



# Mental Health Issue Statement

Suicide is among the ten leading causes of death for Americans aged 10-64 and is the second leading cause of death among adolescents and young adults aged 10-14 and 25-34. According to the CDC, in 2021 12.3 million adults considered suicide, 3.5 million made a plan, and 1.7 million made an attempt, in 2022, 45,979 died by suicide (equaling 1 death every 11 minutes). Of those suicides, individuals that identify as male accounted for 80%.

According to “Males and mental health stigma” in the American Journal of Men’s Health, American men are subjected to a culture where the standards of masculinity are literally killing them, and the lack of treatment can be attributed to the masculinity norms set forth by society. Data suggests that suicide rates correlate to social isolation, economic decline, family stressors, new or worsening mental health symptoms, and disruptions to work and school associated with the COVID-19 pandemic or other disasters. Deeper data analysis indicates additional risk factors for suicide include, but are not limited to, geographic location, race/ethnicity, industry groups, and those with disabilities.

The CDC states that 54% of those that die of suicide had no formal mental health diagnosis, evidence that a gap exists in treatment and prevention. Data show that demographics for men in Pennsylvania affected by suicide closely mirror data on a national scale and for every individual that dies by suicide there are 25 non-lethal attempts. Pennsylvania ranks 4th in the nation for suicide rates with higher rates in rural counties..

To date, there is little evidence of broad cross-sector collaboration activated in western Pennsylvania along the education, prevention & treatment continuum to reach the male population for whom suicide is most prevalent.

