



VA and DSPO Dallas Brief

What, Where, When and Why for 3600 Seconds

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Agenda



The Suicide Data Repository

- Background of the Suicide Data Repository (SDR)
- Joint VA and DoD SDR
- SDR Data Sources
- Examples of SDR Data
- Specific DoD Suicide Statistics
- Specific VHA Suicide Statistics
- How to Access SDR and Process
- Enhancing Rate Comparison for VHA, DoD, Civilians

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Background



The Suicide Data Repository

- Studies identified problems with sharing suicide-related data across the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Department of Defense (DoD), and Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)
- 2009: Joint Strategic Plan (JSP 2010-2012) required a Suicide Data Working Group (Objective 2.8.A)
- The Working Group Found that:
 - Neither DoD nor VA has a comprehensive system for collecting longitudinal suicide data
 - DoD/VA are limited in their ability to:
 - Report suicides for inactive Guard and Reservists
 - Report on longitudinal issues related to suicide (e.g., suicides following short service periods; long-term outcomes following a suicide attempt)
 - Reliably report on topics requiring access to information about ALL veterans (e.g., suicide after deployment; risk for suicide following separation from service)

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The Need for a Joint VA and DoD SDR



The Suicide Data Repository

- The Report of the Blue Ribbon Workgroup on Suicide Prevention in the Veteran population noted that consistent, reliable suicide rate calculation was limited by barriers to data access and comparability
 - For example, even if using death certificates as the consistent definition of “suicide,” data may be biased by underreporting or inconsistencies in data collection across systems
- Biases may also be associated with determining Veteran status on death certificates (that are often subsequently used to calculate suicide rates)
- These issues are further complicated when attempting to compare suicide data within subgroups of the DoD or across the DoD and VA
- Studies may need to link multiple data sets (e.g., VA, DoD, NVDRS, and NDI data) to accurately compile VHA treatment history, service characteristics, and death circumstances

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SDR Data Sources

The Suicide Data Repository



1. CDC's National Death Index Plus which contains approximately 2.5 million records (1979-2011)
2. Social Security Administration Death Register
3. Active Duty Master File
4. Reserve Components Common Personnel Data System (RCCPDS) Master File and RCCPDS Transaction File
5. Defense Casualty Analysis System (DCAS)
6. Active Duty Transaction File
7. Military Mortality Database (~240 data elements per record)
8. Veterans Health Administration Master User File

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SDR Relationship to DoDSER/SPAN



The Suicide Data Repository

DoDSER	SPAN
<ul style="list-style-type: none">The DoD Suicide Event Report (DoDSER) program requires all Services to identify suicide attempts that result in hospitalization or evacuation from theater.A professional collects medical records, personnel records, etc., on the individual and responds to standardized items about the event and individual's history	<p>The VA developed a suicide event reporting system called SPAN, based on standardized "Suicide Behavior Reports," with data collected on suicides and non-fatal suicide behavior known to VHA clinicians or Suicide Prevention Coordinators</p>
<p>DoDSER data is used to characterize suicide behaviors in DoD</p>	<p>SPAN data is used to characterize suicide events known to VA providers and Suicide Behavior Coordinators</p>
<p>DoDSER and SPAN data will be useful for expanding the value (e.g., outcomes for suicide attempts)</p>	

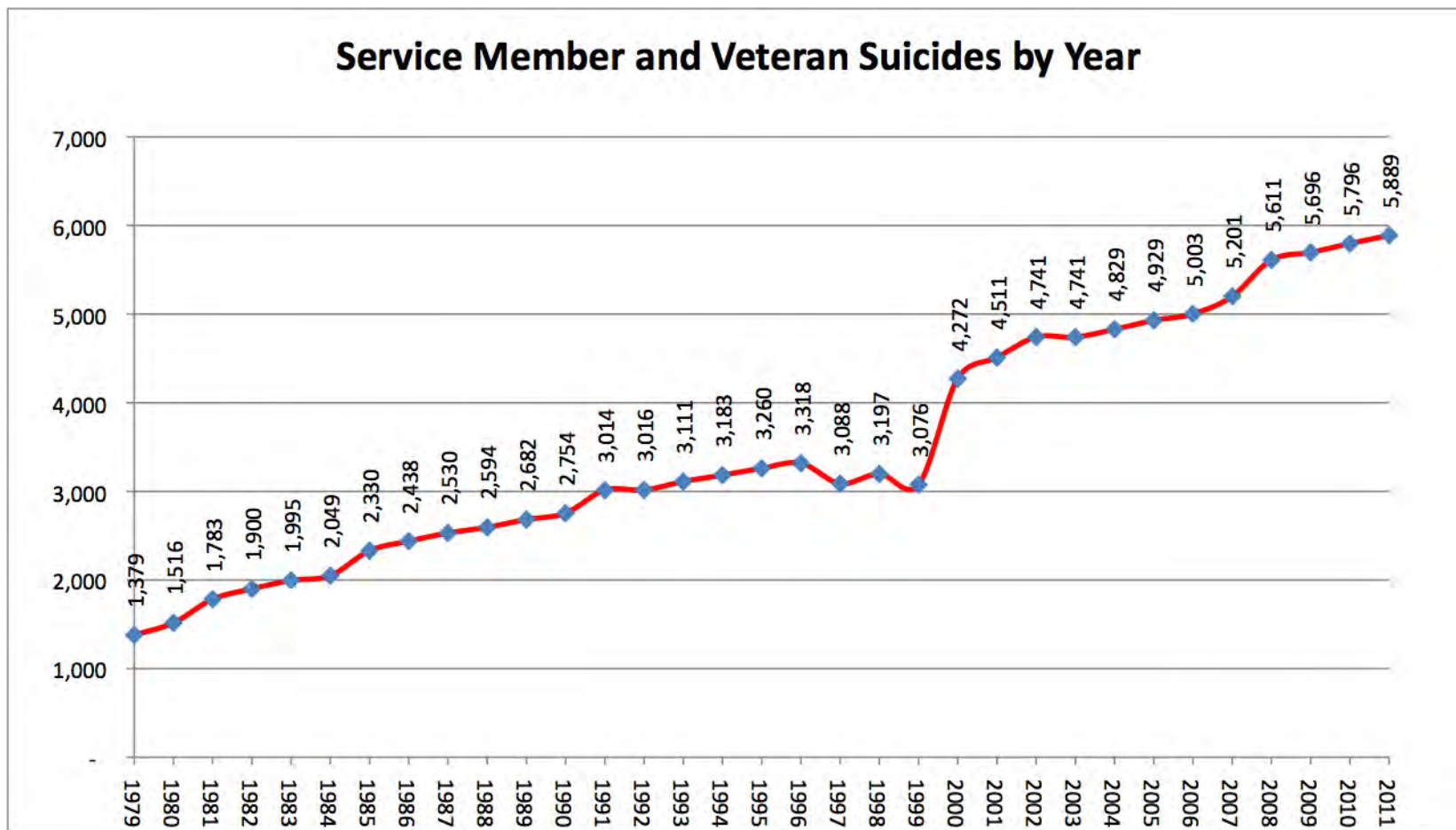
- SDR does not replicate these data sources
- The future SDR may incorporate data from DoDSER and SPAN in a common and shared resource

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VHA, Veteran, and DoD Suicide Records in SDR by Year



The Suicide Data Repository



VA and DoD SDR data

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Military Suicides by Component and Gender

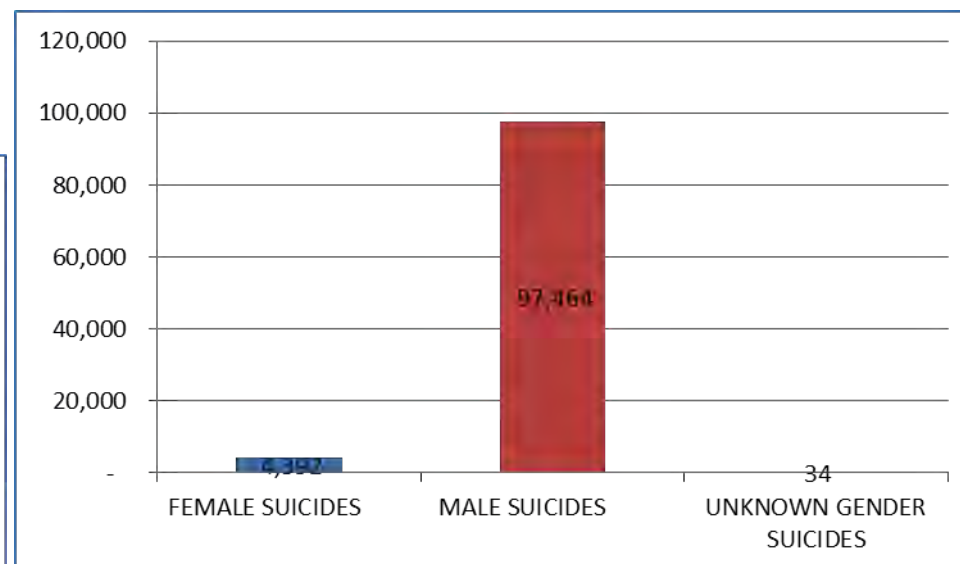
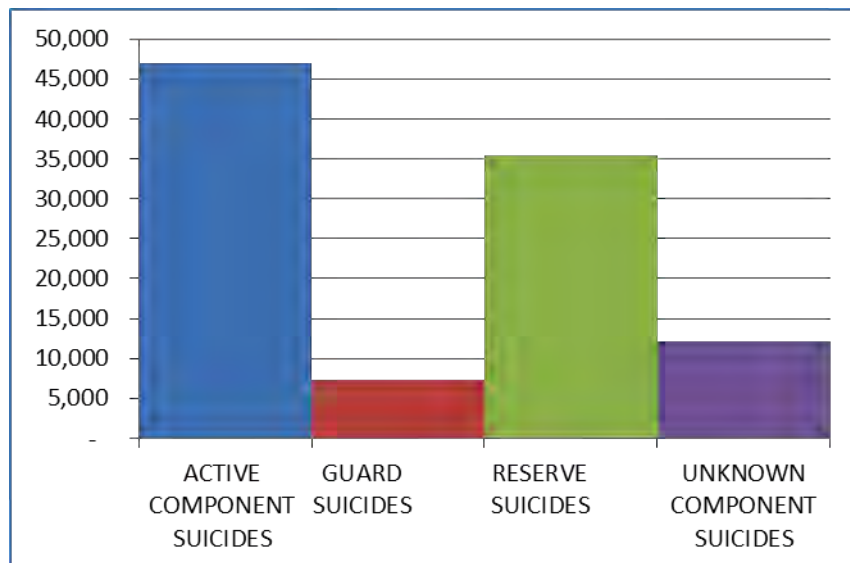


