

EPIDEMIOLOGY OF SUICIDE AND ATTEMPTED SUICIDE DERIVED FROM THE HEALTH SYSTEM DATABASE IN ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN: 2001-08

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Aims: Suicide is an important public health problem worldwide. The aim of this study was to describe the epidemiology of suicide and attempted suicide in Iran.

Methods: A retrospective study from March 2001 to March 2008 examined some characteristics of cases of suicide and attempted suicide in the Islamic Republic of Iran based on the health system database of 41 medical universities.

Results: A total of 53 100 cases of suicide and attempted suicide were analysed. Just over half were among women (55.0%). The most favoured method of attempted suicide among both males and females was drug overdose. Self-burning was more frequent in females (5.8%) while hanging (4.5%), cutting (2.8%) and firearms (0.5%) were more common in males. There were 3883 (7.3%) completed (fatal) suicides. Hanging had the highest case fatality rate (76.5%) and drug overdose the lowest (2.3%). Older people had a higher mortality rate.

Conclusion: Suicide and attempted suicides increased from 8.3 per 100 000 population in 2001 to 19.4 in 2005, then declined to 16.3 in 2008.