

Public Health in the News

TB and HIV are highest causes of death among youth – Stats SA

Tuberculosis and HIV-related illnesses were the two leading causes of death among young people in 2013, details released by Statistics South Africa have revealed. Of the 77 822 people below the ages of 35 who died in 2013, 10 962 died from TB, 7 890 succumbed to HIV, and “other viral diseases”, which were third on the list, accounted for 4 400 deaths.

Although the number of young people who died decreased from 86 925 in 2012, female deaths contributed the highest to the total during the era of increasing mortality between 1997 and 2005. The figures show that white South African youth, with the highest medical aid coverage at 73.4%, had fewer deaths compared with black and coloured youth who had the lowest medical aid coverage at 8.8% and 18.7% respectively...

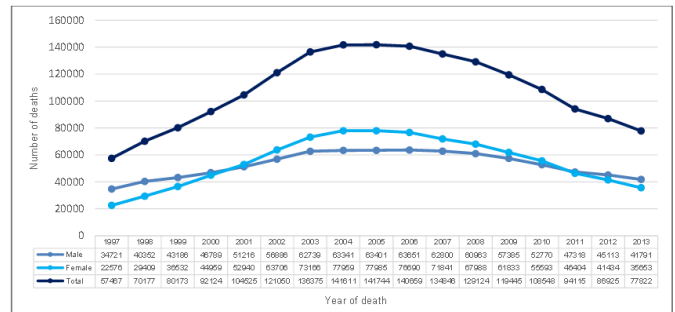
As was the case in 2012, males were more likely to die from non-natural causes compared with females. Among young males, 43.2% of deaths were due to non-natural causes compared with 10.4% for females. “Young females had a higher proportion dying from natural causes (89.6%) than young males (56.8%),” found the report.

The statistics show that Indian and white youth died from injuries compared with black youth, most of whom died from TB-related illnesses. ...“The leading cause of death, tuberculosis, was ranked first for the African and Indian/Asian population groups while it was ranked second for the coloured population group and seventh for the white population group. “For the white population, the leading cause of death was ischemic heart diseases and for the coloured population group it was the human immunodeficiency virus [HIV] disease,” said the report.

Source: *News 24, 29 June 2015*

Context

Almost a quarter of all youth deaths occurred in KwaZulu-Natal, which topped the country’s list of deadliest places to be a young person with Gauteng and Eastern Cape close behind. The figure below shows trends in the number of deaths among South African youth between 1997 and 2013. The number of deaths among the youth increased consistently from around 57 000 in 1997 and peaked in 2005. After this period there was a consistent decline to 77 822 observed in 2013.



The levels observed in 2013 were still higher than those that were seen in 1997 but were almost consistent with those seen in 1999, when 79 718 deaths were registered. Prior to 2001 there were more male than female deaths; when changes in the trends were observed, this trend (where there were more female deaths than male deaths) continued until 2011, when female deaths declined to levels last seen in 2000. However, these levels among the sexes were also still above those observed in 1997. Female deaths contributed the highest to the total deaths during the era of increasing mortality (1997 - 2005) and the biggest contributor to the decline observed in the period 2006 - 2013. This pattern was consistent with patterns observed in the general population, and consistent with increasing mortality related to HIV/AIDS in the country.

Source: *Statistics South Africa, 2015*

WAMTechnology supports the health sector with custom software development projects. Our many successful projects include the development and support of the **Electronic Tuberculosis Register (ETR.Net)** and **Electronic Drug-Resistant Tuberculosis Register (EDRWeb)** – which are the **official software tools** used by the South African National Department of Health’s Tuberculosis Control Program, to maintain and analyse registered patients.

The “Electronic TB Register” (ETR.Net) is a Microsoft.net–based computer software program, inspired and based on the World Health Organization (WHO) recording and reporting formats. Many of the features of ETR.Net are derived from the “Electronic TB Register” software, a TB surveillance project in southern Africa supported by USAID and CDC (Centres for Disease Control). It was developed to provide for more efficient and useful collection, compilation, and analysis of TB data on an ongoing basis.

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