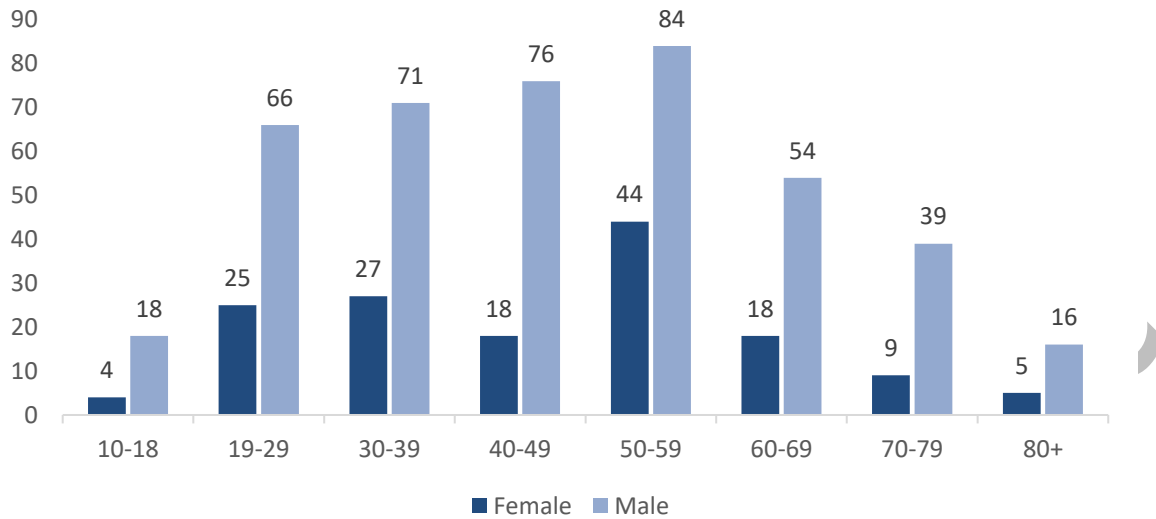


Fig. 3. Suicide Deaths by Age Group and Gender, 2018

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Hanging	162	203	207	196	193	189	258	216	240	231	228
Poisoning (Alcohol/ Drugs/Other)	99	103	98	102	98	92	121	120	113	86	70
Fire Arms	78	70	79	67	78	86	82	103	87	97	78
Fall	54	38	47	36	57	48	53	56	48	54	36
CO Poisoning	38	28	28	26	15	21	37	29	22	13	16
Airway Obstruction	12	17	24	33	31	25	24	31	32	16	19
Stabbing/Incised Injuries	11	19	14	28	12	30	27	21	16	20	15
Drowning	13	9	12	15	9	8	15	17	15	15	7
Motor Vehicle	8	7	5	11	8	9	6	4	9	3	5
Railway	1	1	4	5	3	3	5	4	6	3	4
Fire	1	5	5	2	4	5	5	2	2	1	3
SkyTrain	3	3	3	2	1	3	4	3	3	5	2
Exposure: Cold	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	0
Electrical	1	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Other	2	4	6	3	2	4	4	4	2	1	3
Under Investigation	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	5	7	26	89
Total	485	510	533	527	512	525	644	616	603	572	575

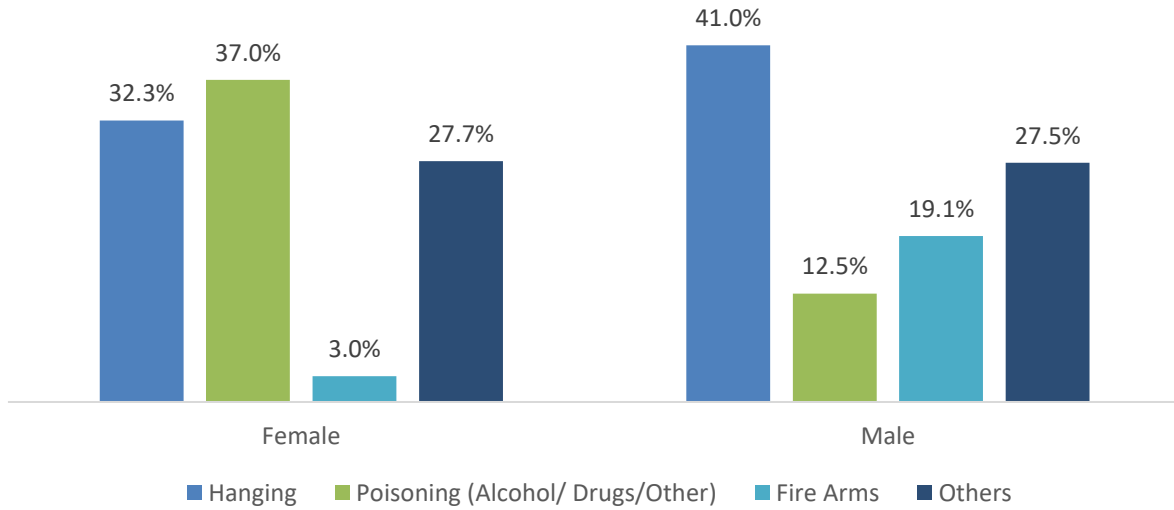


Fig. 4. Suicide Deaths by Gender and Means of Death as % of Total*, 2008-2018

*Note: Deaths under investigation were excluded.

