

Broader firearm restrictions needed to prevent suicide deaths

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Limiting firearm access only for persons with a mental health condition or those who previously attempted suicide likely is not enough to reduce suicide deaths. The brief research report is published in *Annals of Internal Medicine*.

Firearms account for one half of all suicide deaths in the United States. Attempts to reduce access to firearms have focused on persons with a [mental health](#) condition or a history of [suicidal behavior](#). Researchers from Kaiser Permanente Colorado-Institute for Health Research, sought to identify the proportion of suicide deaths that could be prevented by limiting firearm access for only persons who fall into one of those two categories.

The researchers reviewed medical records and claims information for 2,674 adults and adolescents who had been enrolled in the Treatment Utilization Before Suicide (TUBS) study in the months prior to their suicide deaths. They found that 54.7 percent of those enrolled had a mental health or substance use condition. Of those, 42.8 percent committed suicide using a firearm. Among those persons who died by suicide with a firearm, only 4.1 percent had previously attempted suicide and just 23.5 percent had a mental health or substance use condition.

Based on these findings, the researchers suggest that firearm restrictions be expanded beyond the current focus on these patients to include other persons at risk for suicide.

More information: *Annals of Internal Medicine* (2017).
<http://annals.org/aim/article/doi/10.7326/L17-0111>

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