The Suicide Data Repository

For Deaths occurring between 1979 and 2011

AS OF: 31 December 2011

SOURCE: DMDC/Military Veteran Mortality Database



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Military Suicides by Rank

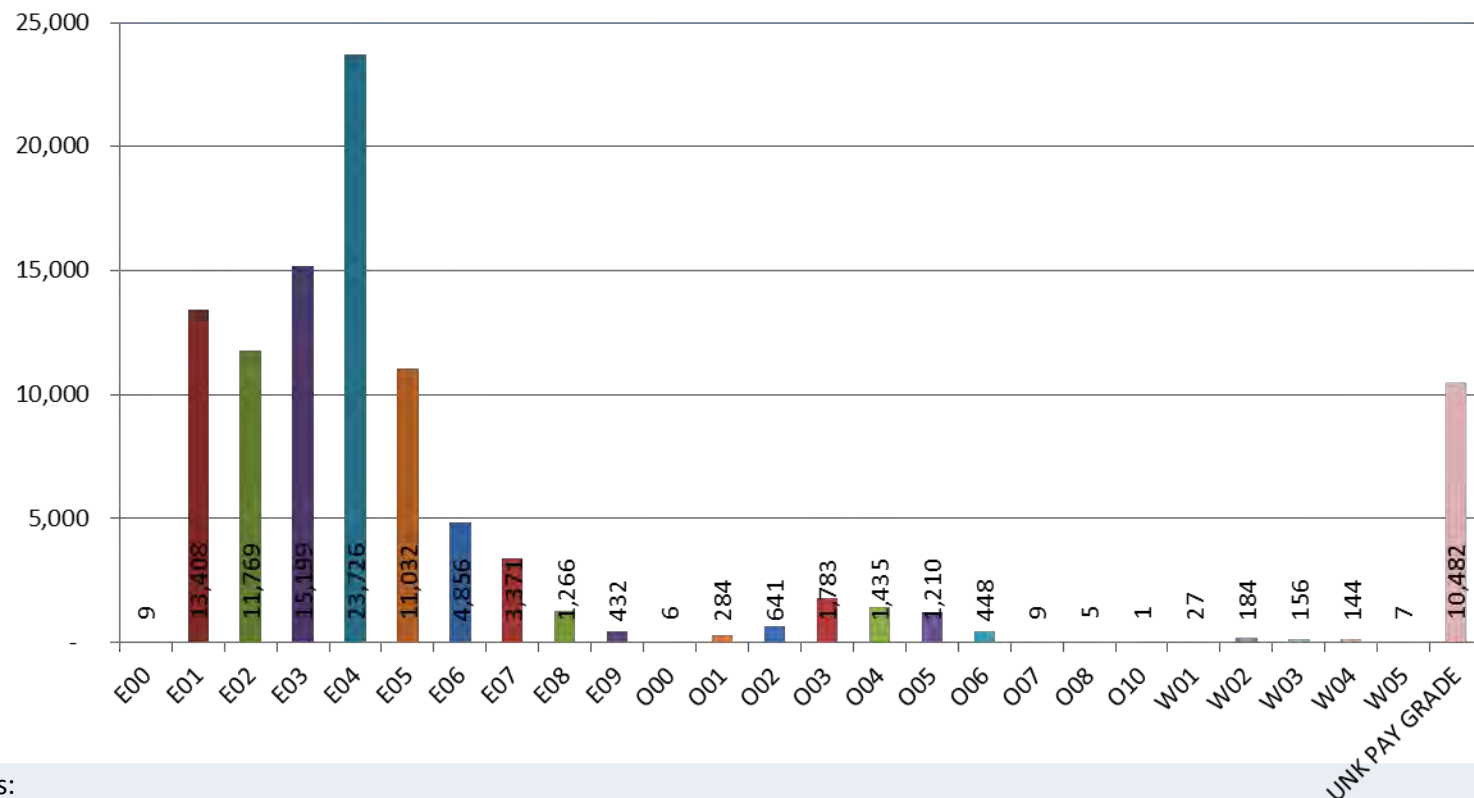


The Suicide Data Repository

For Deaths occurring between 1979 and 2011

AS OF: 31 December 2011

SOURCE: DMDC/Military Veteran Mortality Database



Notes:

Component and Pay Grade are based on Service members' last known affiliations with the Service, whether they died while serving or died after leaving service.

E00 and O00 represent unknown Pay Grades

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Military Suicides by Type of Service Member

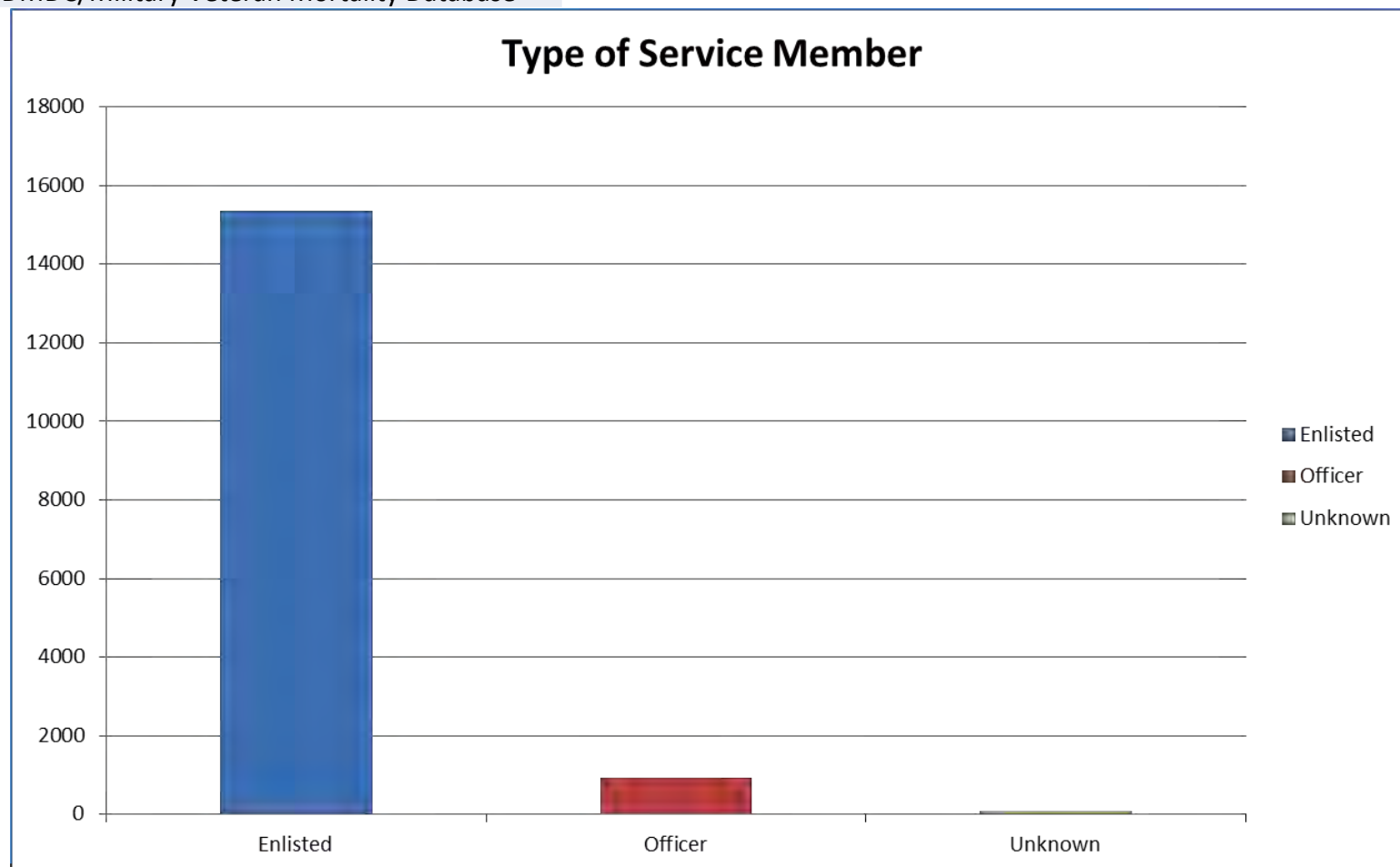


The Suicide Data Repository

For Deaths occurring between 2008 and 2011

AS OF: 31 December 2011

SOURCE: DMDIC/Military Veteran Mortality Database



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Military Suicides Years of Service

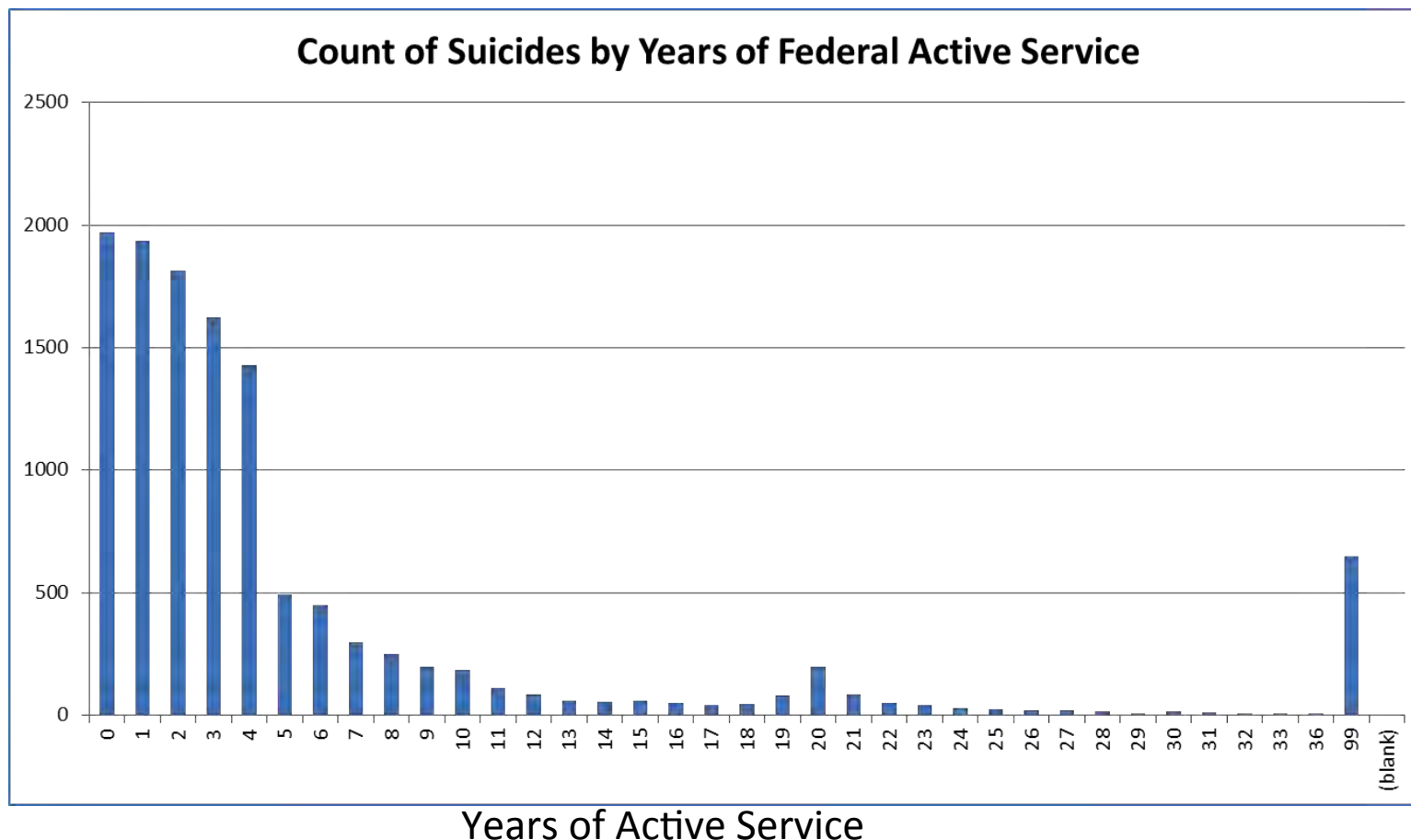


The Suicide Data Repository

For Deaths occurring between 2008 and 2011

AS OF: 31 December 2011

SOURCE: DMDIC/Military Veteran Mortality Database



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Military Suicides By Education Level



