



## MASSACHUSETTS: Suicides in Mass. Rise 40 Percent in a Decade

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[The Boston Globe](#) [1]

According to a new report from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, the state's suicide rate rose by 40 percent between 2004 and 2014, driven by an increase in suicide deaths among middle-aged men. In 2014, males accounted for more than three-fourths of the state's suicide deaths, and individuals aged 35 to 64 made up just over half. Department of Public Health Suicide Prevention Program Director Alan Holmlund said that middle-aged men were a difficult population to impact through prevention efforts. "They want to be independent. They don't want to ask for help. They don't, as a group, see mental health treatment as something that is viable for them." In spite of the recent increase, Massachusetts has among the lowest suicide rates in the country, and the report suggests that rates may have stabilized over the past five years. Holmlund attributed the state's relatively low rates to several factors, including widespread access to behavioral health care services, low rates of gun ownership, and effective suicide prevention activities. "I know that we are preventing deaths," he said. "We are identifying people that are vulnerable, and we are helping them to seek the kind of treatment they need."

**Spark Extra!** Read the full [report](#) [2], and [commentary](#) [3] by SPRC Director Jerry Reed.

### Links within this resource

[1] <https://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/2017/02/28/suicides-mass-rise-percent-decade/jzG4aS5aylM9ufJe2aEXrK/story.html>

[2] <http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/dph/injury-surveillance/suicide/suicide-data-report-2014.pdf>

[3] <http://www.wbur.org/cognoscenti/2017/03/14/why-are-so-many-middle-aged-men-killing-themselves-jerry-reed>

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