



Ministry  
of Justice

## **Statistical Notice**

# **Self-Inflicted Deaths in Prison Custody in England and Wales between 1978 and March 2014**

1 July 2015

## Background

This ad-hoc statistical notice presents detailed analysis of self-inflicted deaths in custody.

The notice uses an extract of the Safety in Custody dataset, which records information on deaths, self-harm, and assaults in prison custody. The notice builds on already published statistics on self-inflicted deaths and other safety in custody publications, which can be found at [www.gov.uk/government/collections/safety-in-custody-statistics](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/safety-in-custody-statistics).

The figures provided in this ad-hoc statistical notice have been drawn from administrative IT systems which, as with any large scale recording system, are subject to possible errors with data entry and processing.

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## Introduction

This report provides analysis of self-inflicted deaths in custody in England and Wales from 1978 to March 2014<sup>1,2</sup> and is based on a further breakdown of Safety in Custody statistics. The analysis was produced to inform the work of the Independent Review into Self-Inflicted Deaths in NOMS Custody of 18-24 year olds (also referred to as the Harris Review).

The Safety in Custody National Statistics bulletin has been published on a quarterly basis since 2012. The most up to date published statistics on deaths in prison custody can be found at the following address: [www.gov.uk/government/collections/safety-in-custody-statistics](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/safety-in-custody-statistics). The most recent figures available, at the time of publication, show that the number of self-inflicted deaths fell from 88 in the 12 months to March 2014 to 76 in the 12 months to March 2015, after showing a recent increase in the period covered by this report. The rate of self-inflicted death fell from 1.0 per 1,000 prisoners in the 12 months to March 2014 to 0.9 in the 12 months to March 2015.<sup>3</sup>

This current report analyses the historical dataset on deaths in custody from 1978 to March 2014 in further detail. It uses the most recent figures available at the time of analysis, however, due to the scope and depth of the analysis involved, this analysis has not been updated to include more recent figures.

The analysis explores a number of issues, including: self-inflicted deaths among different age groups, ethnicities, genders, sentence lengths and offence types; the length of elapsed time in prison prior to self-inflicted death; the method and location of self-inflicted deaths; and the proportion of self-inflicted deaths where the prisoner had been classed as at risk at the time of their death.

For the purposes of this analysis, self-inflicted deaths are defined as *any death of a person who has apparently taken his or her own life irrespective of intent*. This not only includes suicides, but any death without attribution of intent, as a result of the person's own actions. This classification is used because it is not always known whether a person intended to take their own life.

While the deaths in custody dataset and this report provide insight on a wide range of factors on self-inflicted deaths, they do not provide a complete picture of all of the relevant factors concerning deaths in custody. For instance, they do not provide insight on actions taken by staff, prisoners and prisons to prevent self-inflicted deaths, as well as the particular circumstances of individual prisoners involved. However, it is hoped that this report will add to the body of learning on self-inflicted deaths in custody and support work to prevent future self-inflicted deaths.

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<sup>1</sup> More recent statistics are available beyond March 2014; this was, however, the most recent available data at the time of the data extract. More recent statistics can be found at [www.gov.uk/government/collections/safety-in-custody-statistics](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/safety-in-custody-statistics).

<sup>2</sup> This is with the exception of the analysis of the time of day in Section 10, which was included later than the other analysis and so covers all of 2014.

<sup>3</sup> This is from the Safety in Custody bulletin found at [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/425028/safety-in-custody-dec-2014.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/425028/safety-in-custody-dec-2014.pdf).

## Key Findings

- The number of self-inflicted deaths generally increased each year from 1978, when there were 16 recorded self-inflicted deaths, to 96 self-inflicted deaths in 2004. Although the number of self-inflicted deaths decreased in the following years to 58 self-inflicted deaths in 2010 and 2011, there has been a recent increase in 2012 and 2013, with 75 recorded self-inflicted deaths in 2013.
- The rate of self-inflicted deaths followed a similar trend, declining from 1.33 self-inflicted deaths per 1,000 prisoners in 2004 to 0.68 in 2010 and 2011, but then rising in 2012 and 2013 to 0.89 per 1,000 in 2013.
- Self-inflicted deaths among male prisoners constituted 95% of all self-inflicted deaths between 1978 and March 2014, reflecting that males make up a large majority of the prison population.
- With the exception of those aged 60 and over, for male prisoners the average rate of self-inflicted deaths between 2002 and 2013 generally increased with age, with male prisoners aged 50-59 significantly more likely to take their own lives than those aged 18-24. The average rate of self-inflicted deaths of female prisoners appeared to decrease with age, although some caution should be used when considering age breakdowns of self-inflicted deaths of female prisoners, due to the low numbers involved.
- The rate of self-inflicted death has generally been higher for white prisoners than other ethnicities, both among prisoners of all ages and 18-24 year old prisoners specifically.
- Offenders in prison for arson and criminal damage offences had the highest overall rate of self-inflicted deaths, while constituting fewer than 5% of all self-inflicted deaths. The offence type with the highest rate of self-inflicted deaths among 18-24 year olds was sexual offences.
- Prisoners sentenced to over ten years had the highest rate of self-inflicted deaths of any sentence band. The rate of self-inflicted death does not, however, appear to decrease with a reduction in sentence length.
- The majority of self-inflicted deaths occurred relatively soon after a prisoner's entry into the current prison. Almost a quarter of deaths occurred within a week of arriving into the current prison and most were within the first six months. The proportion of self-inflicted deaths occurring within a week of reception into the current prison fell significantly between the time periods '1989 to 2004' and '2005 to March 2014'.
- Hanging was the most frequent method of self-inflicted death used by both male and female prisoners and the majority of self-inflicted deaths occurred within normal cells.
- Incidents resulting in the self-inflicted death of prisoners of all ages were detected by staff slightly more frequently between 6.00am and 8.00am, and were fairly evenly interspersed across days of the week and months of the year. This was the case for all prisoners and for 18-24 year old prisoners specifically.
- A higher proportion of female prisoners had been identified as being at risk at the time of their death than male prisoners.

## Methodology

This analysis primarily uses Safety in Custody data; in particular, an extract of the deaths in custody dataset from January 1978 to March 2014. As the dataset consists of relatively detailed individual level data, it has been possible to produce a broad range of descriptive analysis and significance testing across a number of previously unexamined sub-groups.<sup>4</sup>

Prison population data has also been used to help compare numbers of deaths across different sized populations, including age, ethnicity, gender, and types of prison establishment. The rate of self-inflicted deaths shows the number of self-inflicted deaths per 1,000 prisoners per year and measures how prevalent self-inflicted deaths are in a given population. For example, a rate of 0.89 per 1,000 prisoners per year between 1978 and 2013 would mean that for every 1,000 prisoners, there were on average 0.89 self-inflicted deaths every year. Unless otherwise stated, all rates are per year.

As population data are available for a shorter time series than the Safety in Custody dataset it has not been possible to calculate rates for all the years covered by the Safety in Custody dataset. Specifically, population data by gender, age, sentence length and offence type was available from 2002-2013, population data by ethnicity was available from 2004-2013, and population data by establishment type was available from 2009-2013.

In order to test whether observed patterns in the data are likely to reflect underlying trends, some of the results have been tested for statistical significance. This estimates how confident one can be that the observed differences are related to certain observed characteristics, such as age or gender, by contrasting expected individual variation with observed differences in the data. In this report, the term 'significance' always refers to statistical significance.

Confidence intervals are also used. These are statistical tools indicating likely variation around the observed rates per 1,000 prisoners per year.

Much of the analysis only considers the relationship between self-inflicted deaths and one other characteristic (such as gender). This may not take other relevant factors into account and so the observed relationships may not mean the characteristic was causing the self-inflicted deaths. For example, an observed difference in the rate of self-inflicted death between different sentence lengths may be because there are particular differences caused by the sentence lengths. The result may, however, be because prisoners on longer sentences could be older, with age being the cause of the different rates of self-inflicted death. Please note this example is for the purposes of illustration only and may not be correct.

Unless otherwise stated, 'average' refers to the arithmetic mean.

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<sup>4</sup> There were also substantial gaps in some parts of the data, such as details on sentence lengths. These tend to be for cases that occurred in the 1970s and 1980s. It is not known whether the findings of this analysis would be different if the data were complete and these findings should therefore be treated with caution.