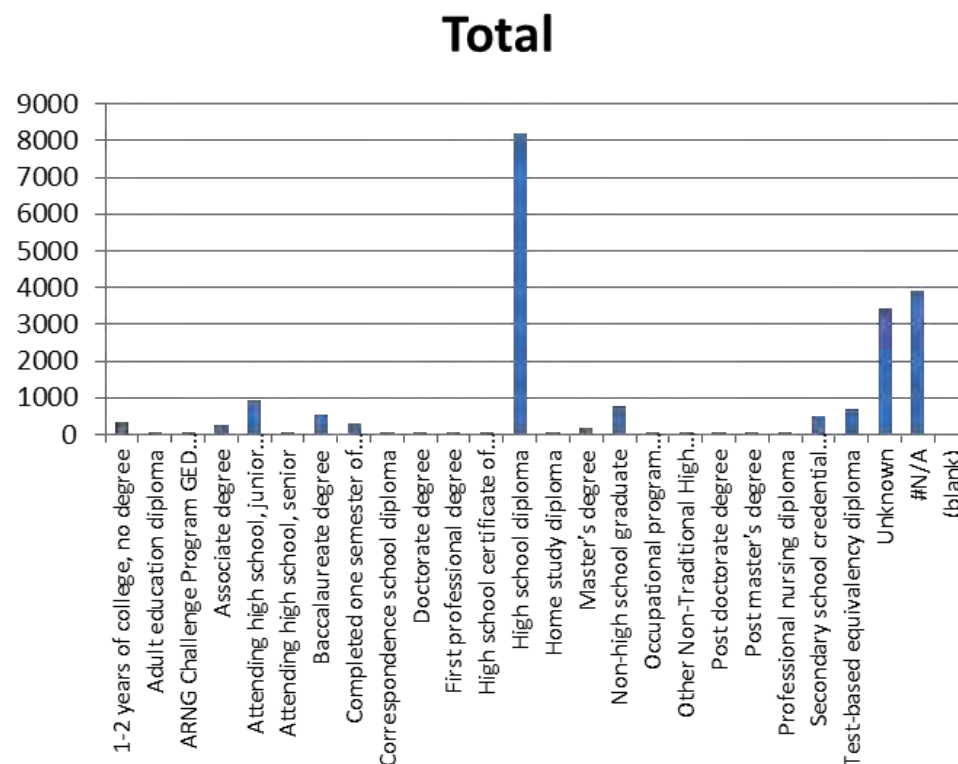
The Suicide Data Repository

For Deaths occurring between 2008 and 2011

AS OF: 31 December 2011

SOURCE: DMDC/Military Veteran Mortality Database

1-2 years of college, no degree	350
Adult education diploma	43
ARNG Challenge Program GED Certificate	19
Associate degree	252
Attending high school, junior or less	918
Attending high school, senior	45
Baccalaureate degree	522
Completed one semester of college, no high school diploma	275
Correspondence school diploma	4
Doctorate degree	38
First professional degree	38
High school certificate of attendance	18
High school diploma	8187
Home study diploma	15
Master's degree	193
Non-high school graduate	763
Occupational program certificate	22
Other Non-Traditional High School Credential	1
Post doctorate degree	1
Post master's degree	2
Professional nursing diploma	8
Secondary school credential near completion	473
Test-based equivalency diploma	674
Unknown	3441
#N/A	3904



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Military Suicides By Number of Dependents



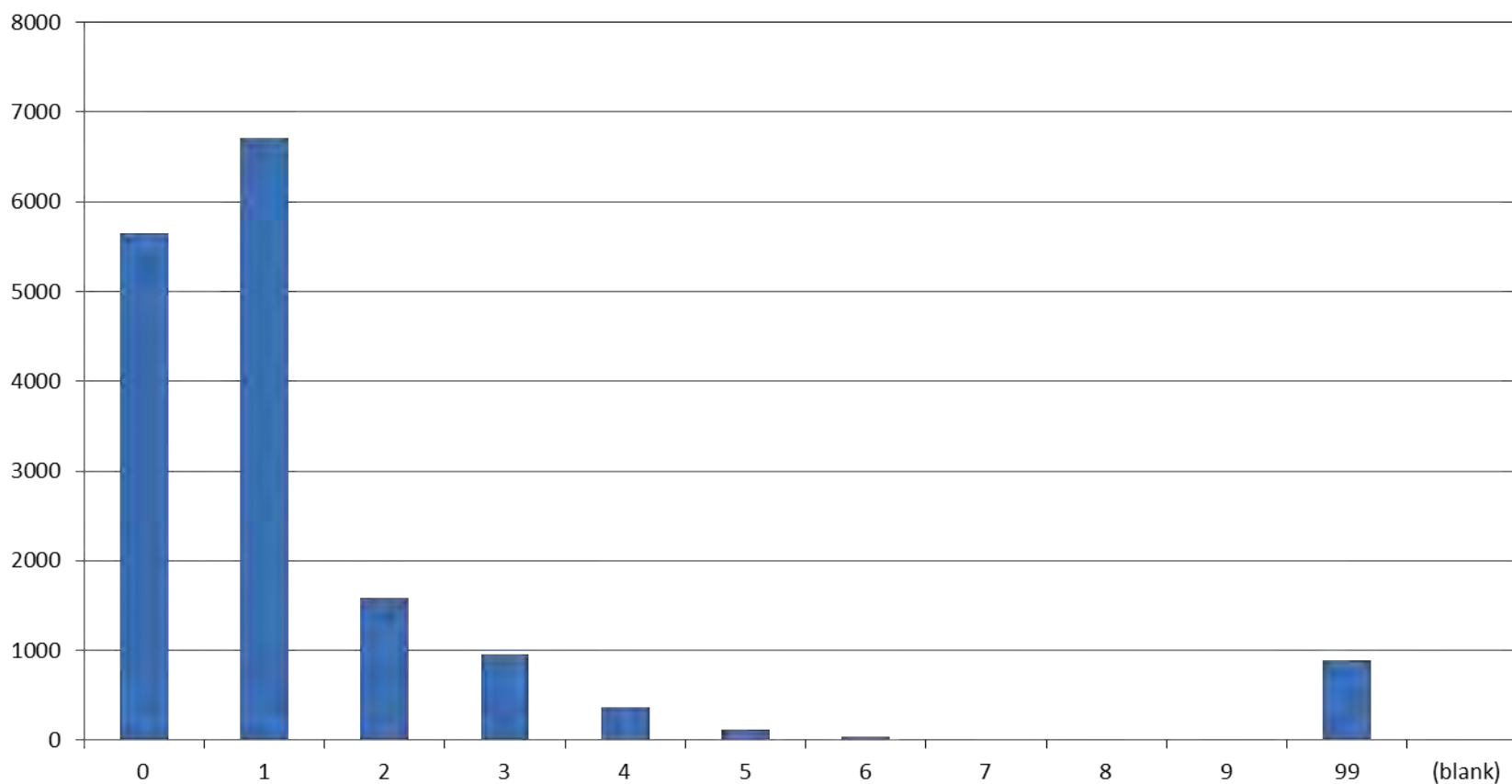
The Suicide Data Repository

For Deaths occurring between 2008 and 2011

AS OF: 31 December 2011

SOURCE: DMDC/Military Veteran Mortality Database

Military Suicides by Number of Dependents



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Military Suicides By ICD 10 Code



