

Statistics shows mortality for adults 65 and over was declining before COVID-19

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Among adults age 65 years and older, mortality was declining before the COVID-19 pandemic, although the rate of decline slowed from 2009, according to the Dec. 15 *National Vital Statistics Reports*, a publication

from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Ellen A. Kramarow, Ph.D., and Betzaida Tejada-Vera, from the National Center for Health Statistics in Hyattsville, Maryland, present data on trends in mortality before the COVID-19 pandemic for adults age 65 and older based on [death certificates](#) filed in all 50 states and the District of Columbia during 2000 to 2019.

The researchers found that for adults age 65 and older, the age-adjusted deaths rates decreased from 5,169.0 to 4,073.8 deaths per 100,000 U.S. standard population from 2000 through 2019, with a slower rate of decline from 2009 onward. Declines occurred in all [age groups](#) among women (65 to 74, 65 to 84, and 85 years and older) while for men, declines were seen only in those ages 75 to 84 and 85 years and older.

Death rates were stable for men aged 65 to 74 years from 2012 through 2019; however, a 0.3 percent increase was seen annually among Black non-Hispanic men ages 65 to 74 years. In rural versus urban areas, age-adjusted [death rates](#) were higher, and they declined more slowly in [rural areas](#).

"Patterns of older adult mortality from 2020 onward will reflect the impact of large numbers of deaths in [older adults](#) caused by COVID-19, an infectious disease that was the third leading cause of death for this age group in 2020 and 2021, as well as the pandemic's effect on overall mortality patterns," the authors write.

More information: [National Vital Statistics Reports](#)

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