

Child and Youth Mortality Review Committee Definitions

An important note on interpreting the data

The majority of data in the summaries has been drawn from administrative and service data. As such, they are dependent on reporting and recording practices and cannot be used as indicators of the incidence of family violence in the population. In addition, they cannot be used to comment on trends in the occurrence of family violence over time. Sexual and family violence are often not reported to authorities and so can be very hard to measure from administrative data. Further, the data provided is often provisional (subject to change if new information is gathered) and drawn from dynamic operational databases.

Child and Youth Mortality Review Collection (CYMRC)¹

Definition

Children and young people are defined, for the purposes of child and youth mortality review, as being those aged between 28 days and less than 25 years.

The analyses presented include children and young people who died in New Zealand between 1 January 2002 and 31 December 2015. Cases who were residents from overseas were excluded.

Data sources

The data in this report are from the Mortality Review Database. This database contains information from a number of sources, including the Ministry of Health, Births Deaths and Marriages, Coronial Services Unit and individual Coroners, Child Youth and Family, Ministry of Transport, Water Safety New Zealand, and data that are entered by the Local Mortality Review Group Coordinator on completion of a Local Mortality Review Group death review. The data were extracted from the database on 6 December 2016.

Data selection criteria and analysis

Cause of death was assigned using the Underlying Cause of Death data from the National Mortality Collection, Ministry of Health. This is coded according to the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems 10th Revision (ICD-10).

Assault was assigned as the cause of death when the underlying cause of death ICD-10 code was in the following range:

- X85-Y09 (Assault, including neglect and abandonment, and other maltreatment syndromes);
- Y87.1 (Sequelae of assault).

Therefore, all deaths due to assault are included, regardless of who the perpetrator is i.e., not all deaths are due to family violence. CYMRC data are retrieved from a database that is constantly being updated. As well as details of new cases, there can also be new information for existing cases, and at times changing information for existing cases. The result of this is that details can change from year to year, even for cases whose death was some years previously. This is particularly true of cases that require an inquest, as in some cases this process may not be completed until years after the death. While the analyses include deaths that occurred until 31 December 2015, the 2014 and 2015 data are provisional, for the above reasons. The incompleteness of the data is not randomly spread across all causes. Deaths that are referred to the Coroner, such as due to assault, are less likely to have complete cause of death information available quickly. Therefore, information relating to deaths in 2015 in particular needs to be interpreted with caution.

Discrepancies with other collections

The data presented in the analyses may differ from official collections. This is due to the multiple data sources which may provide more comprehensive data than other collections. In addition, the way that data are coded may result in variations from official collections. For example, the CYMRC use the date of death to assign year of death, whereas some other collections use date of registration of death.



References

- ¹ Clinical Leader, NZ Mortality Review Data Group, Child and Youth Mortality Review Committee. (2017, May). [CYMRC Mortality Statistics: Personal Communication].