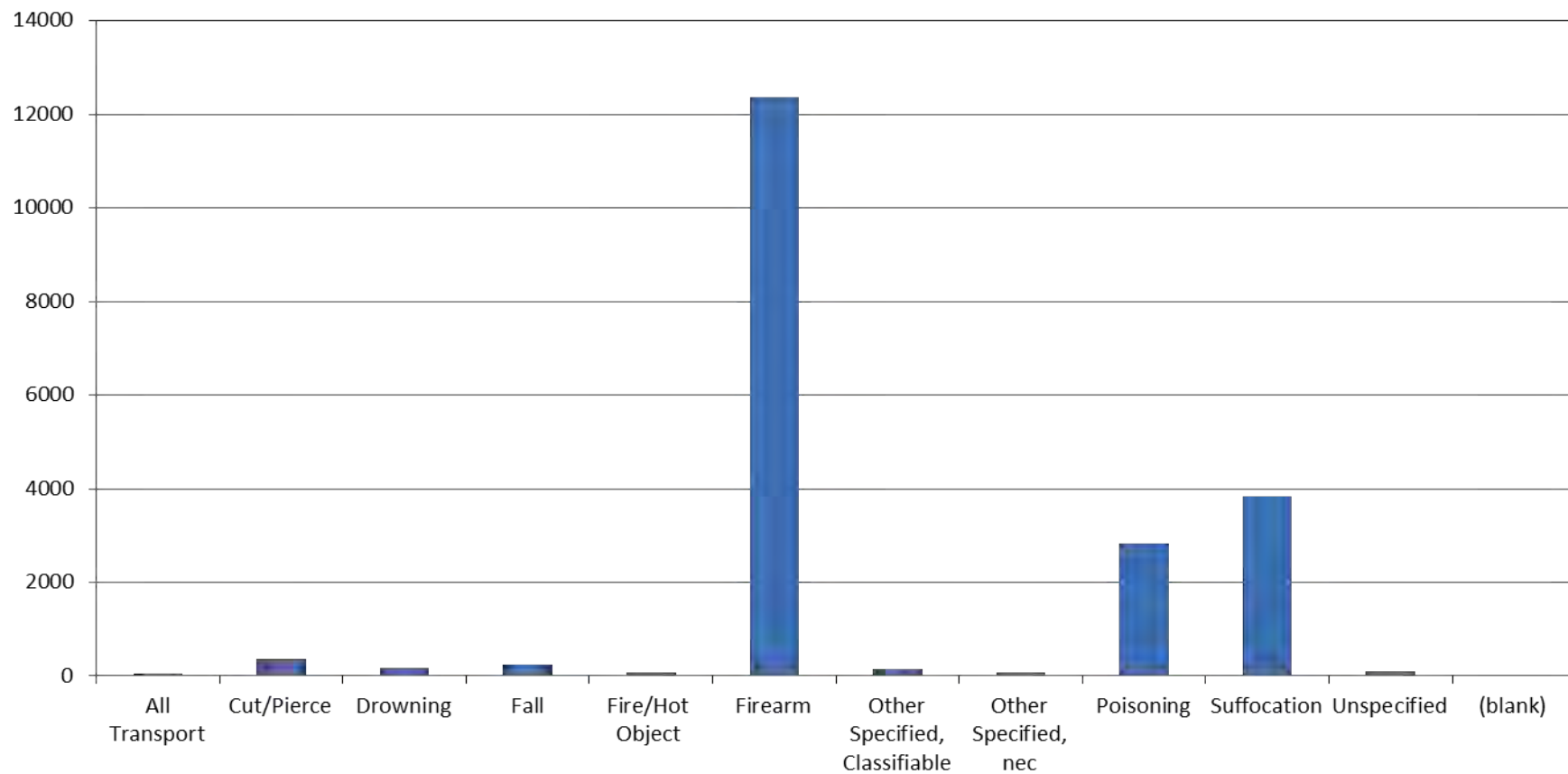
The Suicide Data Repository

For Deaths occurring between 2008 and 2011

AS OF: 31 December 2011

SOURCE: DMDC/Military Mortality Database

Total

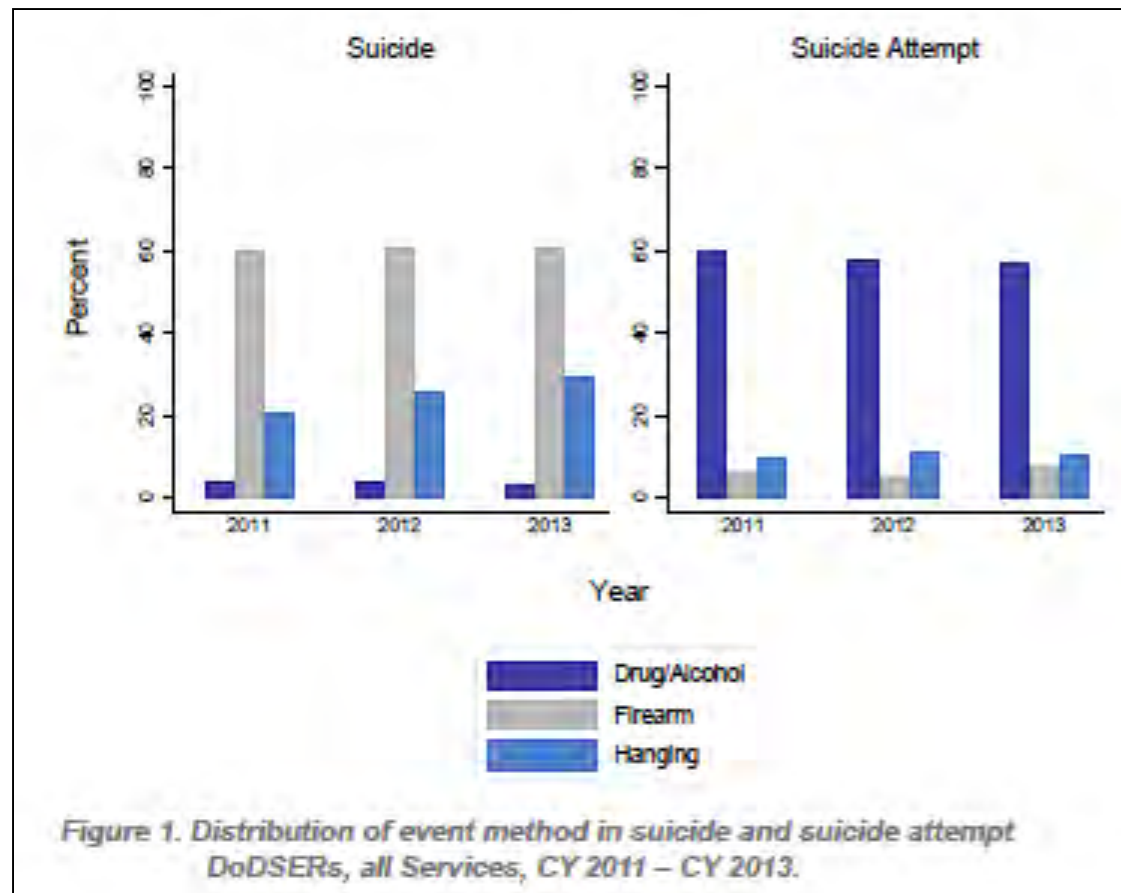


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DoD Suicide Statistics



The Suicide Data Repository

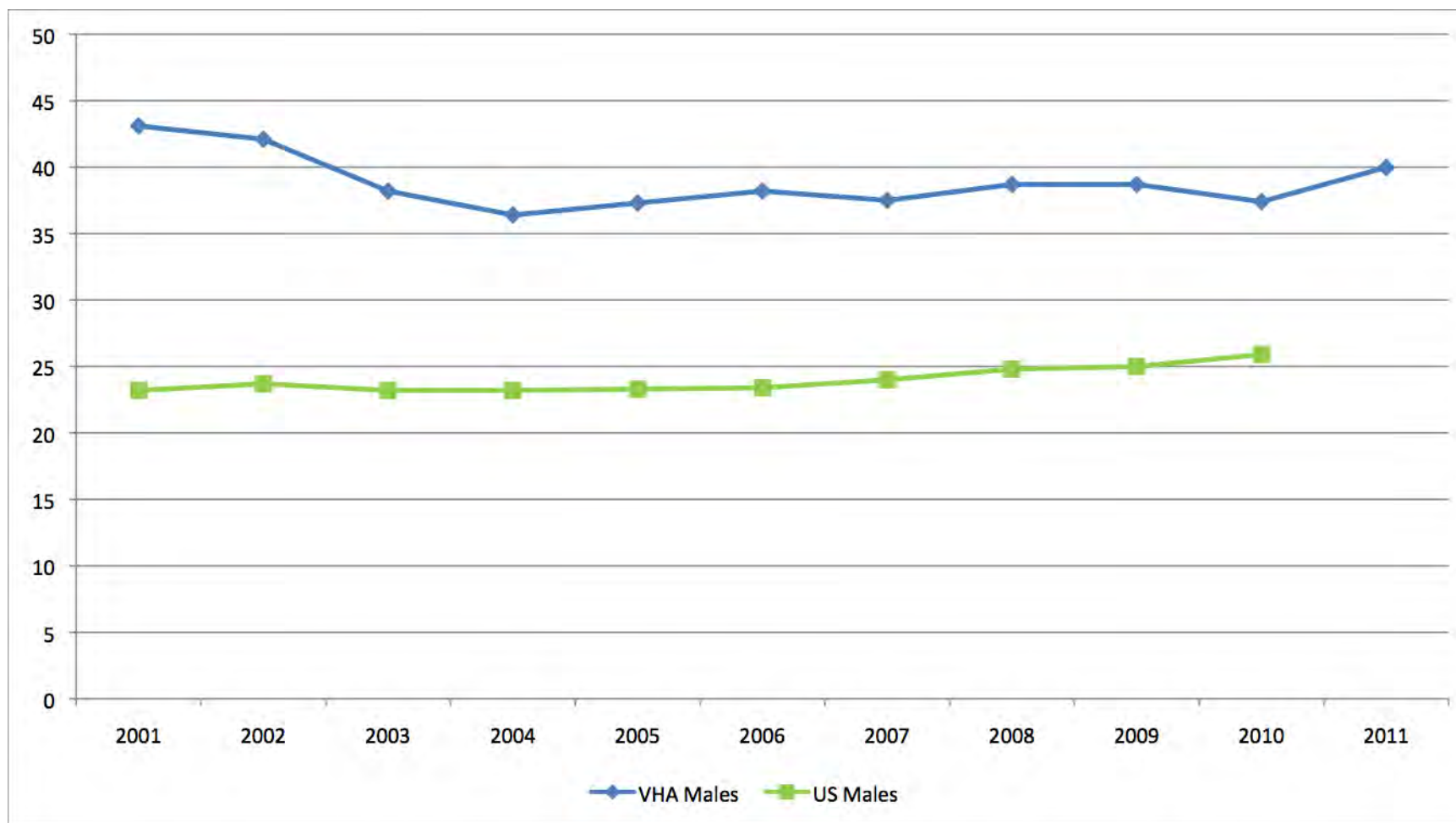


SOURCE: DoDSER

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Rates of Suicide among VHA Males and US Males by Year, 2001-2011

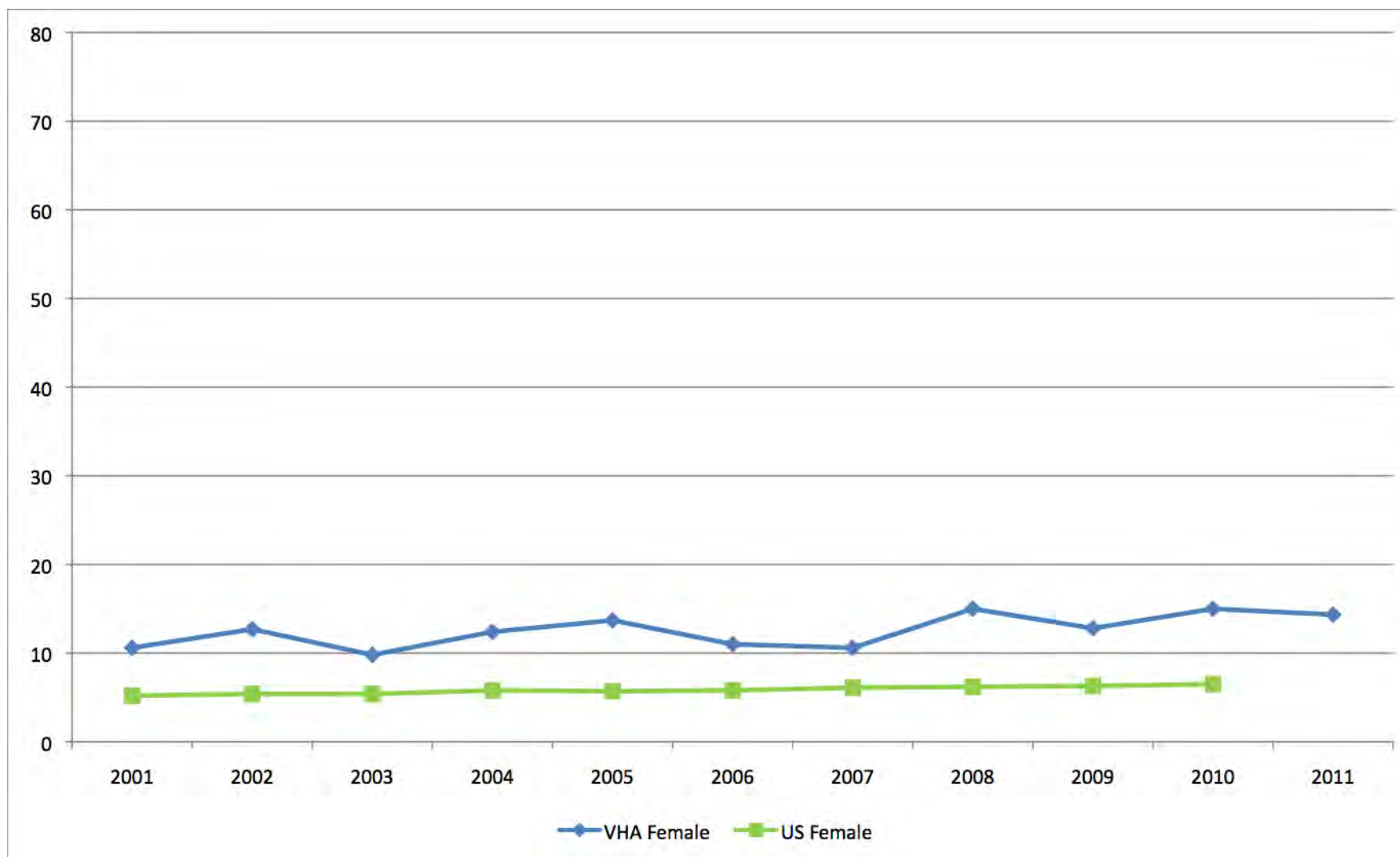
The Suicide Data Repository



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Rates of Suicide among VHA Females and US Females by Year, 2001-2011

