

BC Coroners Service (BCCS) Suicide Data – Knowledge Update to August 31, 2020

The following summarizes the number of deaths classified as suicide between January 1, 2018 and August 31, 2020. While this data is usually not released until data has had time to settle, preliminary statistics are being made available due to public interest.

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. Data and trends for 2020 should be interpreted with caution as the data require time to settle; cases that are currently classified as undetermined may be updated and those classified as suicide may also change as the coroner’s investigation concludes.

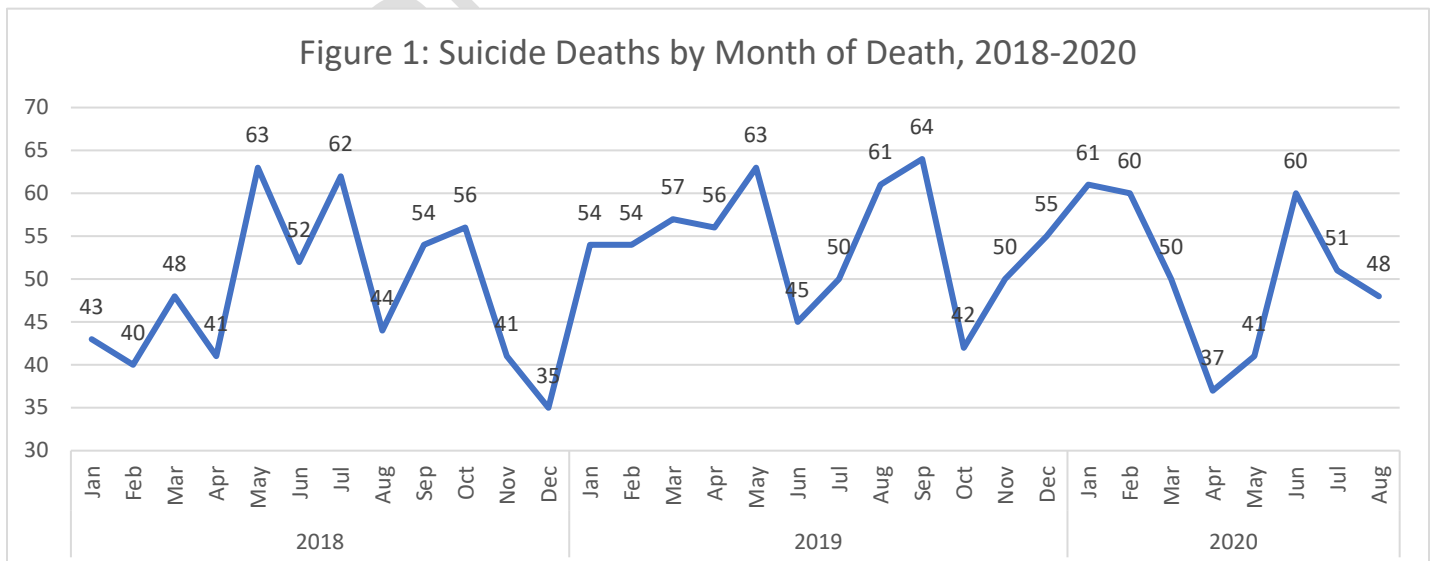
These data were compiled by date of death, which may differ from the date of injury. In some cases, the death may occur months or years subsequent to injury.

Question: Has the number of suicides changed since the COVID-19 Pandemic in B.C.?

- Overall, the number of suicide deaths in B.C. in Jan-Aug 2020 has appeared to decrease by 7% compared to Jan-Aug 2019. *Please see caveat with respect to data limitations.*
- Compared to Jan-Aug 2019, each health authority has seen an apparent decline in suicide deaths except for Island Health (3% increase). The health authority with the largest decline is Northern Health (decrease of 33%), followed by Fraser Health (11%).

A. BC Data:

Figure 1: Suicide Deaths by Month of Death, 2018-2020



B. BC Data by Health Authority:

Table 1: Suicide Deaths by Year of Death and Health Authority of Injury, 2018-2020			
	2018	2019	2020
Interior	131	144	88
Fraser	153	188	110
Vancouver Coastal	135	125	85
Island	117	129	90
Northern	43	65	35
Total	579	651	408

Table 2: Suicide Deaths by Year of Death and Health Authority of Injury, 2018-2020 (Jan-Aug only)			
	2018	2019	2020
Interior	93	92	88
Fraser	101	123	110
Vancouver Coastal	95	86	85
Island	82	87	90
Northern	22	52	35
Total	393	440	408