# 1. Self-Inflicted Deaths

## Key Point

The number of self-inflicted deaths generally increased in each year from 1978, peaking in 2004. Between 2005 and 2011, the number of self-inflicted deaths per year generally declined, but in 2012 and 2013 increased, with 75 in 2013.

There were 2,039<sup>5</sup> self-inflicted deaths between 1978 and March 2014 (with 2,014 from 1978-2013 and an additional 25 in the first three months of 2014). Of these, 522 (or 26%) were of 18-24 year old prisoners.

Figure 1.1 shows the number of self-inflicted deaths in custody in each year. It shows running 12-month totals, meaning, for example, a figure of 88 for March 2014 refers to 88 self-inflicted deaths in the 12 months up to and including March 2014 (April 2013 to March 2014).

Considering calendar years (January to December), the number of self-inflicted deaths generally increased in each year from 1978, with 16 recorded self-inflicted deaths, peaking in 2004 with 96 self-inflicted deaths. Between 2005 and 2011 (with the exception of 2007) the number of self-inflicted deaths per year generally declined to 58 self-inflicted deaths in 2010 and 2011 – the lowest recorded numbers in almost two decades. The number of self-inflicted deaths has increased in recent years, with 61 and 75 self-inflicted deaths in 2012 and 2013. From the Safety in Custody bulletin<sup>6</sup> published 29 January 2015, this increase has continued beyond the coverage of the dataset used in this report, with 84 self-inflicted deaths from January to December 2014.

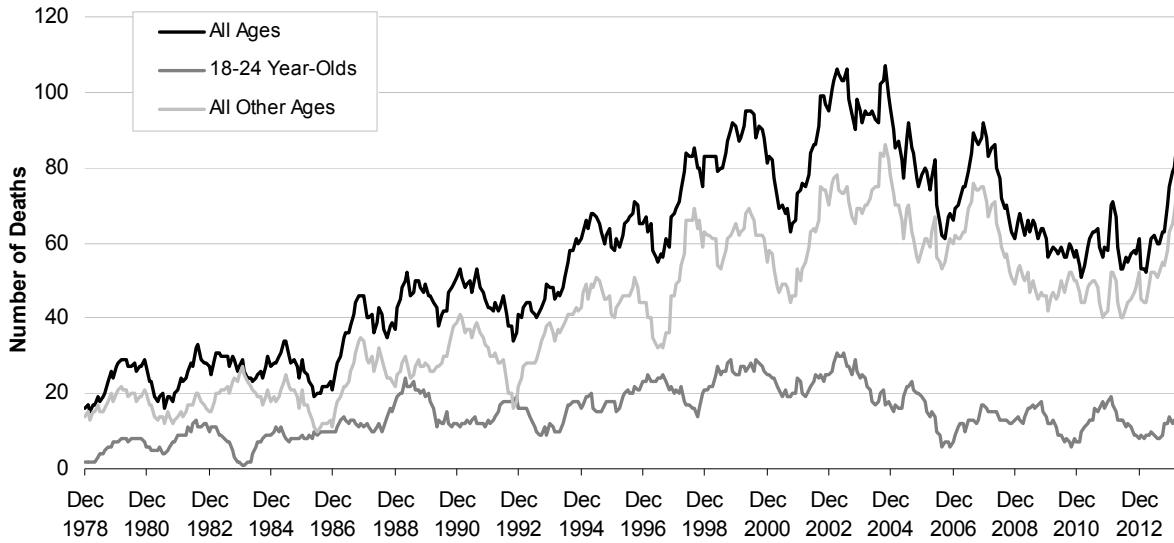
The number of self-inflicted deaths among 18-24 year olds followed a similar trend to the overall population. The number of self-inflicted deaths among 18-24 year olds generally increased from 1978, peaking (slightly earlier compared to the overall population) in 1999, 2000, and 2003, with 26 self-inflicted deaths in each calendar year. Since then the number of self-inflicted deaths has been lower, with 6 self-inflicted deaths in 2006, the lowest number of self-inflicted deaths among 18-24 year olds in a 12 month period since 1978. From 2007-2013, the number of self-inflicted deaths in each year varied between eight and 17.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Correct at time of analysis. Due to a change in classification, this has since been revised down to 2,038.

<sup>6</sup> Available at [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/399071/safety-in-custody-to-sept-2014.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/399071/safety-in-custody-to-sept-2014.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> There were 14 self-inflicted deaths among the 18-24 age group between January and December 2014, beyond the coverage of the dataset used in this report.

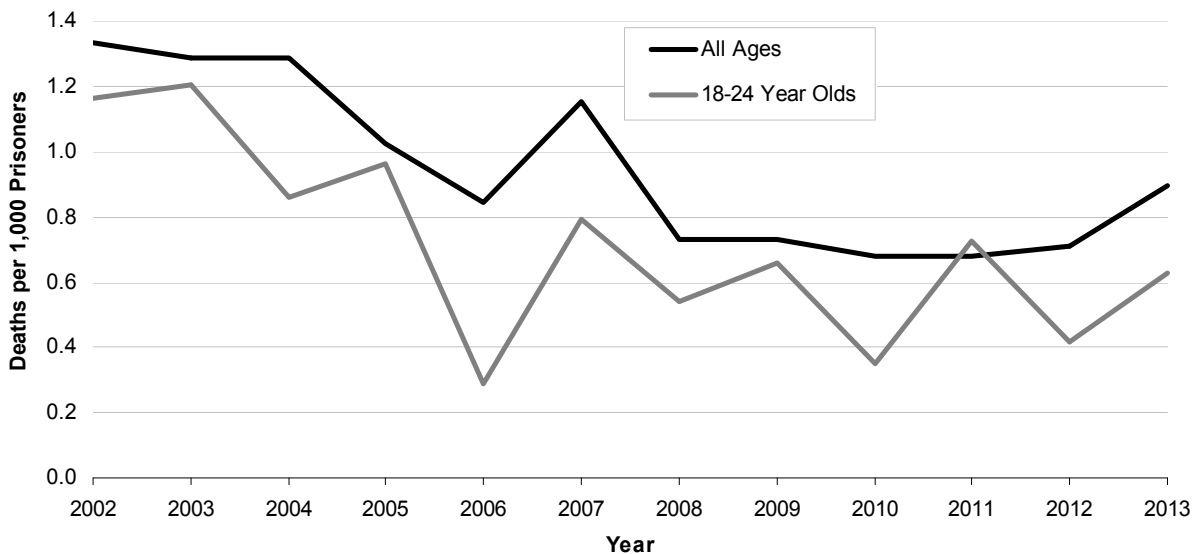
**Figure 1.1: Number of Self-Inflicted Deaths in Custody, Running 12-Month Totals (1978-March 2014)**



As the prison population has changed over time, it is useful to look at rates of self-inflicted death. Figure 1.2 shows the rate of self-inflicted deaths in the prison population in each year from 2002. In 2002, there were 1.33 self-inflicted deaths per 1,000 prisoners within the overall prison population. The rate subsequently decreased, with the exception of 2007, reaching a low of 0.68 self-inflicted deaths per 1,000 prisoners in 2010 and 2011, before increasing to 0.89 self-inflicted deaths per 1,000 in 2013.

The rate of self-inflicted deaths among 18-24 year olds has tended to vary due to smaller numbers within the age group. In 2003 there were 1.21 self-inflicted deaths per 1,000 18-24 year olds within the prison population. Since then, the rate has generally declined, with the lowest rate of 0.29 self-inflicted deaths per 1,000 18-24 year old prisoners in 2006. Similar to the trend for all prisoners, the rate of self-inflicted deaths increased in 2013 for 18-24 year olds.

**Figure 1.2: Rate of Self-Inflicted Deaths per 1,000 Prisoners (2002-2013)**



Annex A contains further detail on numbers of all deaths in custody.

## 2. Self-Inflicted Deaths and Age Group

### Key Point

Although the highest number of self-inflicted deaths has been among 30-39 year olds, the rate of self-inflicted deaths tends to increase with the age of the prisoner, such that (with the exception of prisoners aged 60 and over) older prisoners are significantly more likely to take their own lives than younger prisoners.