The Suicide Data Repository

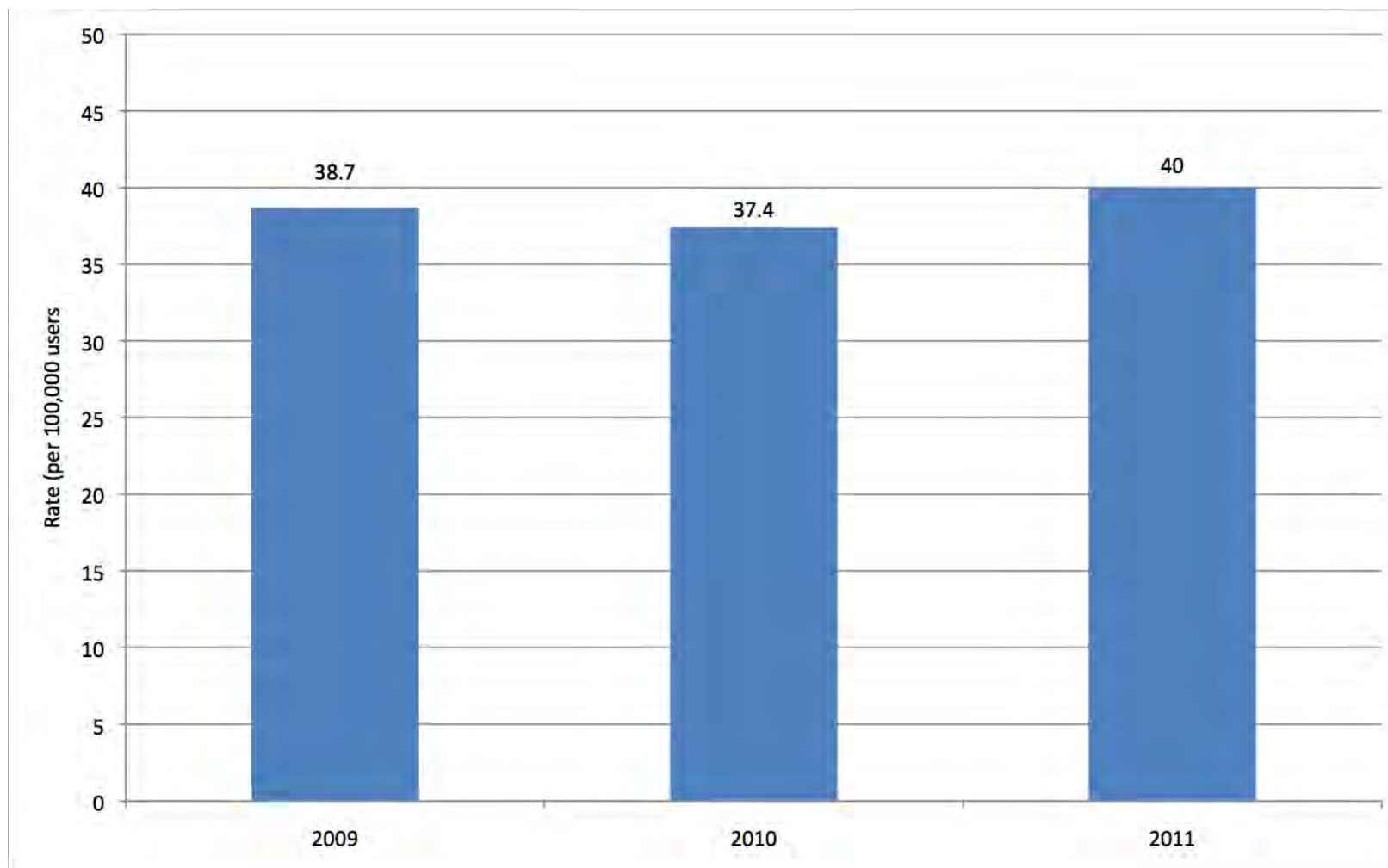


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Rates of Suicide among VHA Males by Year, 2009-2011



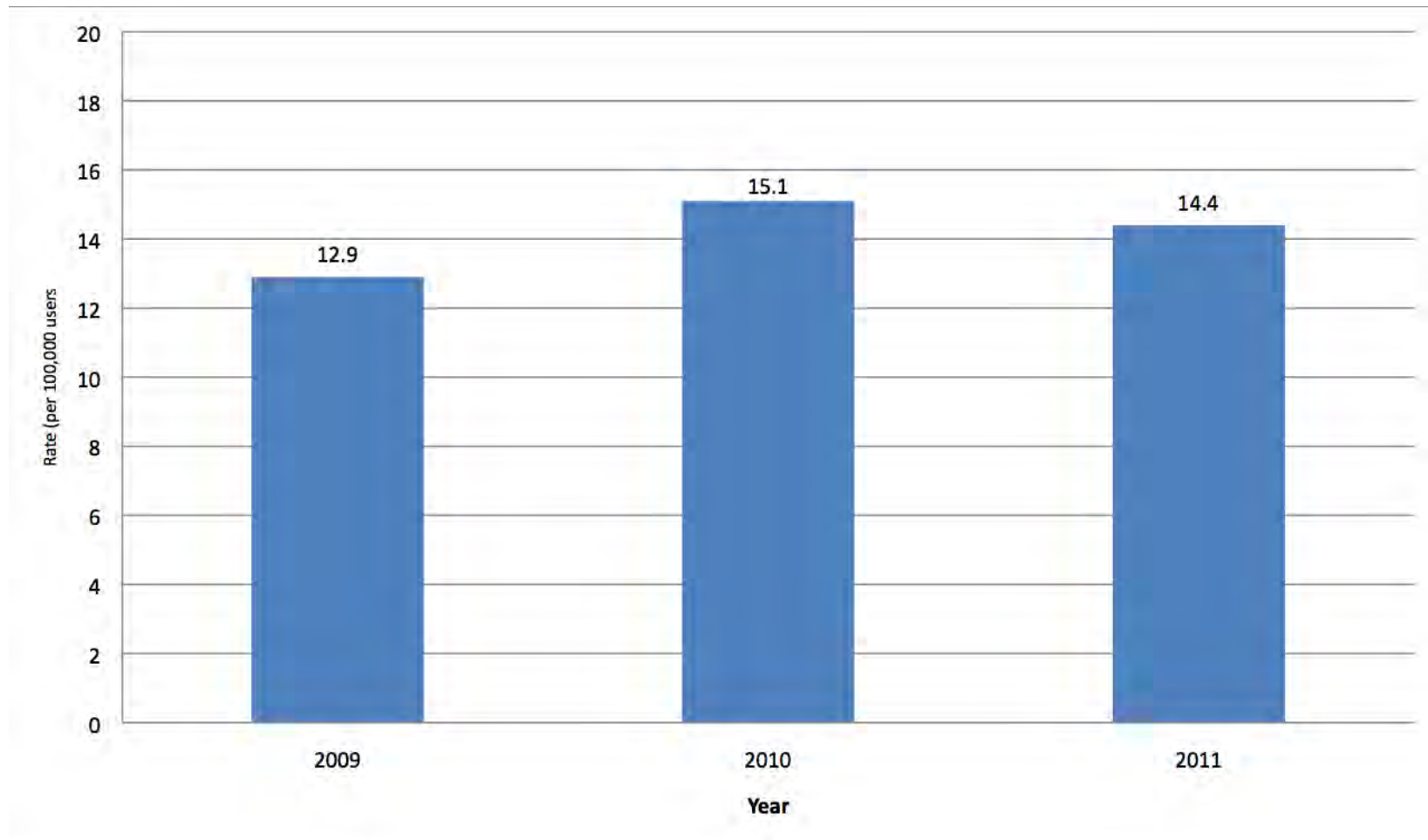
The Suicide Data Repository



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Rates of Suicide among VHA Females by Year, 2009-2011

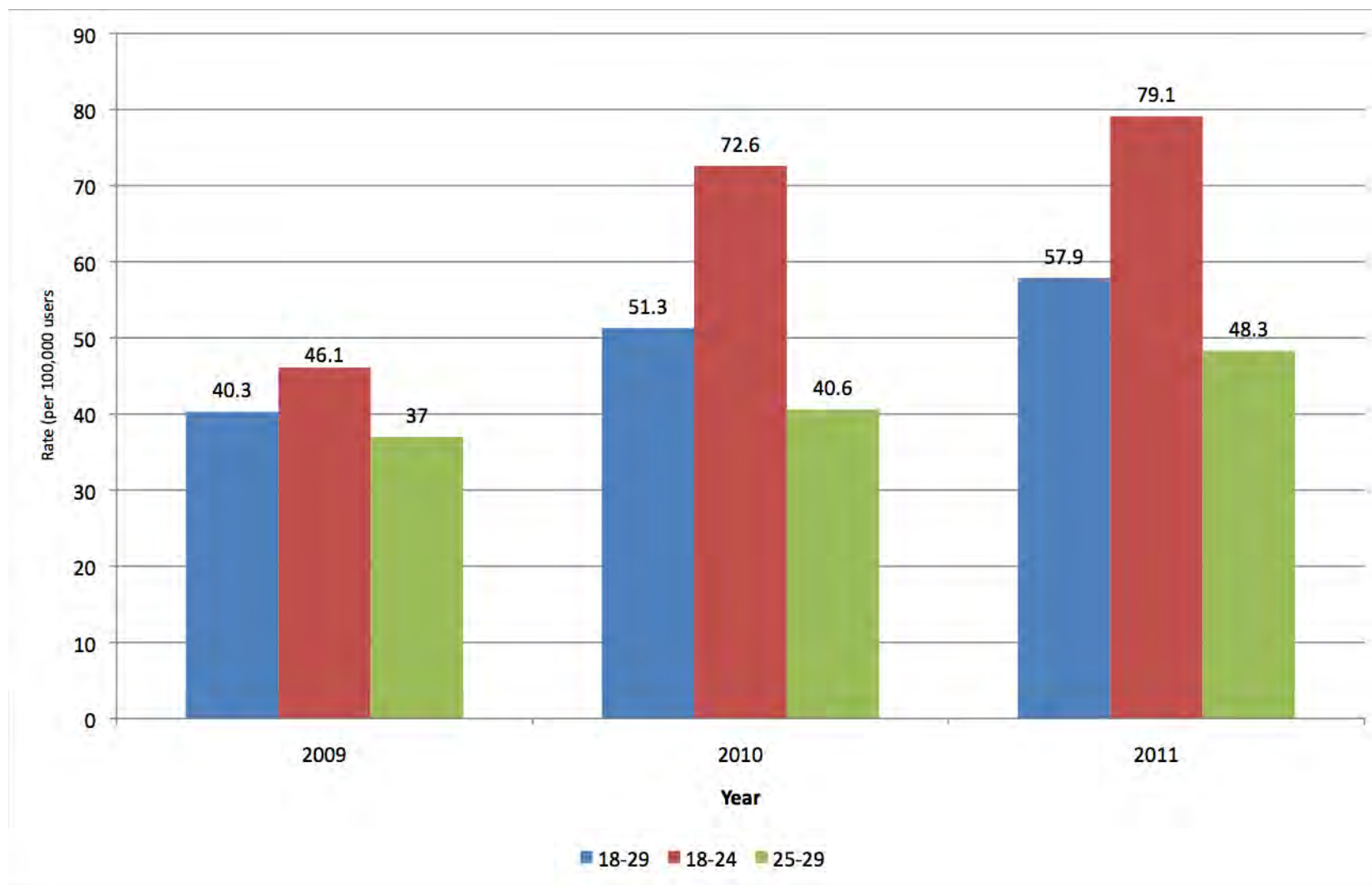
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Rates of Suicide among Younger VHA Males by Year, 2009-2011