Table 6. Suicide Deaths by Top 10 Townships of Injury, 2008-2018

Township	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Total
Vancouver	69	72	81	71	73	85	95	73	74	73	82	848
Surrey	30	31	34	37	34	30	63	48	39	48	32	426
Victoria	25	36	39	37	36	25	38	30	30	41	31	368
Kelowna	23	16	21	15	17	20	22	21	27	17	24	223
Burnaby	12	21	13	25	21	17	27	17	24	19	23	219
North Vancouver	11	14	17	19	12	13	15	11	13	17	14	156
Langley	15	17	13	9	11	15	15	18	13	5	18	149
Kamloops	6	13	11	15	13	13	16	15	11	16	14	143
Abbotsford	12	15	5	13	6	12	13	19	17	15	15	142
Richmond	15	9	9	9	10	15	10	14	12	16	18	137
Other Townships	267	266	290	277	279	280	330	350	343	305	304	3,291
Total	485	510	533	527	512	525	644	616	603	572	575	6,102

*Note: Death township was used in 3 cases where injury township was not available.

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Interior	99	104	121	91	96	104	133	118	133	131	131
Fraser	131	139	130	151	153	149	191	176	173	157	150
Vancouver	118	118	123	133	114	130	148	132	120	129	134
Coastal											
Island	90	102	108	108	107	103	120	124	121	104	117
Northern	47	47	51	43	41	39	52	66	55	51	43
Out of Province	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
Total	485	510	533	527	512	525	644	616	603	572	575

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Interior	13.9	14.4	16.8	12.6	13.5	14.5	18.3	15.6	17.3	16.4	16.0
Fraser	8.5	8.8	8.0	9.2	9.1	8.8	11.1	10.0	9.6	8.6	8.0
Vancouver	11.0	10.8	11.2	12.0	10.0	11.2	12.3	11.2	10.1	11.0	11.3
Coastal											
Island	12.2	13.8	14.5	14.4	14.2	13.5	15.6	15.7	14.9	12.5	13.8
Northern	16.8	16.8	18.2	15.2	14.4	13.4	17.6	23.0	18.8	18.0	15.2
Total	11.2	11.6	11.9	11.7	11.2	11.3	13.7	12.9	12.4	11.6	11.5

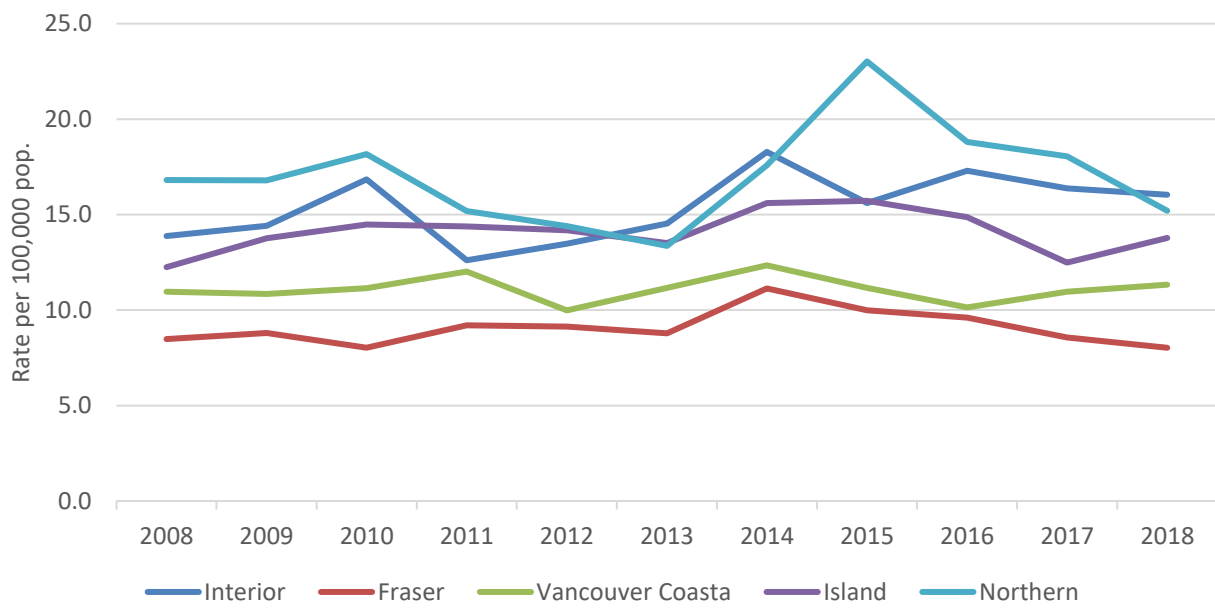


Fig. 3. Suicide Death Rates by Health Authority of Injury per 100,000, 2008-2018^[2,5]