Table 2.1 shows the total number of self-inflicted deaths by age band from 2004 to 2013.<sup>8</sup> The highest overall number of self-inflicted deaths in custody has generally been among 30-39 year olds, with this age group having the highest recorded numbers of self-inflicted deaths in 17 out of the 35 years in the time series and peaking in 1998 and 1999, and again in 2004.

The second highest number of self-inflicted deaths was among 18-24 year olds.<sup>9</sup> This age group had the highest number of recorded self-inflicted deaths in 10 out of the 35 years, peaking in 1999, 2000, and 2003.

The lowest numbers of self-inflicted deaths across the time series have consistently been among the 15-17 and 60+ age groups.

The relative proportions for the older age groups (50-59 year olds and to a lesser extent 60+ year olds) appear to be increasing, reflecting the increasing population of older prisoners in recent years.

**Table 2.1: Self-inflicted Deaths by Age Band (2004-2013)**

Year	Age Band							Total
	15-17	18-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+	
2004	0	18	20	34	18	5	1	96
2005	2	20	12	28	10	4	2	78
2006	0	6	10	28	12	7	3	66
2007	1	17	18	27	22	4	3	92
2008	0	12	17	14	9	7	2	61
2009	0	15	10	14	13	7	2	61
2010	0	8	10	12	17	9	2	58
2011	1	16	9	13	14	5	0	58
2012	2	9	6	16	15	10	3	61
2013	0	12	14	19	17	10	3	75
Total	6	133	126	205	147	68	21	706

These findings are partly due to the different sizes of each age band; and changing populations over time within each age band. It is more reliable therefore to examine the age bands by rate of self-inflicted death. Figures 2.1 and 2.2 show the rate of self-inflicted deaths per 1,000 prisoners by age band. Although, there are higher numbers of self-inflicted deaths among 30-39 year olds and 18-24 year olds, these two age groups did not generally have the highest rates of self-inflicted deaths within the prison population.

The highest rates of self-inflicted deaths were among 50-59 year olds. This group had the highest rate of self-inflicted deaths in six out of the 12 years within the time series and an average of 1.38 self-inflicted deaths per 1,000 prisoners per year between 2002 and 2013 (though this varies by gender – see Section 4 of this report). The rate for 18-24 year olds was

<sup>8</sup> See Table B.1 in Annex B for figures each year between 1978 and 2013.

<sup>9</sup> Prison statistics do not typically use an 18-24 age band. This grouping has been used here at the request of the Harris Review.

0.72 per 1,000, and 15-17 year olds had the lowest rate, with 0.33 self-inflicted deaths per 1,000 prisoners.

The rates for different age groups have had different trends over time. The rates among 18-24 year olds, 25-29 year olds, and 30-39 year olds have generally declined, although all of these groups experienced an increase in 2013. The rates for 15-17 and 40-49 year olds have been more variable in comparison. The rate among prisoners aged 60+ peaked in 2006, when 60+ prisoners had the second highest rate of self-inflicted deaths in that year.

**Figure 2.1: Rate of Self-Inflicted Death per 1,000 by Age Band (2002-2013)**

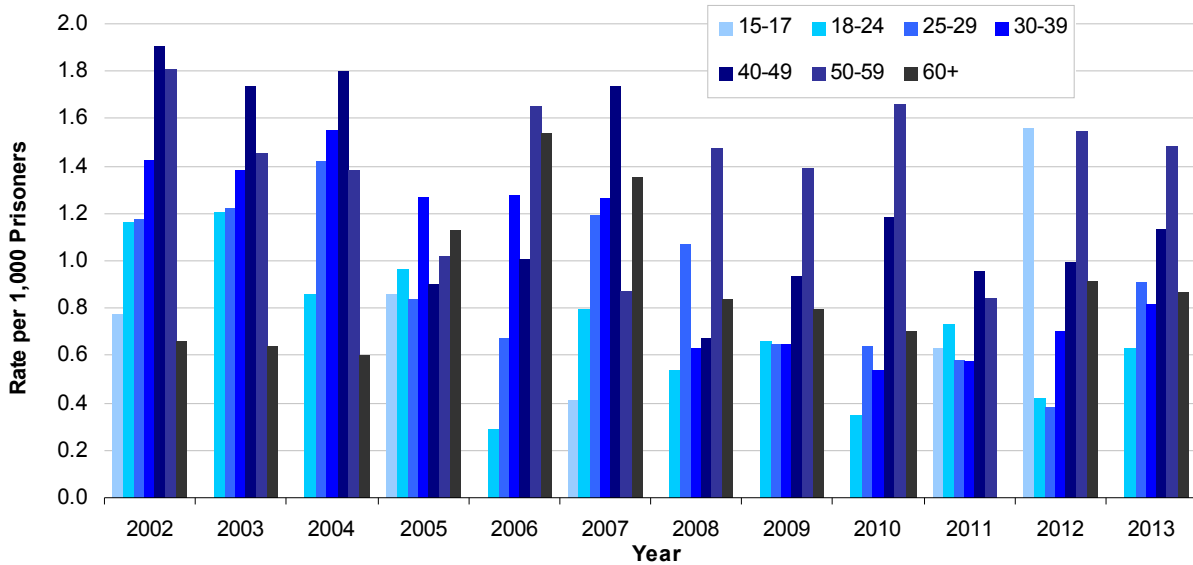
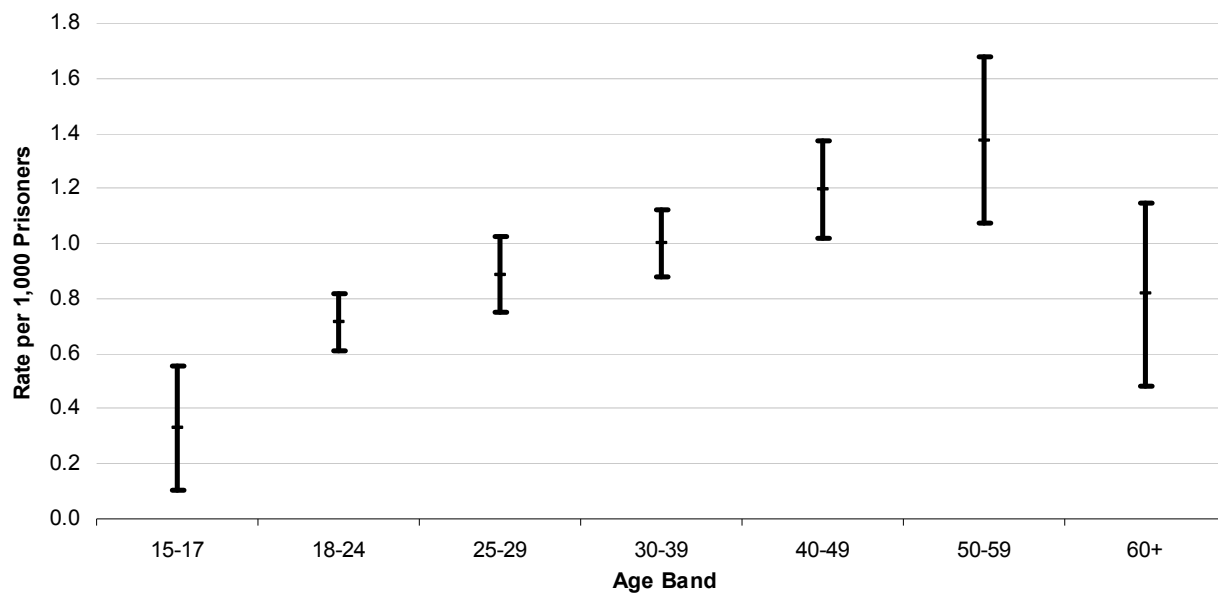


Figure 2.2 shows the rates by age band for 2002-2013 with confidence intervals<sup>10</sup>. Even taking into account the size of confidence intervals, older prisoners (with the exception of those aged 60+) seem to be more likely to take their own lives than younger prisoners.

<sup>10</sup> Confidence intervals are statistical measures of the likely range of rates in a population, given the rates that have been observed. As 95% confidence intervals have been used, if no factors change, we would expect the rate of self-inflicted deaths among 18-24 year olds in 95% of future years to be between 0.61 and 0.82 per 1,000 prisoners.