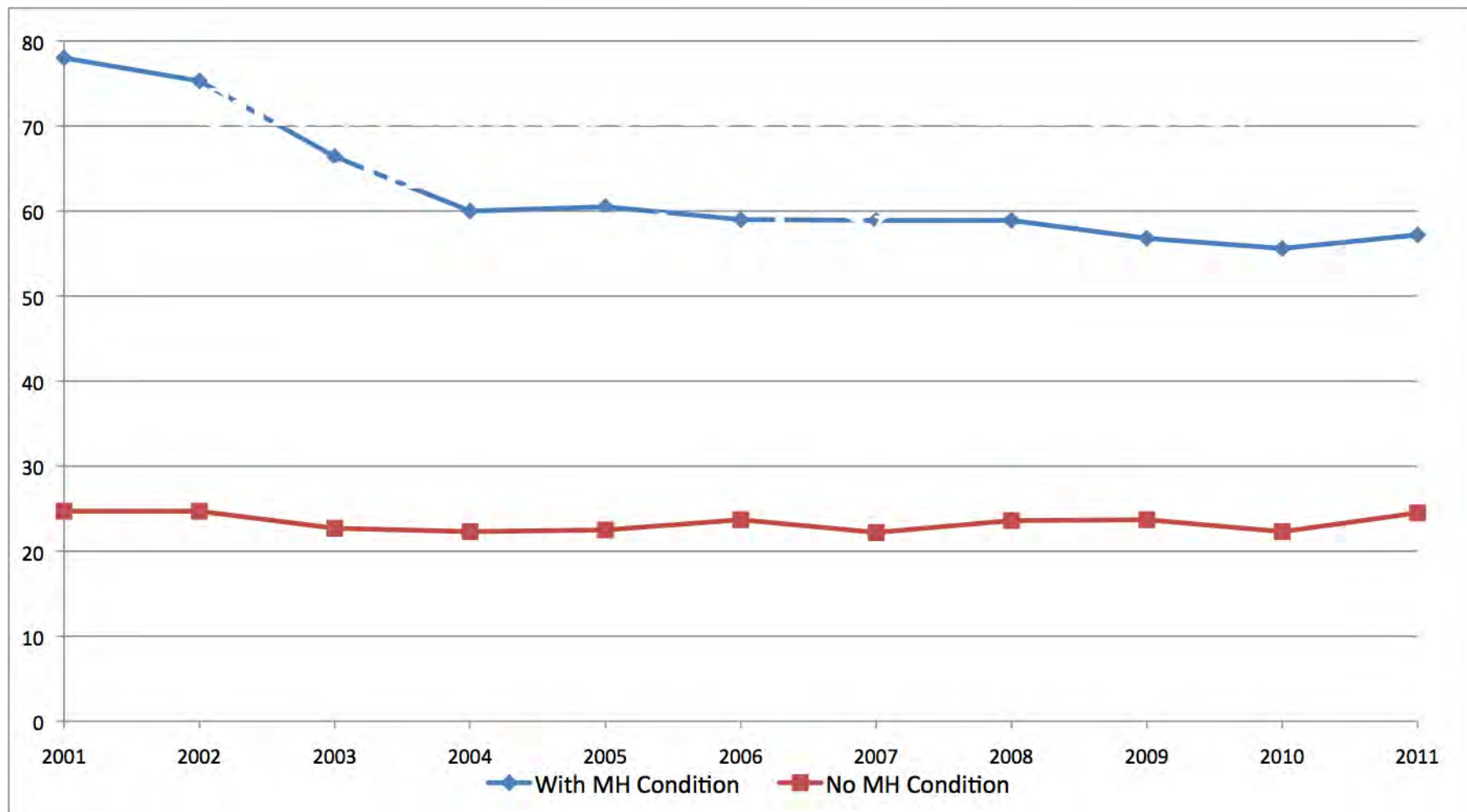
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Rates of Suicide among VHA Users by Diagnosis with Mental Health Condition by Year, 2001-2011

The Suicide Data Repository

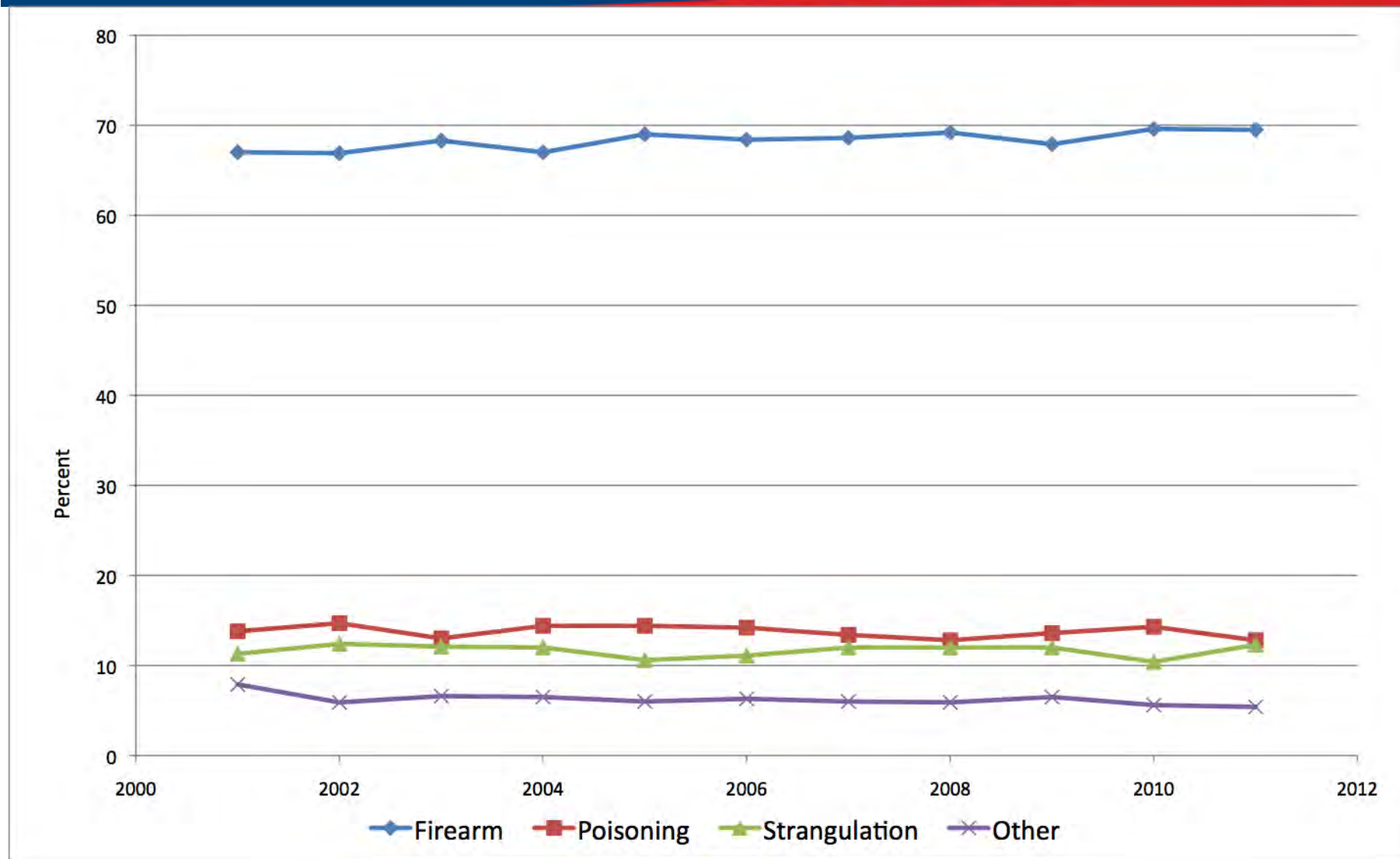


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Rates of Suicides among Male VHA Users by Year and Mechanism, 2001-2011



The Suicide Data Repository

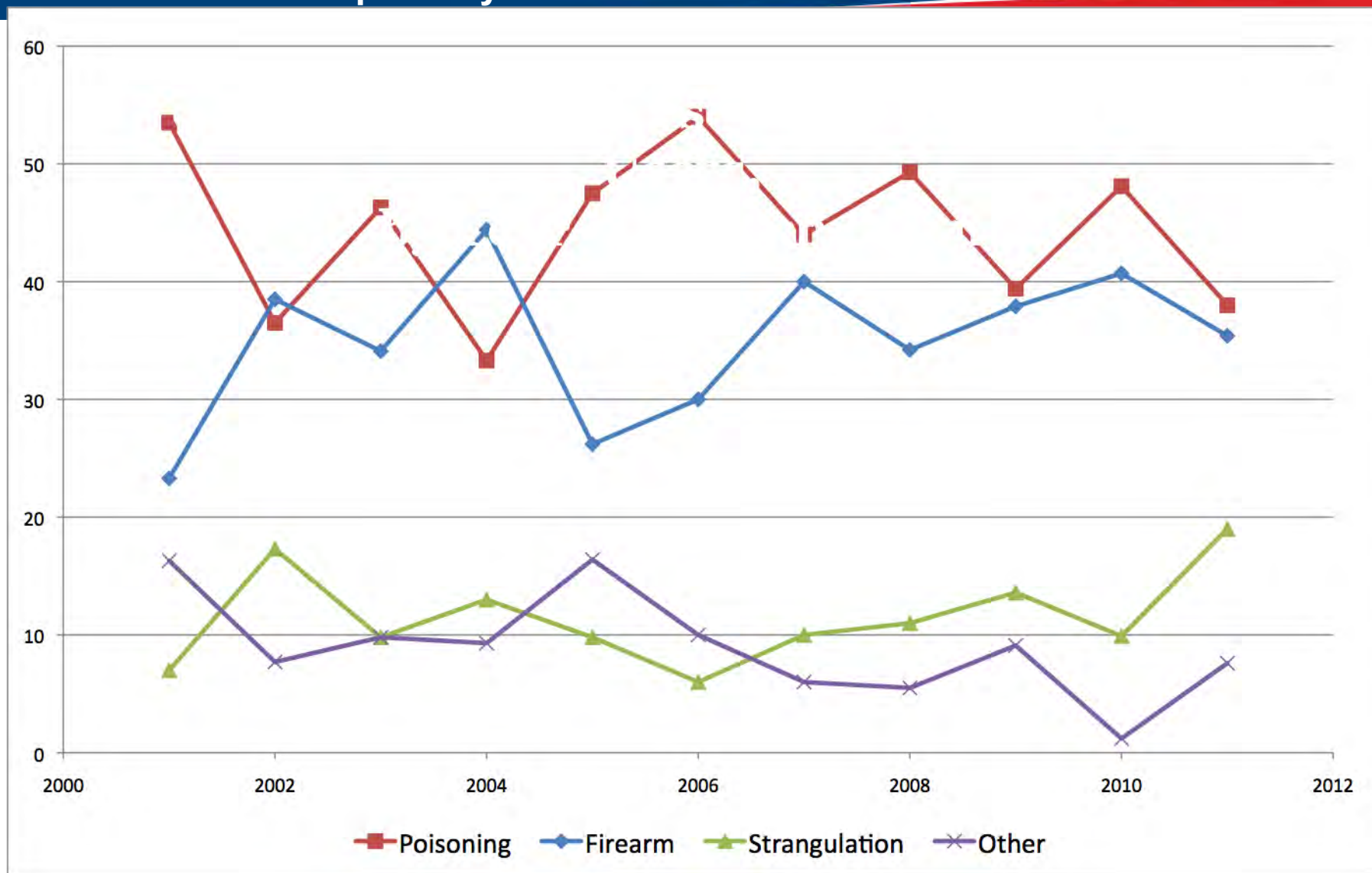


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Percentage of Suicides among Female VHA Users by Year and Mechanism, 2001-2011



