The World Health Organization defines violent death as “a death resulting from the intentional use of physical force or power against oneself, another person, or against a group or community.”

In NVDRS, violent deaths include:

a. Suicide – death resulting from the intentional use of force against oneself
b. Homicide – death resulting from the intentional use of force or power, threatened or actual, against another person, group, or community
c. Death due to legal intervention – death in which the decedent was killed by or died as a result of a law enforcement officer or other persons with specified legal authority to use deadly force, including military, acting in the line of duty
d. Death of undetermined intent – death resulting from the use of force or power against oneself or another person for which the evidence indicating one manner of death is no more compelling than the evidence indicating another manner of death
e. Unintentional firearm injury death – death resulting from a penetrating injury or gunshot wound from a weapon that uses a powder charge to fire a projectile when there was a preponderance of evidence that the shooting was not intentionally directed at the victim.

NY VDRS is an incident-based system; it captures information on each individual violent death, and also links related deaths to create an incident.

In 2015, there were 1054 violent incidents in NYC, resulting in 1070 violent deaths.

- Over half of all violent incidents were suicides.
- The youngest victim in a violent death incident was less than one day old and the oldest victim was 96 years old.
- Males were almost three times more likely than females to be the victim of a violent death.

Multiple victim incidents include multiple homicides, multiple suicides, and homicide(s) followed by suicide(s).

In 2015, there were 14 multiple victim incidents resulting in 30 deaths.
Violent Incident Circumstances

- NY VDRS collects information on the documented circumstances surrounding each violent death in an effort to more fully describe patterns in violent deaths and violent death incidents.

- In 2015, circumstances were identified for 794 of 1054 (75%) violent death incidents in New York City.

- In 2015, 43% of all violent death incidents with documented circumstances in NYC involved a mental health circumstance.
  - More than three-quarters of all incidents involving a mental health circumstance were single suicides (84%). Single homicides made up 3% of incidents with a mental health circumstance.
  - While most of these incidents were single suicides (56%), single homicides accounted for about 11% of these incidents.

- Circumstances related to alcohol and/or other substance use disorders were present in nearly 21% of violent incidents.
  - While most of these incidents were single suicides (56%), single homicides accounted for about 11% of these incidents.

- Slightly over 20% of violent death incidents with documented circumstances were precipitated by an argument.
  - Most of these incidents were single homicides (80%); however, 15% of violent incidents precipitated by an argument were single suicides.

Figure 2. Documented Circumstances Among Violent Death Incidents in NYC, NY Violent Death Reporting System, 2015 (n = 794)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Violent Incident Circumstances</th>
<th>Circumstances Explored in NVDRS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mental health, substance use disorders, other addictions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Crime and criminal activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Relationship and life stressors (e.g. arguments, job loss, divorce)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Suicide attempt history, ideation, disclosure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mental Health Circumstance</th>
<th>84%</th>
<th>3%</th>
<th>13%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol and/or Other Substance Use Disorder</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argument/Interpersonal Strife</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: More than one circumstance can be related to an incident

*Other violent death incidents include: multiple victim, undetermined intent and unintentional firearm death incidents

References

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Office of Vital Statistics, NYC DOHMH
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