



Trends in Suicide-related Emergency Department visits among American Indians & Alaska Natives in Oregon during COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in negative mental health impacts among adults and children, including increased in anxiety and fear, sense of isolation, and disrupted mental health services and access. American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) communities in the Pacific Northwest region experienced a higher burden of suicide before COVID-19, and there are concerns that this burden has worsened during the pandemic. This fact sheet describes trends in suicide-related emergency department (ED) visits among Oregon AI/AN communities during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The number of **suicide ideation** ED visits among AI/AN in Oregon from January to March in 2021 increased by **60%** compared to pre-pandemic of the same months in 2019

Suicide Ideation ED Visits

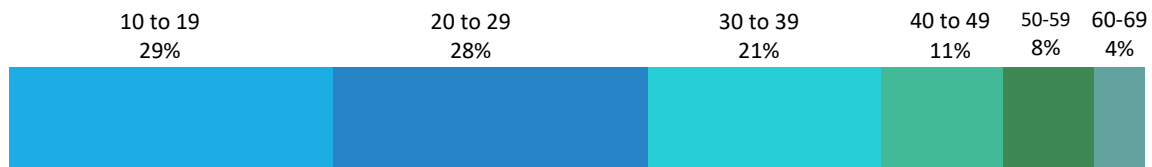
The rate of AI/AN suicide ideation ED visits increased by 8.1% in 2020 compared to 2019. Among ED patients, AI/AN were 1.2 times more likely to have a suicide ideation visit than White in 2020. Suicide ideation ED visits increased by 7% for AI/AN women in 2020 from 2019, while it decreased 11% for AI/AN men. suicide ideation ED visits from January to March in 2021 went up more than 90% compared to the same months in 2019 for AI/AN women in Oregon (23% for AI/AN men in the same period).

The number of **suicide attempt** ED visits among AI/AN from January to March 2021 went up by **16%** compared to pre-pandemic of the same months in 2019

Suicide Attempt ED visits

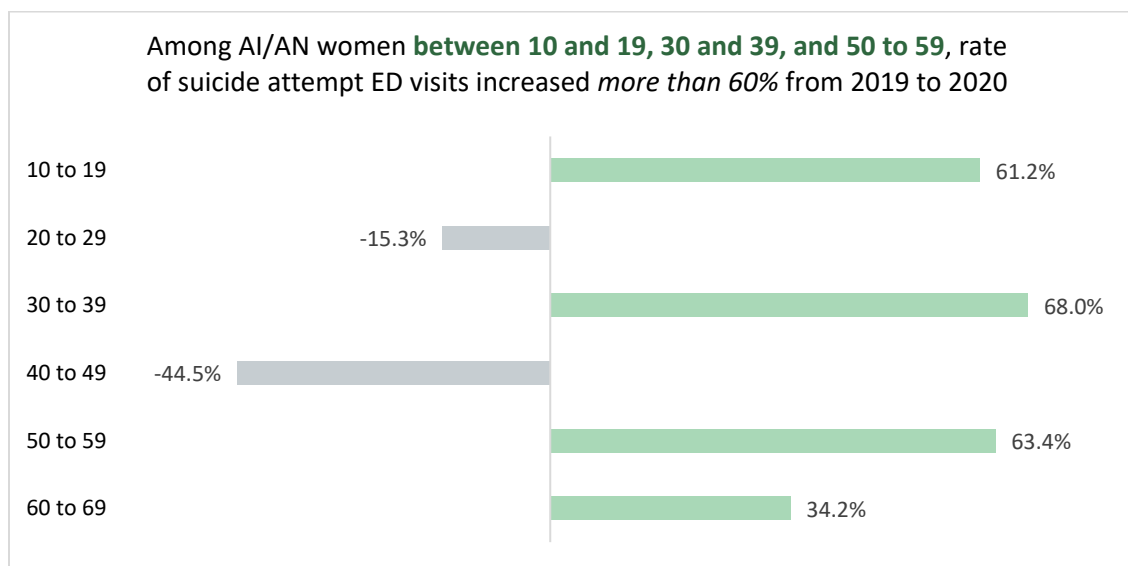
The average rate of AI/AN suicide attempt ED visits from January to March 2021 went up by 25.5% compared to the same months in 2019. AI/AN were 1.3 times more likely to have a suicide attempt than White. There was a 6% increase in suicide attempt ED visits among AI/AN women in 2020 compared to 2019, while a 26% decrease in AI/AN men.

AI/AN **between 10 and 29** accounted for 56% of total ED visits for suicide attempt in 2020



The highest rate of suicide attempt ED visits in 2020 was seen in AI/AN age 20-29 (75 per 10,000 ED visits).

Alarmingly, there was a 15% increase in the rate of suicide attempts ED visits for AI/AN women in Oregon from 2019 to 2020. Over 60% increase in suicide attempt rate in AI/AN women age 10-19, 30-39, and 50-59 in 2020 compared to 2019. The AI/AN men age 40-49 was the only age group that had an increase in suicide attempt rate.



Suicide attempt ED visits from January to March in 2021 went up *more than 65%* compared to the same months in 2019 for AI/AN women in Oregon (decreased for AI/AN men in the same period).

Data Source

- Analyses are based on information reported to the Oregon's syndromic surveillance program.
- Suicide-related, suicide ideation, and suicide attempt ED records were identified using validated CDC definitions for syndromic surveillance data.
- These data may undercount suicide-related ED visits due to the misclassification of AI/AN people in emergency department data.

Contact

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