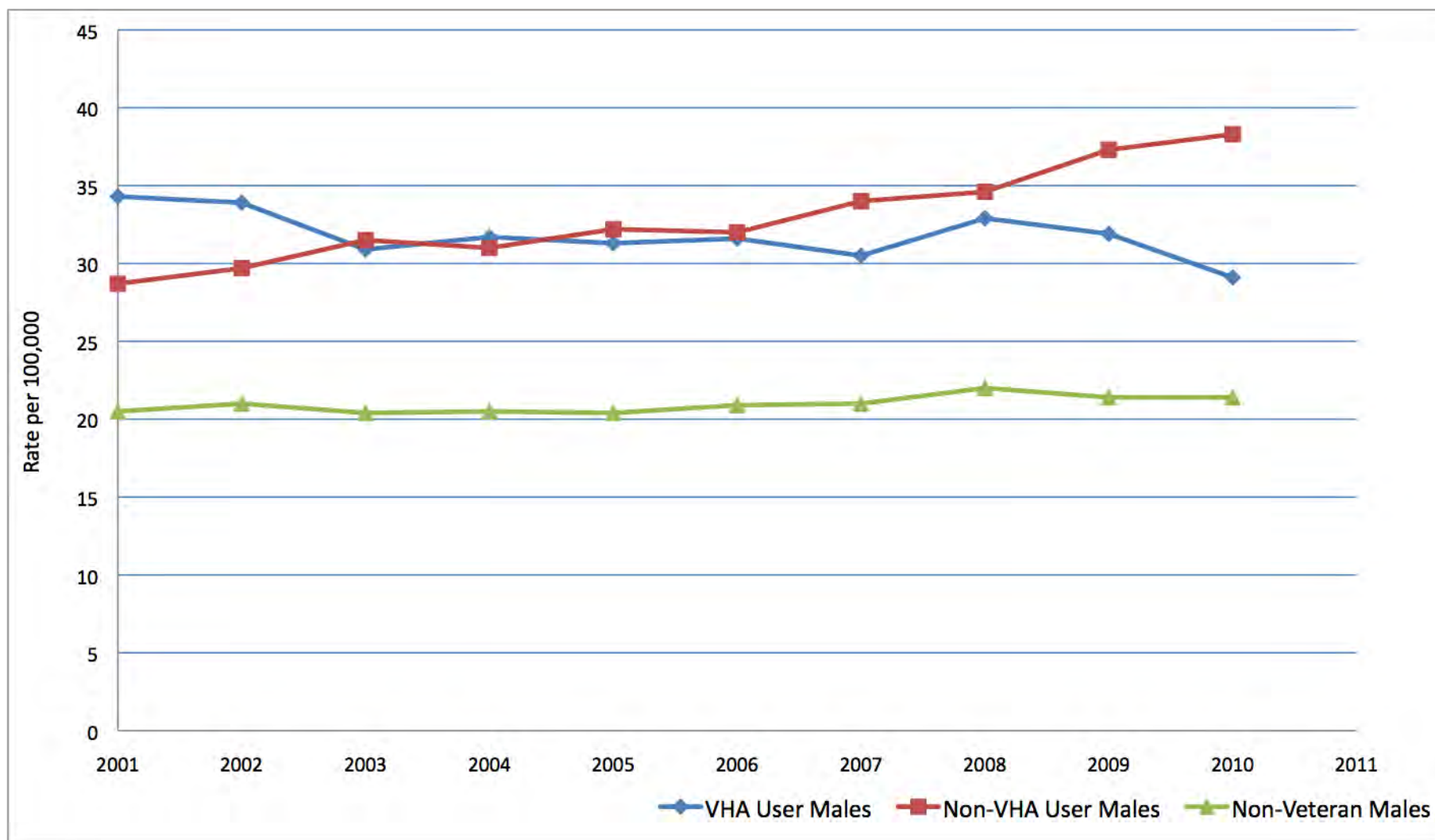
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Rates of Suicides among Male VHA User Veterans, Non-VHA User Male Veterans, and non-Veterans in 23 States by Year, 2001-2011

The Suicide Data Repository



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Comparing VA and CDC Findings on Suicide Rates in Middle Aged Americans



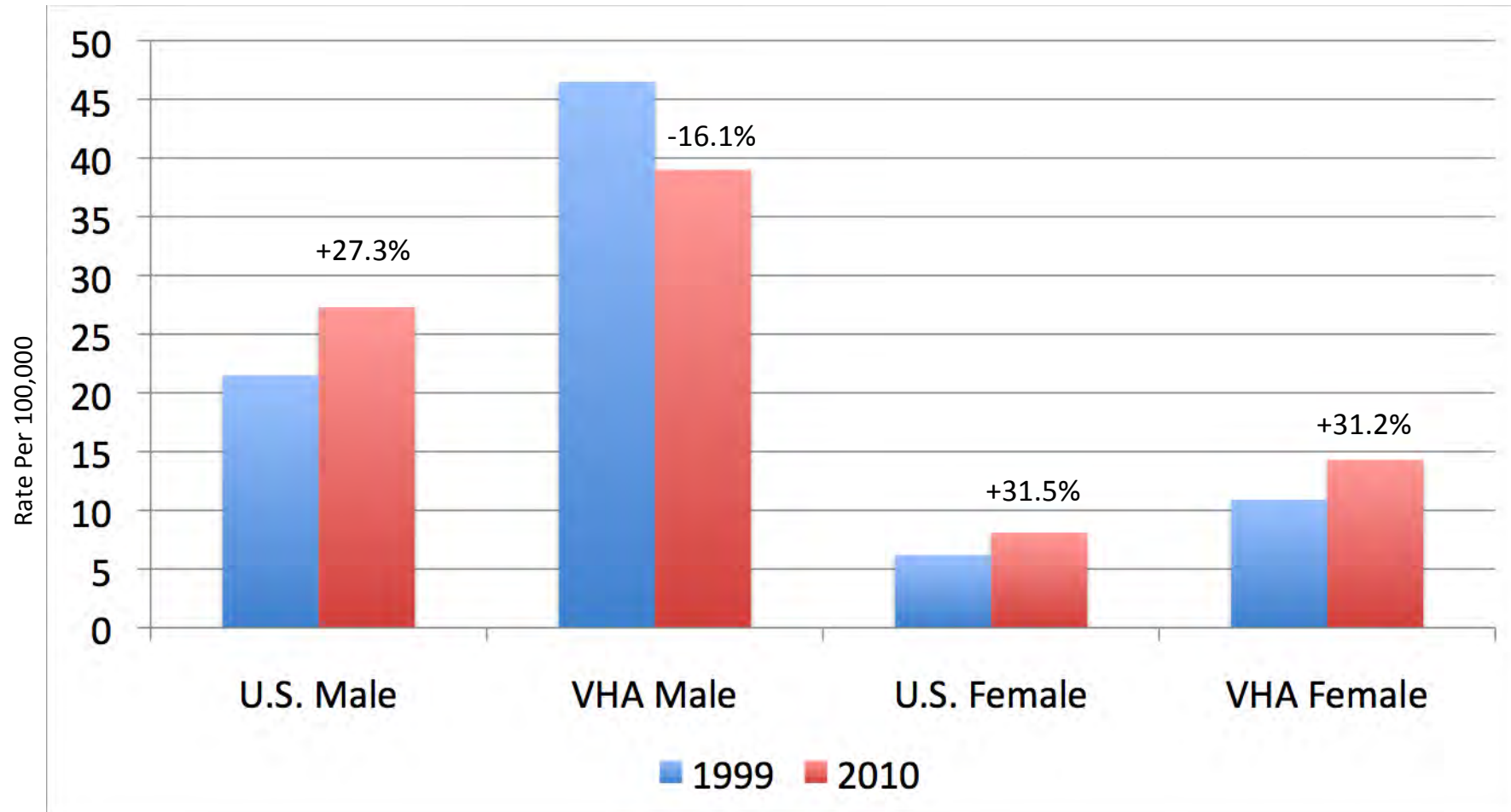
The Suicide Data Repository

- Understanding trends in suicide in Veterans requires comparisons with trends in other Americans
- CDC has reported that there were substantial increases in suicide rates in Americans aged 35-64 during the period from 1999-2010
 - Trends in age adjusted rates for male VHA users differ substantially from trends in other American males
 - In the US as a whole, there was a 27.3% increase
 - In VHA users, there was a 16.1% decrease
 - Trends in age adjusted rates for female VA users were similar to trends in other American females
 - In the US as a whole, there was a 31.5% increase
 - In VHA users, there was a 31.2% increase
- Findings in 23 states where data are available allow comparisons between VHA users and other Veterans
 - Rates decreased ~30% in male Veteran VHA users
 - In contrast, rates increased ~60% in Veteran males who did not use VHA services

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Suicide Rates among US Adults and Users of VHA Services Aged 35-64 Years, by Gender

