

# Substance use mortality varies widely across U.S. counties

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(HealthDay)—Across U.S. counties there is considerable variation in

mortality due to alcohol use disorders, drug use disorders, self-harm, and interpersonal violence, according to a study published in the March 13 issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*.

Laura Dwyer-Lindgren, Ph.D., from the University of Washington in Seattle, and colleagues estimated county-level [mortality rates](#) from 1980 to 2014 for [alcohol use disorders](#), drug use disorders, self-harm, and interpersonal violence. Data were included for 2,848,768 deaths recorded in the United States.

The researchers found that there was [considerable variation](#) among counties in mortality rates from alcohol use disorders, drug use disorders, self-harm, and interpersonal violence. At the national level, there were decreases in mortality rates for alcohol use disorders, self-harm, and interpersonal violence between 1980 and 2014; over the same period, the percentage of counties in which mortality rates increased for these causes was 65.4, 74.6, and 6.6 percent for alcohol use disorders, self-harm, and interpersonal violence, respectively. Between 1980 and 2014, mortality rates from drug use disorders increased nationally and in every county; the relative increase varied from 8.2 to 8,369.7 percent. Between 1980 and 2014 the relative and absolute geographic inequalities in mortality decreased for alcohol use disorders and [interpersonal violence](#) but increased for drug use disorders and self-harm.

"These estimates may be useful to inform efforts to target prevention, diagnosis, and treatment to improve health and reduce inequalities," the authors write.

**More information:** [Abstract/Full Text](#)

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