**Figure 2.2: Self-Inflicted Death Rate per 1,000 Prisoners by Age (2002-2013)**



### 3. Self-Inflicted Deaths and Gender

#### Key Points

Self-inflicted deaths among male prisoners constituted almost all self-inflicted deaths between 1978 and March 2014, reflecting that males make up the majority of the prison population

From 2002-2013, female prisoners had a higher average rate of self-inflicted deaths than male prisoners. However, in the five years leading up to 2013, the rate of self-inflicted deaths was lower for female prisoners than males, which is consistent with the fall in the number of female self-inflicted deaths in recent years. This was the case both for prisoners of all ages and for 18-24 year olds specifically.

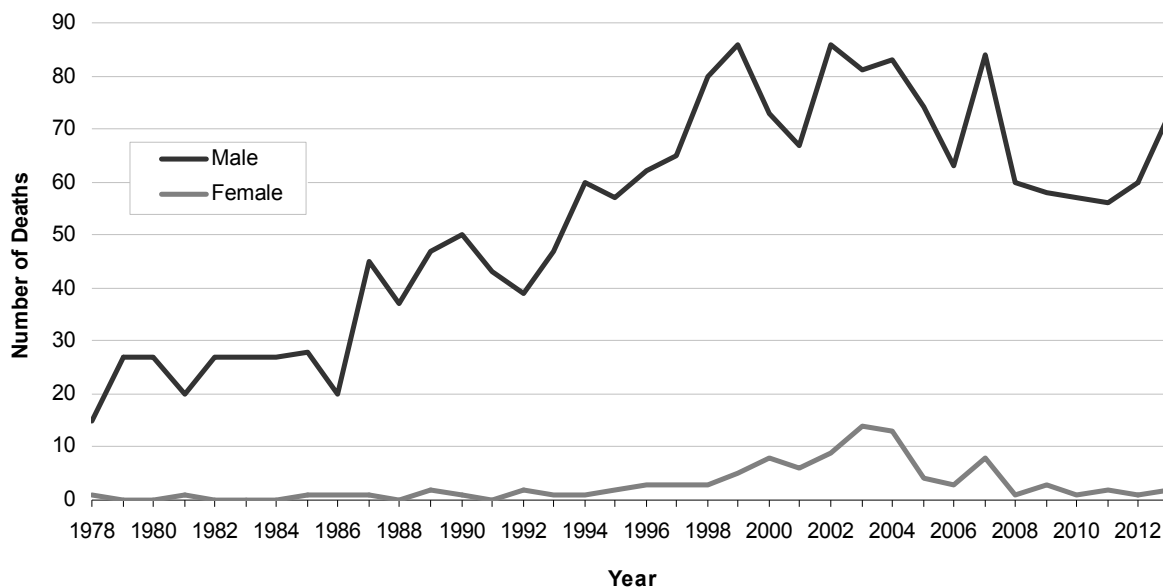
As Figure 3.1 shows, there were more male self-inflicted deaths in custody than female, with self-inflicted deaths among male prisoners constituting 95% of all self-inflicted deaths from 1978 to 2013. The average number of self-inflicted deaths among male prisoners per year between 1978 and 2013 was 53, compared to 3 female self-inflicted deaths. Overall trends therefore are often representative of male rather than female prisoners. As the data shows differences between the genders, it is important to examine them separately.

The number of self-inflicted deaths generally increased for both genders from 1978 to the early 2000s, with some subtle differences. While the number of male self-inflicted deaths dropped sharply between 2000 and 2001 and again in 2005 and 2006, the number of female self-inflicted deaths peaked in 2003 with a total of 14 self-inflicted deaths.

From around 2004 to 2011, the total number of self-inflicted deaths for both genders declined (with the exception of 2007, where both genders experienced a distinct jump in numbers of self-inflicted deaths).

Figure 3.1 also shows that the recent increase in self-inflicted deaths has been driven primarily by male prisoners, as the number of self-inflicted deaths among female prisoners has remained relatively stable since 2010.

**Figure 3.1: Number of Self-Inflicted Deaths by Gender (1978-2013)**



**Figure 3.2: Number of Self-Inflicted Deaths by Gender, 18-24 Year Olds (1978-2013)**

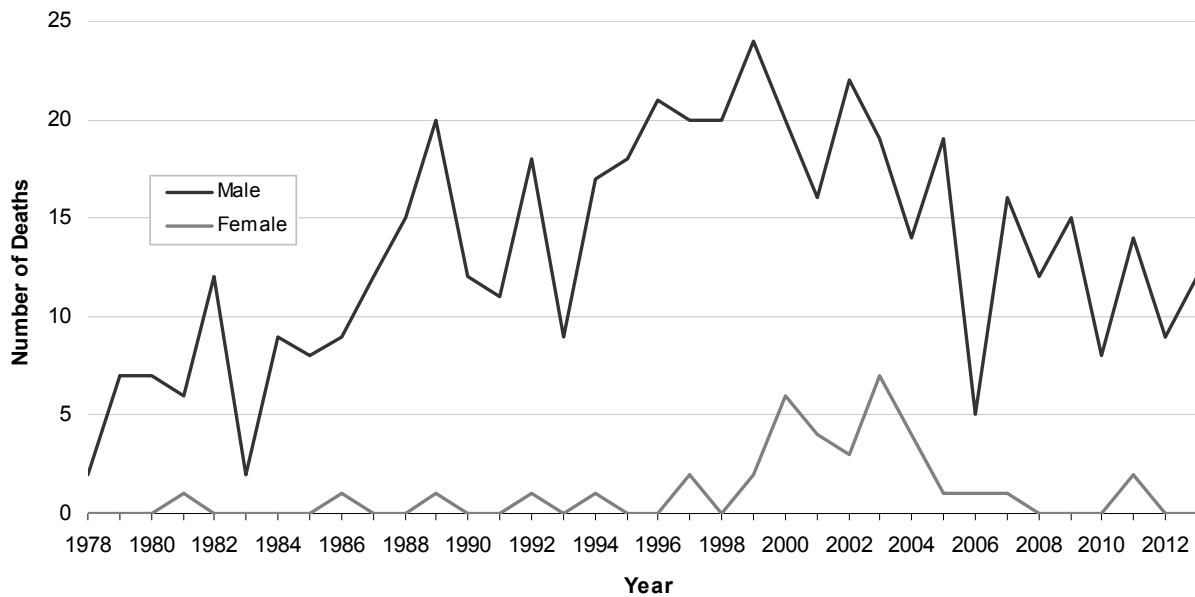


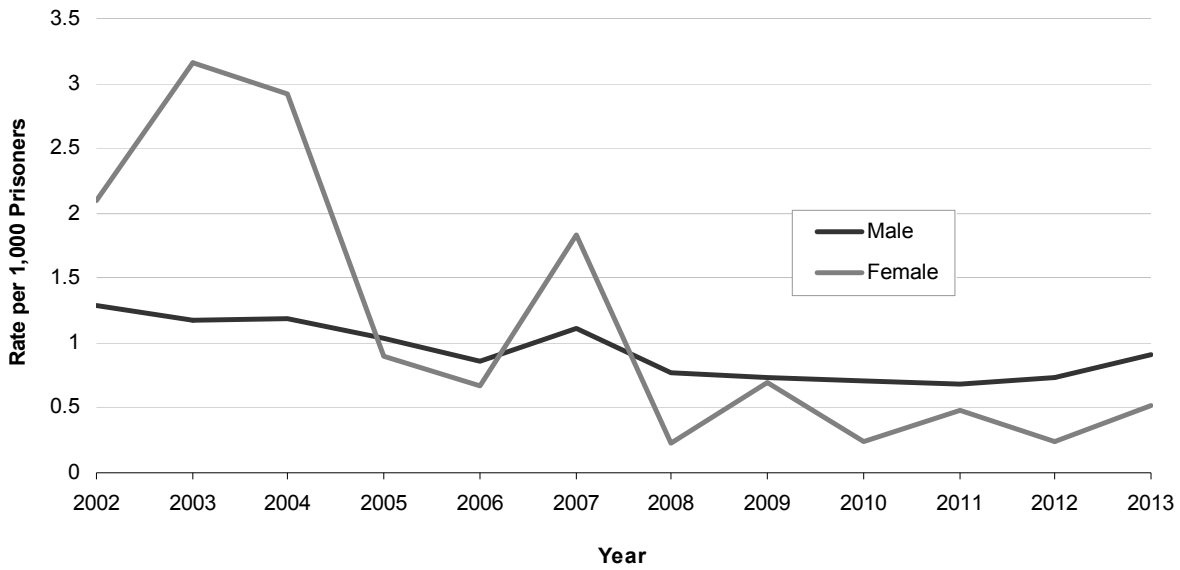
Figure 3.2 shows the number of self-inflicted deaths for 18-24 year old prisoners by gender. As with the overall prison population, the number of male 18-24 year old self-inflicted deaths is much higher than for females. The number of male self-inflicted deaths generally increased from 1978 and peaked in 1999 with 24 self-inflicted deaths. Since then, the number of self-inflicted deaths generally decreased, with a low of 5 self-inflicted deaths among male 18-24 year olds in 2006 (the lowest total number of self-inflicted deaths in a calendar year since 1983).

