



## Psychological distress and suicidal ideation

### Psychological distress and suicidal ideation among male construction workers in the United States

*Xiuwen Sue Dong, Raina D. Brooks, Samantha Brown, and William Harris. American Journal of Industrial Medicine, 2022.*

#### Overview

From 1999 to 2019, the suicide rate in the U.S. increased 32%, with the rate for males four times higher than for females by the end of that period. Male-dominated occupations have higher suicide rates, and male construction workers have a higher rate than other workers. To examine these findings, the researchers analyzed psychological distress and suicidal ideation among male construction workers, as well as possible underlying factors, using 2008-2014 data from the National Survey of Drug Use and Health.

#### Key Findings

- Among male construction workers in the study population, the prevalence of suicidal ideation was 2.5% and of psychological distress, 30%.
- After accounting for demographic, work and health characteristics:
  - Male workers aged 18-25 years were five times as likely to report serious psychological distress and twice as likely to report suicidal ideation than those 50 years or older.
  - Male workers employed part-time were 1.4 times as likely to report serious psychological distress and twice as likely to report suicidal ideation than those employed full-time.
  - Male workers with self-reported fair/poor health status were approximately twice as likely to report both serious psychological distress and suicidal ideation than those with excellent/very good health status.
- After accounting for demographics, work and health characteristics, and substance use:
  - Male workers with illicit opioid use were almost twice as likely to report suicidal ideation, and those with alcohol dependence or abuse were almost three times as likely to report suicidal ideation.
  - Male workers with serious psychological distress were nearly 33 times more likely to have suicidal ideation than those with no or minor distress.
- To reduce suicides and improve mental health, policies and programs that support the prevention and treatment of workplace injuries, substance use, and mental distress should be utilized.

#### For more information, contact:

Amber Trueblood: [datacenter@cpwr.com](mailto:datacenter@cpwr.com)

#### Read the article:

<https://bit.ly/3PhPh1B>

©2022, CPWR-The Center for Construction Research and Training. All rights reserved. CPWR is the research and training arm of NABTU. Production of this document was supported by cooperative agreement OH 009762 from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). The contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of NIOSH.



THE CENTER FOR CONSTRUCTION  
RESEARCH AND TRAINING

[WWW.CPWR.COM](http://WWW.CPWR.COM)