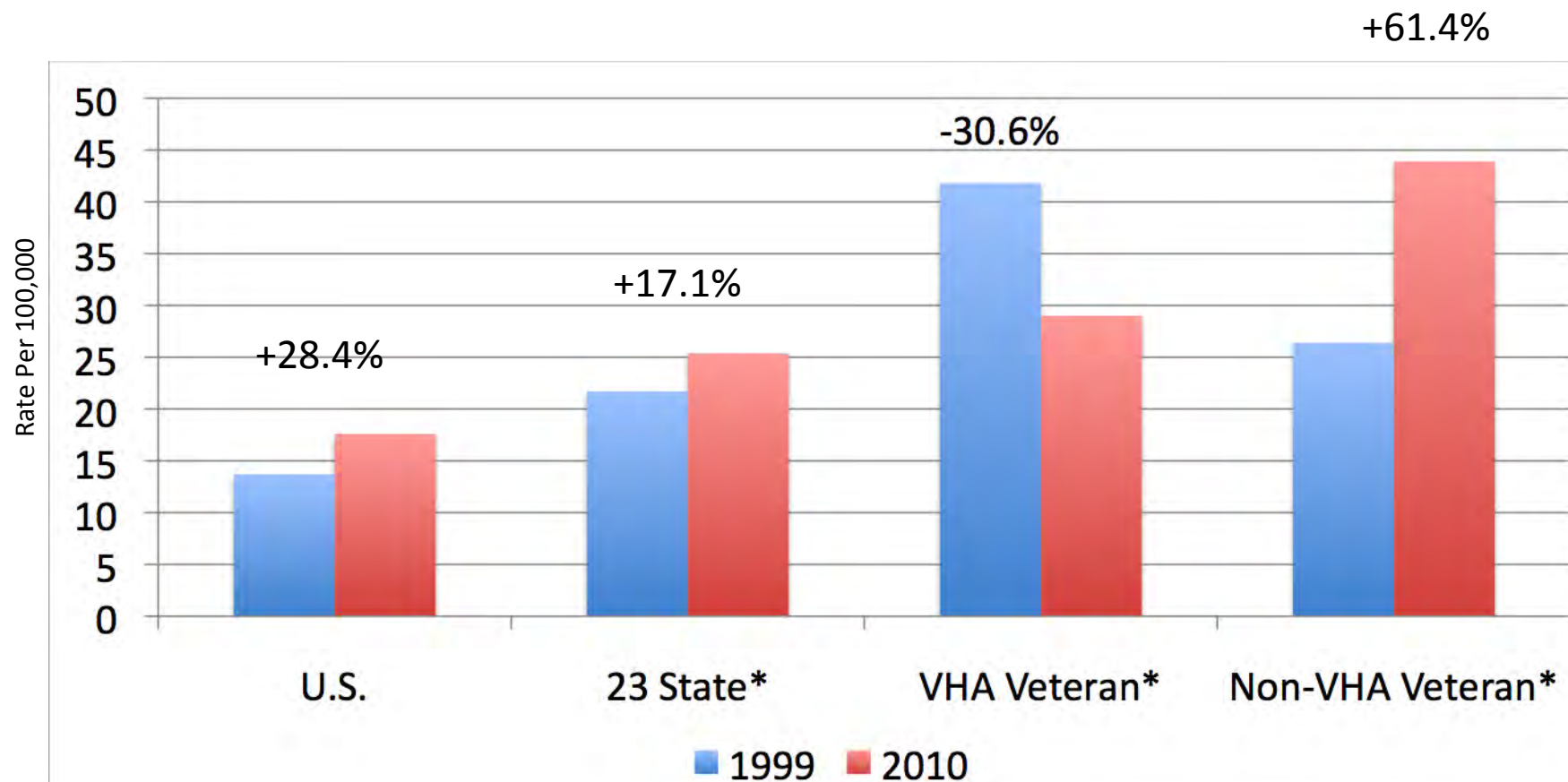
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Comparison of Trends in Suicide Among US Adults and Veterans Aged 35-64 Years in 23 States

The Suicide Data Repository



* Included data from New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Louisiana, North Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, West Virginia, Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Utah, Washington.

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SDR Benefits and Request Process

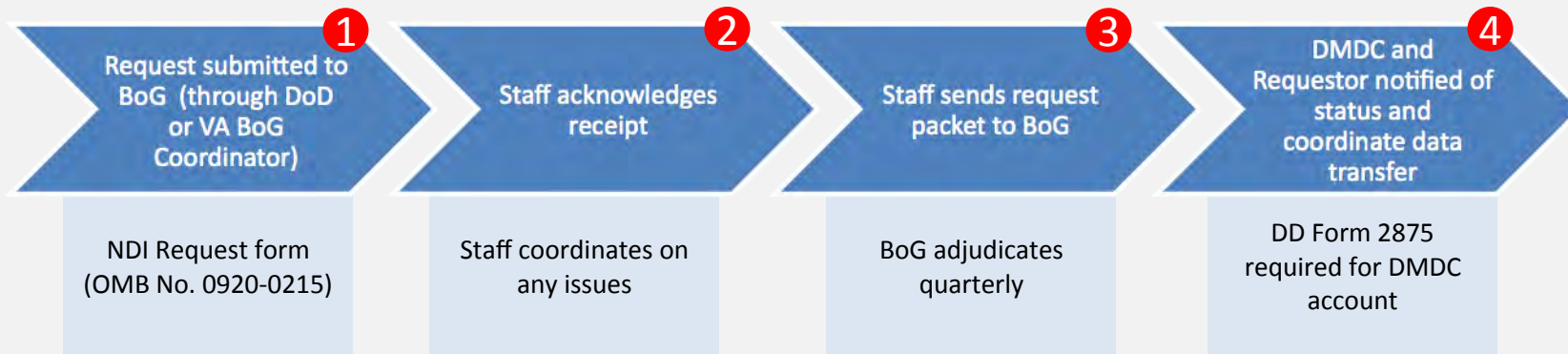


The Suicide Data Repository

Benefits

- “De-duplicated” data
- SDR acquires (and pays for) NDI records annually and distributes to approved requestors at no cost
- May provide info regarding similar studies/investigators

Request Process



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Procedures for Handling Data



The Suicide Data Repository

- ✓ Data must be kept in DoD/VA custody
 - Study must be done by a DoD/VA organization
 - Data may never be provided to a third party
- ✓ Primary Investigator (PI) Signature
- ✓ Data Steward designation (and signature)
- ✓ Institution Review Board Determination
- ✓ Physical, Technical, and Administrative controls

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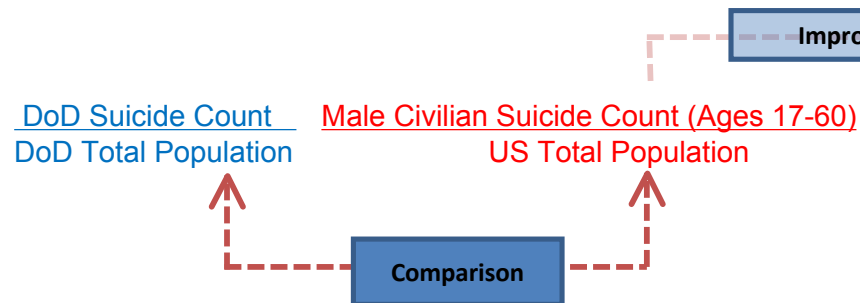
Suggested new calculation to comparison rates

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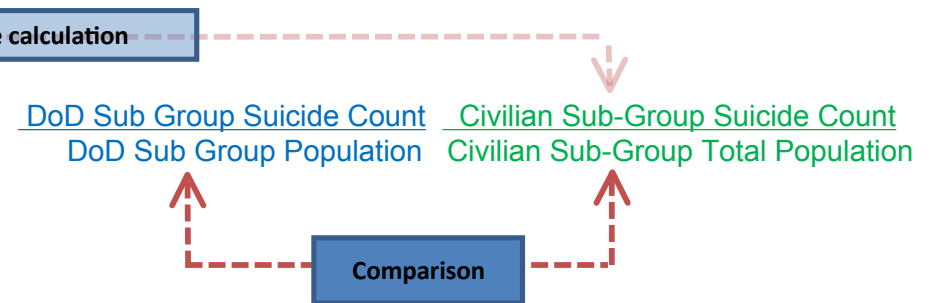
Current State

DoD Suicide and Civilian Suicide Rates:



Future State

DoD Suicide Rate and Civilian Suicide Rate:



Example (2012 Actuals):

$\frac{318 \text{ DoD Suicides}}{1,369,816 \text{ DoD Total Population}}$ $\frac{23,971 \text{ Male Civilian Suicide Count (Ages 17-60)}}{93,429,310 \text{ US Total Male Population (Ages 17-60)}}$

This ratio includes VHA, Veterans and DoD members; thus, it is not a civilian ratio exclusively

Example (2012 Actuals; Age 25-29):

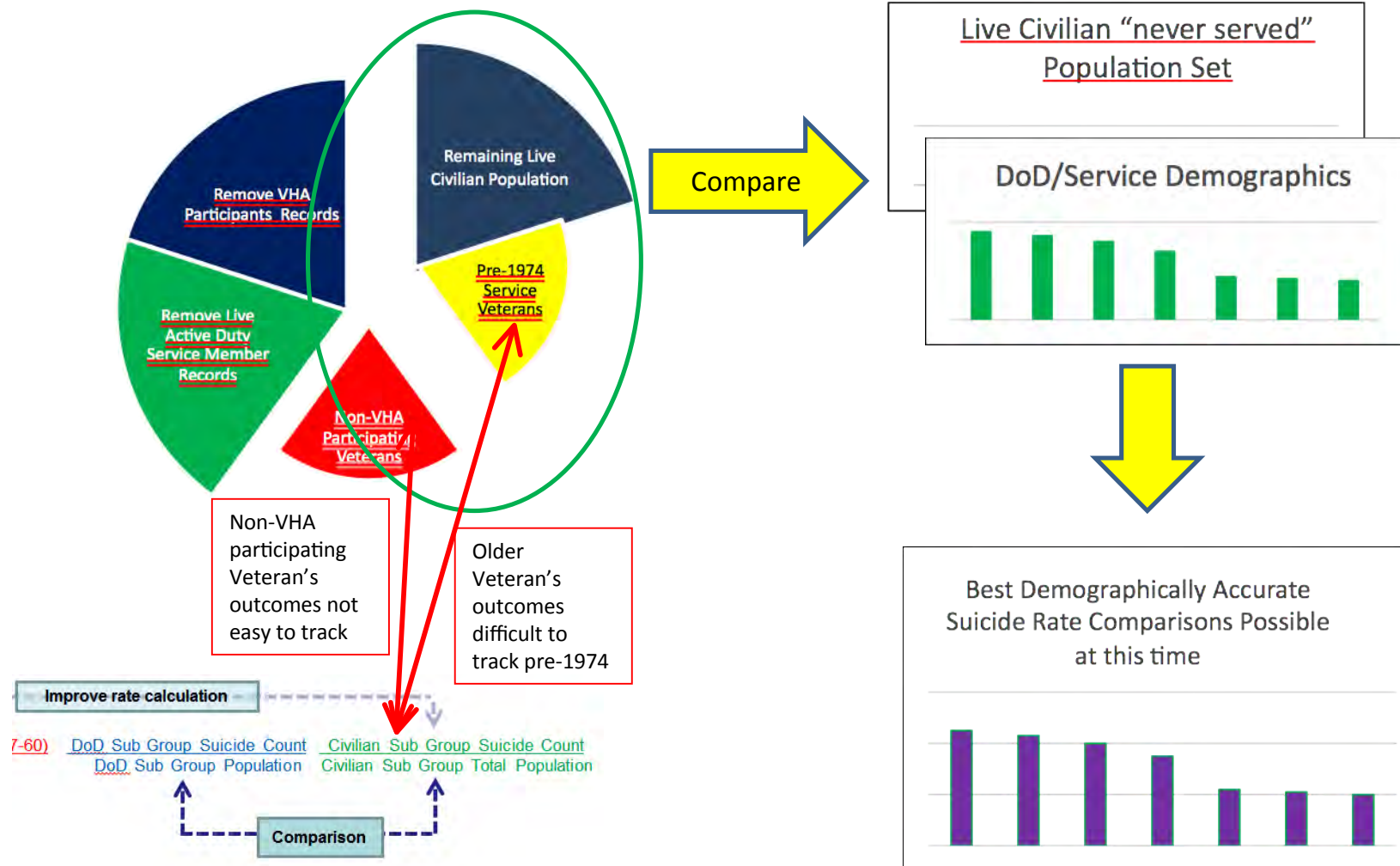
$\frac{201 \text{ DoD Suicides}}{332,553 \text{ DoD Total Population}}$ $\frac{2,597 \text{ US Male Civilian Suicides}}{10,840,983 \text{ US Total Population}}$

This ratio would exclude the majority of VHA participants and DoD members; thus, making this a ratio closer to the true civilian population

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How to develop a more comparable civilian population data set

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