From 1978 through to 1998, self-inflicted deaths among female 18-24 year olds were relatively rare occurrences, with many years without any recorded self-inflicted deaths. From 1999 to 2007, there was at least one self-inflicted death every year, with a peak in 2003 of seven self-inflicted deaths. From 2008-2013 there were two recorded self-inflicted deaths, both in 2011.

As there are many more male prisoners than female prisoners, it is useful to take into account the prison population by considering the rates of self-inflicted deaths. From 2002-2013 the average rate of self-inflicted deaths was higher for female prisoners than for male prisoners, with an average rate of 0.92 self-inflicted deaths per 1,000 male prisoners per year and 1.17 self-inflicted deaths for female prisoners.

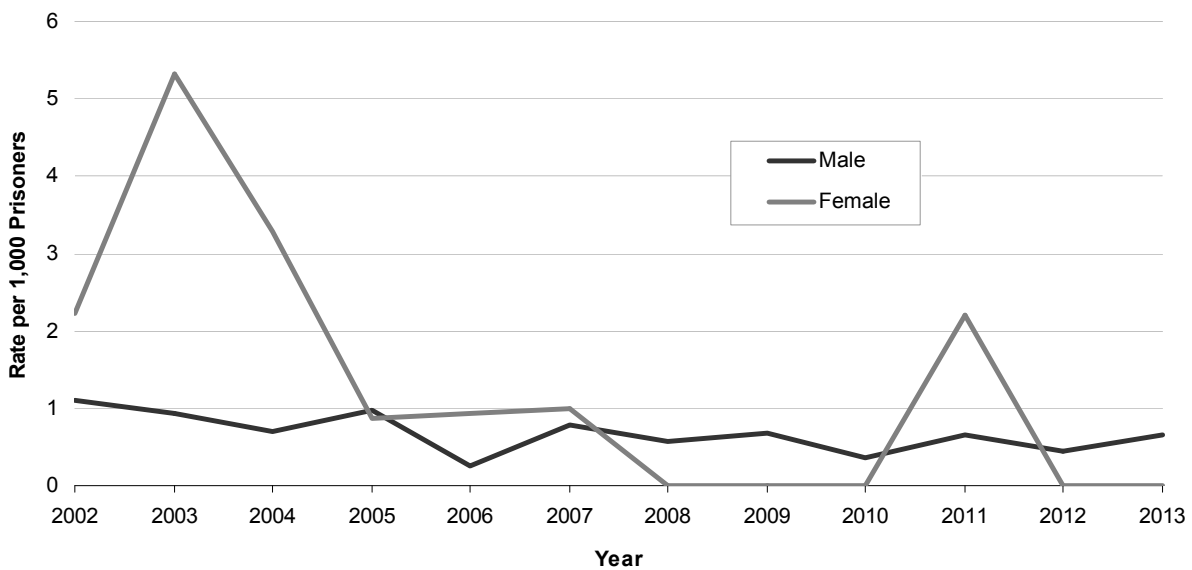
This was largely as a consequence of unusually high numbers of female self-inflicted deaths from 2002 to 2004. As Figure 3.3 shows, from 2002-2013 females had a lower rate of self-inflicted deaths than males in seven out of the 12 years in the time series. The rate of self-inflicted deaths over the five years up to and including 2013 was 0.75 per 1,000 male prisoners per year and 0.43 for female prisoners, which is consistent with the reduction in self-inflicted deaths among female prisoners. The rate of self-inflicted deaths among female prisoners also appears to have been less variable from 2008 onwards.

**Figure 3.3: Rate of Self-Inflicted Deaths by Gender per 1,000 Prisoners (2002-2013)**



As shown in Figure 3.4, similar to the overall female population the rate for female 18-24 year olds has been much more variable than for the comparative male population. The average rate of self-inflicted deaths per 1,000 prisoners was much higher for female 18-24 year old prisoners than for male 18-24 year old prisoners from 2002-2013, with 0.67 self-inflicted deaths per 1,000 male prisoners per year and 1.51 self-inflicted deaths per 1,000 female prisoners. However, in the five years leading up to 2013 the rate of self-inflicted deaths has been lower for female prisoners than male prisoners (0.46 per 1,000 female prisoners compared to 0.56 self-inflicted deaths per 1,000 male prisoners). As with the general female prisoner population, this was due to unusually high numbers of self-inflicted deaths of females from 2002 to 2004.

**Figure 3.4: Rate of Self-Inflicted Deaths by Gender per 1,000 Prisoners, 18-24 Year Olds (2002-2013)**





## 4. Self-Inflicted Deaths and Gender and Age

### Key Points

The average age at which a self-inflicted death occurred among male and female prisoners who took their own lives was similar, with males on average aged 32 and females aged 30.

With the exception of those aged 60 and over, for male prisoners the average rate of self-inflicted deaths between 2002 and 2013 generally increased with age; such that male prisoners aged 50-59 appeared to be more likely to take their own lives in comparison to male prisoners aged 18-24.

Among female prisoners, the average rate of self-inflicted death generally decreased with age (with the exception of 15-17 year olds); such that, between 2002 and 2013 female prisoners aged 18-24 appeared more likely to take their own lives compared to older female prisoners. Due to the low numbers involved, caution should be used in interpretation of age breakdowns of self-inflicted deaths of female prisoners.

Figure 4.1 shows the age distribution of self-inflicted deaths by gender. The number of self-inflicted deaths among male prisoners was highest among prisoners in their late 20s. The number of self-inflicted deaths among male prisoners generally decreased with age after age 28. There was no clear pattern for female prisoners. The average at which a self-inflicted death occurred among male and female prisoners who took their own lives was similar, with males on average aged 32 and females aged 30.

**Figure 4.1: Number of Self-Inflicted Deaths by Gender and Age (1978-March 2014)**

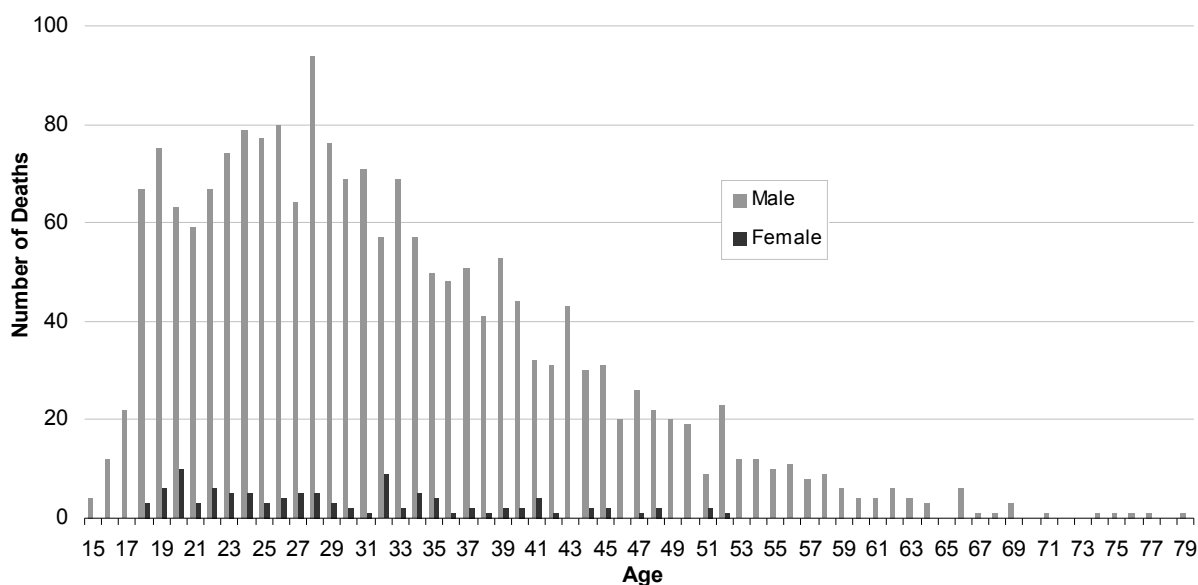


Table 4.1 provides an overview of the number of self-inflicted deaths by gender for each age band and tables B.2 and B.3 in Annex B show the number of self-inflicted deaths by gender and age in each year between 1978 and 2013. Caution is, however, advised with using these overall numbers due to differences in the relative sizes of each age band.

