

Economic burden of suicide in Sweden in 2022

12. Socioeconomic, cultural and psychological factors

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Abstract text

Background. Suicide and suicidal behaviors bring massive human, social and economic impacts. Estimates of the cost of suicide can give some guidance as to where research on developing new interventions might be focused to give the greatest potential gain. The aim of the study is to quantify the economic cost of suicide in Sweden in 2022.

Methods. Incidence of suicide attempts and mortality due to suicide, intentional and undetermined (ICD10 X60-X84 and Y10-Y34) were sourced from the Swedish National Board of Health and Welfare databases for 2022. Cost were estimated from a societal perspective, including costs for inpatient and outpatient care, medication, police and justice activities as well as productivity losses due to early mortality.

Results. In 2022, a total of 1,569 suicide death were registered in Sweden (1,102 men and 467 women). The incidence rate remains stable during the last ten years, 17 death per 100 000. In total, 18,854 patients (10, 359 women and 8,459 men) were treated in inpatient and outpatient hospital care with suicide-related diagnoses, generated 32,843 days in inpatient care and 11,471 outpatient care visits. Direct costs for suicide death including forensic examination, emergency services, police investigation and property damage were estimated as €6,02 million, while indirect costs for productivity losses totaled €690 million. Direct healthcare costs for suicide related treatment were estimated at €54.3 million. Overall, suicide and suicide attempts cost around €750 million per year to society.

Conclusions. Estimates of the economic burden of suicide are needed for the Swedish setting, and these amounted to €60.3 million in direct costs and €690 million in indirect costs in 2022. The cost might be underestimated because the societal cost of suicide bereaved persons was not considered. These estimation can provide useful inputs to a cost-effectiveness analysis of a specific preventive intervention, and to its subsequent evaluation