Table 9. Suicide Deaths in BC by Health Services Delivery Area of Injury, 2008 – 2018^[5]

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
East Kootenay	14	15	17	13	11	10	17	15	14	15	12
Kootenay Boundary	7	12	12	8	13	7	19	11	14	17	15
Okanagan	53	42	53	42	40	47	61	57	70	56	71
Thompson Cariboo	25	35	39	28	32	40	36	35	35	43	33
Fraser East	29	31	25	36	31	41	36	50	46	37	32
Fraser North	48	54	41	58	57	50	67	59	66	51	50
Fraser South	54	54	64	57	65	58	88	67	61	69	68
Richmond	15	9	9	9	10	15	10	14	12	16	18
Vancouver	69	72	81	71	73	85	95	73	74	73	82
North Shore/Coast Garibaldi	34	37	33	53	31	30	43	45	34	40	34
South Vancouver Island	37	42	50	53	53	41	52	47	50	55	45
Central Vancouver Island	30	42	36	31	41	43	49	49	44	31	41
North Vancouver Island	23	18	22	24	13	19	19	28	27	18	31
Northwest	14	15	17	16	8	11	16	20	20	7	15
Northern Interior	22	21	25	18	18	15	18	33	22	25	21
Northeast	11	11	9	9	15	13	18	13	13	19	7
Out of Province	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
Total	485	510	533	527	512	525	644	616	603	572	575

Table 10. Suicide Death Rates by Health Services Delivery Area of Injury per 100,000, 2008 – 2018^[2,5]

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
East Kootenay	18.2	19.4	22.1	16.9	14.3	12.9	21.5	18.3	16.9	17.4	13.7
Kootenay Boundary	9.0	15.4	15.4	10.2	16.8	9.0	24.1	13.7	17.1	19.9	17.3
Okanagan	15.5	12.1	15.3	12.1	11.6	13.6	17.4	15.5	18.7	14.5	17.9
Thompson Cariboo	11.5	16.0	17.9	12.8	15.0	18.5	16.5	15.5	15.3	17.8	13.4
Fraser East	10.6	11.1	8.8	12.7	10.8	14.2	12.4	16.6	14.9	11.6	9.9
Fraser North	8.2	9.0	6.7	9.4	9.0	7.8	10.4	9.0	9.9	7.6	7.3
Fraser South	7.9	7.7	8.8	7.7	8.6	7.5	11.3	8.3	7.4	8.2	7.9
Richmond	8.0	4.7	4.6	4.6	4.9	7.3	4.7	6.7	5.8	7.8	8.7
Vancouver	11.1	11.5	12.8	11.2	11.1	12.7	13.8	10.8	10.9	10.8	12.1
North Shore/Coast Garibaldi	12.7	13.6	12.0	19.2	11.0	10.4	14.4	15.2	11.5	13.4	11.3
South Vancouver Island	10.3	11.6	13.6	14.4	14.2	10.8	13.5	12.0	12.4	13.3	10.7
Central Vancouver Island	11.7	16.3	13.8	11.8	15.6	16.2	18.3	17.8	15.6	10.6	13.8
North Vancouver Island	19.5	15.1	18.4	20.0	11.1	16.1	16.1	22.9	21.2	14.0	23.5
Northwest	18.9	20.4	23.1	21.7	10.4	14.1	20.2	26.2	26.8	9.4	20.3
Northern Interior	15.7	15.0	17.8	12.7	12.5	10.2	12.1	22.9	15.0	17.4	14.5
Northeast	16.9	16.7	13.6	13.3	23.2	19.5	26.7	19.7	18.3	29.5	10.9
Total	11.2	11.6	11.9	11.7	11.2	11.3	13.7	12.9	12.4	11.6	11.5

Notes:

1. Following a policy review, a change was implemented in September 2014, with respect to the determination of suicide. Consistent with the Supreme Court of Canada's decision in *F.H. v. Hugh McDougall*, a finding of suicide is now made on a balance of probabilities, in that it is more likely than not, that the death was the result of intentional self-harm. Prior to September 2014, the determination of suicide was based on the test articulated in the 1992 Ontario Court of Appeal decision in *Beckon v. Young*, which required a higher degree of probability to classify a death as suicide. The suicide numbers after 2014 may have been impacted by this policy change.
2. Population estimates were taken from:
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/data/statistics/people-population-community/population/population-estimates>
3. Statistics Canada. (2019). Table 13-10-0392-01 Deaths and age-specific mortality rates, by selected grouped causes. Retrieved from
<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/cv.action?pid=1310039201>
4. Statistics Canada data limitation: Due to improvements in methodology and timeliness, the duration of data collection has been shortened compared to previous years. As a result, there may have been fewer deaths captured by the time of the release. The 2016 to 2018 data are therefore considered preliminary. Statistics Canada. (2019). Vital Statistics - Death Database (CVSD). Retrieved from
<https://www23.statcan.gc.ca/imdb/p2SV.pl?Function=getSurvey&SDDS=3233>.
5. Health Boundary breakdowns can be found at:
<http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/data/geographicdata-services/land-use/administrative-boundaries/health-boundaries>