The number of self-inflicted deaths of male prisoners has been consistently higher among 30-39 year olds and 18-24 year olds, and to a lesser extent 25-29 year olds. The number of self-inflicted deaths among these age groups generally increased from 1978, peaking in 1999 with 24 self-inflicted deaths among 18-24 year olds, 20 among 25-29 year olds, and 31 self-inflicted deaths among 30-39 year olds. In subsequent years the number of self-inflicted deaths for these

age groups has been lower; generally declining for 30-39 year olds, whilst numbers for 18-24 and 25-29 year olds have been more variable.

Although the numbers vary more for female prisoners and small numbers mean caution should be taken with these results, the highest numbers of self-inflicted deaths have tended to be among 18-24 year olds, peaking in 2003 with a total of seven self-inflicted deaths. However, this dropped sharply in the following years to 2007, and between 2008 and 2013 there were two self-inflicted deaths among 18-24 year old females.

**Table 4.1: Self-Inflicted Deaths by Gender and Age (1978-March 2014)**

Age Band	Male			Female		
	Total 1978-March 2014	Age Band as % of Total	Average per Year (1978-2013)	Total 1978-March 2014	Age Band as % of Total	Average per Year (1978-2013)
15-17	38	2	1	0	0	0
18-24	484	25	13	38	37	1
25-29	391	20	11	20	19	1
30-39	566	29	16	29	28	1
40-49	299	15	8	14	13	<1
50-59	119	6	3	3	3	<1
60+	38	2	1	0	0	0
<b>Total*</b>	<b>1,935</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>3</b>

\*Totals may not always sum due to rounding

Table 4.2 shows the rates per 1,000 prisoners per year of both genders by age band for 2002-2013 and 2009-2013. With the exception of those aged 60 and over, for male prisoners the rate of self-inflicted deaths generally increased with age, with 50-59 year old male prisoners having the highest rate across the time series and in the five years leading up to 2013. This was partly due, as shown in Section 2, to an increase in the number of self-inflicted deaths among this age group in recent years.

The number of self-inflicted deaths among female prisoners across the period was low, so caution should be used in interpretation of the age breakdowns of self-inflicted deaths of female prisoners. The average rate of self-inflicted deaths of female prisoners between 2002 and 2013 appeared in general to decrease with age (with the exception of 15-17 year olds). Females in the 18-24 age band had the highest average rate of self-inflicted death from 2002-2013. Female prisoners aged 50-59, however, had the highest average rate of self-inflicted death in the five years leading to 2013. It is therefore unclear how strong this trend is, as this pattern may be due to relatively small numbers of female prisoners.

**Table 4.2: Rates of Self-Inflicted Deaths for Male and Female Offenders per 1,000 within the Prison Population by Age Band<sup>11</sup>**

Age Band	Male		Female	
	2002-2013	2009-2013	2002-2013	2009-2013
15-17	0.34	0.41	0	0
18-24	0.67	0.56	1.51	0.46
25-29	0.86	0.66	1.27	0
30-39	0.99	0.66	1.13	0.63
40-49	1.21	1.08	1.01	0.48
50-59	1.41	1.43	0.67	0.64
60+	0.83	0.68	0	0
<b>All ages</b>	<b>0.92</b>	<b>0.75</b>	<b>1.17</b>	<b>0.43</b>

<sup>11</sup> See Annex C for figures on the rate of self-inflicted deaths by age band and gender for each individual year between 1978 and 2013.

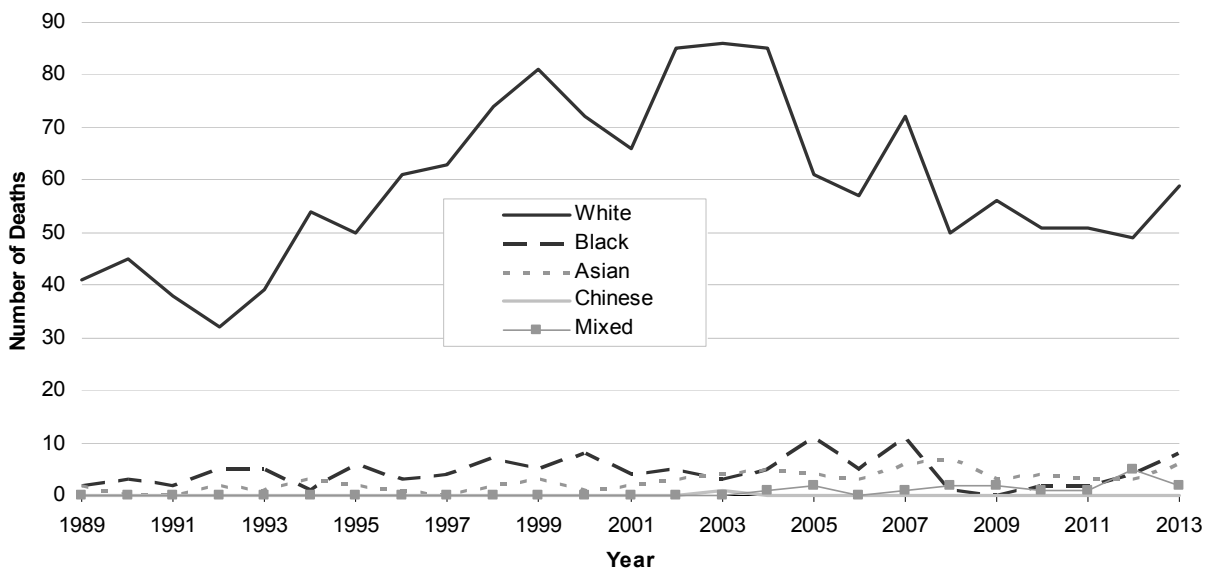
## 5. Self-Inflicted Deaths and Ethnicity

### Key Point

White prisoners were significantly more likely to take their own lives than black and minority ethnic prisoners. Differences between white prisoners and black and mixed ethnic groups were significant (although numbers for the mixed ethnic group were low), but the difference between Asian and white prisoners was not statistically significant.

