



Editor
Journal of the American Medical Association

March 6, 2020

Dear Editor,

We are extremely pleased to submit this original research paper, Suicide, overdose, and worker exit in a cohort of Michigan autoworkers, for publication in your journal. The study was motivated by the rising rates of suicide and overdose among middle aged Americans with only a high school degree. We were able to take advantage of existing data from a large cohort of autoworker with long follow-up to examine these rare outcomes during a period of decline in the domestic automobile manufacturing industry.

In a paper published by JAMA in December 2019, Venkataramani et al highlighted a link between eroding economic opportunity and the opioid epidemic. Our manuscript explores a similar hypothesis about work and mental health using individual-level data from a cohort of U.S. manufacturing workers. The findings indicate that Michigan autoworkers who left work had substantially higher risk of suicide or overdose than active employees. Most events occurred within five years of leaving work among those who left before retirement age, suggesting that leaving work early may increase the risk.

We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

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