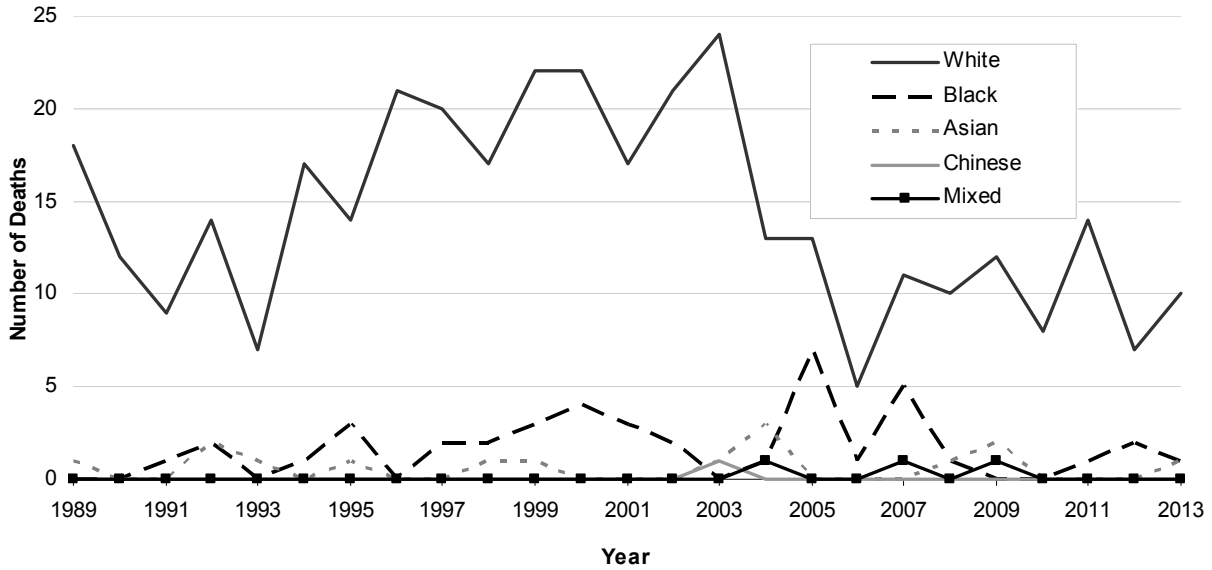
Figure 5.1 shows the total number of self-inflicted deaths from 1989 by ethnicity.<sup>12</sup> Reflecting higher overall numbers within the prison population, white prisoners have the highest number of self-inflicted deaths across the entire time series, with a total of 1,478 self-inflicted deaths. There were 112 self-inflicted deaths among black prisoners, 70 self-inflicted deaths among Asian prisoners, 17 self-inflicted deaths among prisoners who were of mixed ethnicity and one self-inflicted death of a Chinese prisoner. Self-inflicted deaths among black and minority ethnic prisoners generally increased from 1989 until the mid-2000s, albeit at a slower rate than for white prisoners. The total number of self-inflicted deaths increased for white, black and Asian prisoners in 2007, and all three groups experienced lower numbers of self-inflicted deaths from around 2008 to 2011. Numbers of self-inflicted deaths appear to have followed similar patterns across different ethnic groups.

**Figure 5.1: Number of Self-inflicted Deaths by Ethnicity (1989-2013)**



<sup>12</sup> Prior to 1989, ethnicity was not recorded on the safety in custody dataset. Gaps in the data from 1989 onwards do not necessarily mean the information was not recorded: sometimes people would either not state their ethnicity, or would be recorded as 'other'.

**Figure 5.2: Number of Self-Inflicted Deaths by Ethnicity, 18-24 Year Olds (1989-2013)**



Among 18-24 year old prisoners, as shown in Figure 5.2, there were also more self-inflicted deaths among white prisoners than other ethnic groups, with a total of 358 self-inflicted deaths across the available time series. There were 42 self-inflicted deaths among black 18-24 year old prisoners, 15 self-inflicted deaths among Asian prisoners, and 3 self-inflicted deaths among prisoners of mixed ethnicity. Both black and white 18-24 year old prisoners experienced a substantial drop in the number of self-inflicted deaths in 2006 and a subsequent increase in 2007.

As the majority of the prison population is white, it is useful to explore the rates of self-inflicted deaths across ethnic groups.<sup>13</sup> Considering the rates by ethnic group, Table 5.1 shows that from 2004 to 2013 the rate of self-inflicted death has generally been higher among white prisoners, having the highest rate in eight out of the 10 years.

**Table 5.1: Rates of Self-Inflicted Deaths per 1,000 Prisoners by Ethnic Group (2004-2013)**

Ethnicity	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2004-2013
White	1.66	1.07	1.00	1.26	0.83	0.92	0.83	0.82	0.79	0.97	1.00
Black	0.50	0.98	0.42	0.93	0.80	0.00	0.17	0.18	0.35	0.74	0.43
Asian	1.30	0.88	0.59	1.17	1.21	0.50	0.66	0.48	0.47	0.93	0.79
Mixed	0.54	0.93	0.00	0.43	0.74	0.70	0.33	0.32	1.58	0.62	0.64

White prisoners were significantly more likely to take their own lives than black and minority ethnic prisoners (with all non-white groups having a combined rate of 0.53 per 1,000 per year). Differences between white prisoners and black and mixed ethnic groups were significant although caution should be used due to small numbers of mixed ethnicity prisoners. There was no statistically significant difference between Asian and white prisoners. Black prisoners had the lowest rate from 2004 to 2013. It is possible, however, that other factors may be driving these findings, for example age and time in custody, as black and minority ethnic prisoners tend to be younger and in custody for less time than white prisoners, while white prisoners may be older and hence in an age band that is more at risk.

Among 18-24 year olds the rate of self-inflicted deaths per 1,000 prisoners by age and ethnic group was more variable, owing to smaller numbers within each group. White 18-24 year olds

<sup>13</sup> Population data for ethnic groups is available from 2004 onwards. The rates of self-inflicted death for Chinese prisoners has not been calculated, as the available prison population data only described 'Chinese and Other' prisoners, and not just Chinese prisoners.

had a higher rate of self-inflicted deaths compared to other ethnic groups. Black 18-24 year old prisoners had the second highest rate, followed by Asian 18-24 year old prisoners and mixed ethnic group 18-24 year old prisoners. Caution should be taken with these observations, however, due to small numbers of prisoners involved.

**Table 5.2: Rate of Self-Inflicted Deaths for 18-24 Year Olds per 1,000 by Ethnicity (2004-2013)**

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2004-2013</b>
White	0.90	0.86	0.34	0.72	0.64	0.75	0.51	0.93	0.49	0.79	0.69
Black	0.34	2.25	0.32	1.53	0.28	0.00	0.00	0.31	0.60	0.33	0.58
Asian	2.13	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.64	1.22	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.67	0.45
Mixed	1.47	0.00	0.00	1.08	0.00	0.83	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.29

## 6. Sentence Status and Sentence Length

### Key Points

The proportion of self-inflicted deaths does not appear to increase with sentence length: of the prisoners who had been sentenced, the highest number of self-inflicted deaths between 1978 and March 2014 were among prisoners sentenced to between one to three years, with a similar number having received an indeterminate sentence.

The rate of self-inflicted deaths also does not appear to increase with sentence length, although the highest rate of self-inflicted deaths per year was for prisoners sentenced to over 10 years.

Table 6.1 provides an overview of self-inflicted deaths by sentence status between 1978 and March 2014. Over half of all prisoners who took their own lives had been convicted and/or sentenced. Four in ten prisoners were on remand at the time of their death.

The break down by sentence status was similar for 18-24 year olds. Over half of all self-inflicted deaths among 18-24 year old prisoners were of prisoners who had been convicted and/or sentenced and approximately four in ten were on remand.

**Table 6.1: Self-Inflicted Deaths by Sentence Status (1978-March 2014)**

Sentence Status	All Ages		Ages 18-24	
	N	%*	N	%*
Civil	4	<1	0	0
Detainee	5	<1	1	<1
Judicial Review	69	3	18	4
Remand	803	40	217	42
Convicted un-sentenced	129	6	39	8
Sentenced	984	49	236	46
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,994</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>511</b>	<b>100</b>

\*Totals may not always sum due to rounding

Table 6.2 shows the total number of self-inflicted deaths between 1978 and March 2014 by sentence length, as well as rates between 2002 and 2013. Of the prisoners who had been sentenced, the highest number of self-inflicted deaths between 1978 and March 2014 were of prisoners sentenced to between one to three years, with a similar proportion having received an indeterminate sentence.

**Table 6.2 Self-Inflicted Deaths by Length of Prison Sentence**

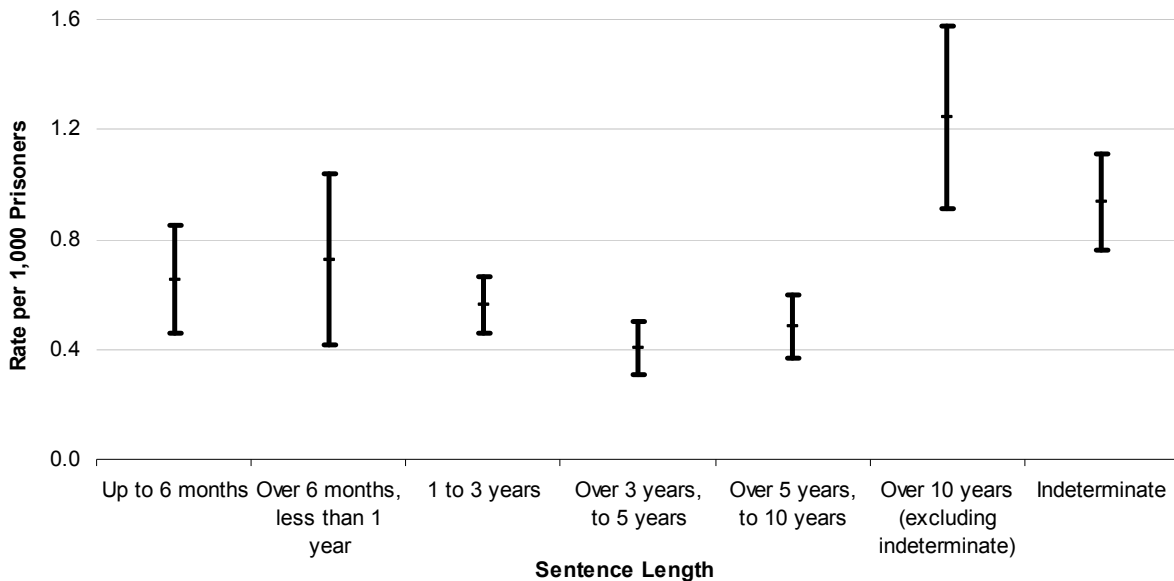
Sentence Length	1978- March 2014		2002-2013		Rate per 1,000 Prisoners per Year 2002-2013
	N	%*	N	%*	
Up to six months	101	10	43	9	0.65
Over 6 months, less than 1 year	46	5	21	4	0.73
1 to 3 years	251	26	118	25	0.56
Over 3 years, to 5 years	142	15	65	14	0.41
Over 5 years, to 10 years	149	15	69	14	0.49
Over 10 years (excluding Indeterminate)	76	8	54	11	1.24
Indeterminate sentence	214	22	109	23	0.94
<b>Total</b>	<b>979</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>479</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>0.62</b>
Missing/Unsentenced*	1,060		417		

\*Totals may not always sum due to rounding

\*\*A large majority of these are unsentenced rather than missing, as shown in Table 6.1

As shown in Figure 6.1, prisoners sentenced to over 10 years (excluding indeterminate sentences) had the highest rates of self-inflicted deaths of all sentence length groups (at a rate of 1.24 self-inflicted deaths per 1,000 prisoners per year, with a confidence interval of between 0.91 and 1.57 per 1,000). The second highest group was prisoners with indeterminate sentences (at a rate of 0.94 self-inflicted deaths per 1,000 prisoners with a confidence interval of between 0.76 and 1.11 per 1,000). The rate for prisoners sentenced to over 10 years appears to have increased in the five years leading to 2013, whereas the rate for prisoners with indeterminate sentences appears to have decreased substantially.

**Figure 6.1: Rate per 1,000 Prisoners of Self Inflicted Deaths by Sentence Length (2002-2013)**



There does not, however, appear to be a trend between sentence length and the rate of self-inflicted death. For example, there was a relatively high rate for prisoners sentenced to over 6 months but less than 1 year, and a lower rate for prisoners sentenced to over 3 years, to 5 years.

## 7. Elapsed Time Prior to Self-Inflicted Death

### Key Points

The majority of self-inflicted deaths of self-inflicted death occurred soon after a prisoner's entry into their current prison. Almost a quarter of deaths occurred within a week of arriving into the prison and over three quarters were within the first six months.

The proportion of self-inflicted deaths occurring within a week of reception into their current prison fell significantly when comparing the time periods '1988 to 2004' and '2005 and March 2014'.

Table 7.1 shows the length of time<sup>14</sup> that elapsed since arriving into their current prison prior to the occurrence of a self-inflicted death. 'Arrival into prison' refers to when a prisoner entered their current prison for either their current sentence or a previous sentence (if there was no break between the sentences). Another two measures of time elapsed are presented in Annex D. These are 'arrival into custody', which refers to when a prisoner first entered any prison on their current sentence; and time since sentencing<sup>15</sup>. These show similar patterns to time since arrival into prison. The overall totals do not equal the total number of self-inflicted deaths due to some entry dates not being available.

In general, the majority of self-inflicted deaths of self-inflicted death occurred early in a sentence, with almost a quarter of deaths occurring within a week of arriving into their current prison and over three quarters within the first six months. Over a quarter of 18-24 year olds' self-inflicted deaths occurred within a week of arriving into their current prison and over three quarters occurred within the first six months, a similar pattern to that seen among all age groups.

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<sup>14</sup> In this section, for ease of analysis one year is assumed to be 365 days, six months is assumed to be half a year (182.5 days), and one month is assumed to be 31 days.

<sup>15</sup> Time since arrival into their current prison was chosen for this analysis because it was the most complete dataset. The three measures tended to show similar results.



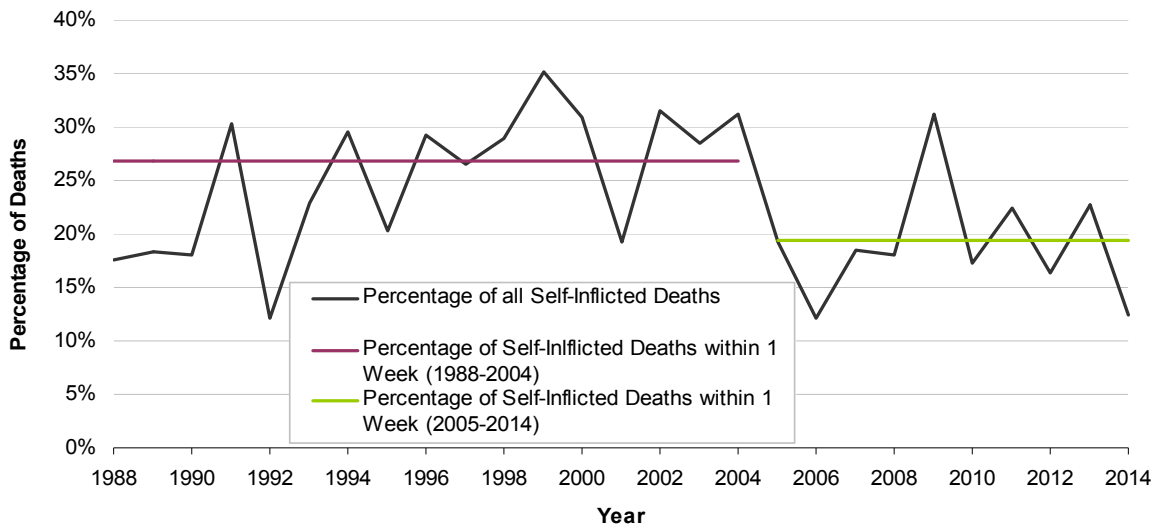
**Table 7.1: Elapsed Time since Arrival into Current Prison Prior to Self-Inflicted Death (1978-March 2014)**

<b>Days Elapsed</b>	<b>All Ages</b>		<b>Ages 18-24</b>	
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
0 days	35	2	12	3
1-2 days	193	11	59	13
3-7 days	194	11	44	10
<b>Total within first week</b>	<b>422</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>26</b>
Over a week to 1 month	325	19	86	20
<b>Total within first month</b>	<b>747</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>46</b>
Over 1 – 3 months	411	24	116	26
Over 3 – 6 months	259	15	62	14
<b>Total within first 6 months</b>	<b>1,417</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>379</b>	<b>86</b>
Over 6 months to 1 year	181	10	40	9
Over 1 year to 2 years	99	6	17	4
<b>Total within first 2 years</b>	<b>1,697</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>436</b>	<b>99</b>
Over 2 years to 5 years	44	3	3	1
Over 5 years to 10 years	6	<1	0	0
Over 10 years	2	<1	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,749</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>439</b>	<b>100</b>
Missing	290		83	

Figure 7.1 shows the proportion of all self-inflicted deaths that occurred within a week of reception into their current prison, from 1988 to March 2014. From 1988 to 2004, 27% of self-inflicted deaths occurred within the first week. Between 2004 and 2006 there was a sharp decline in the proportion of deaths occurring within the first week which was generally maintained up to March 2014. Between 2005 and March 2014, 19% of deaths occurred in the first week, a statistically significant difference of around seven percentage points compared to the time period '1988 to 2004'.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Splits to measure the changes between different years are shown in Annex E.

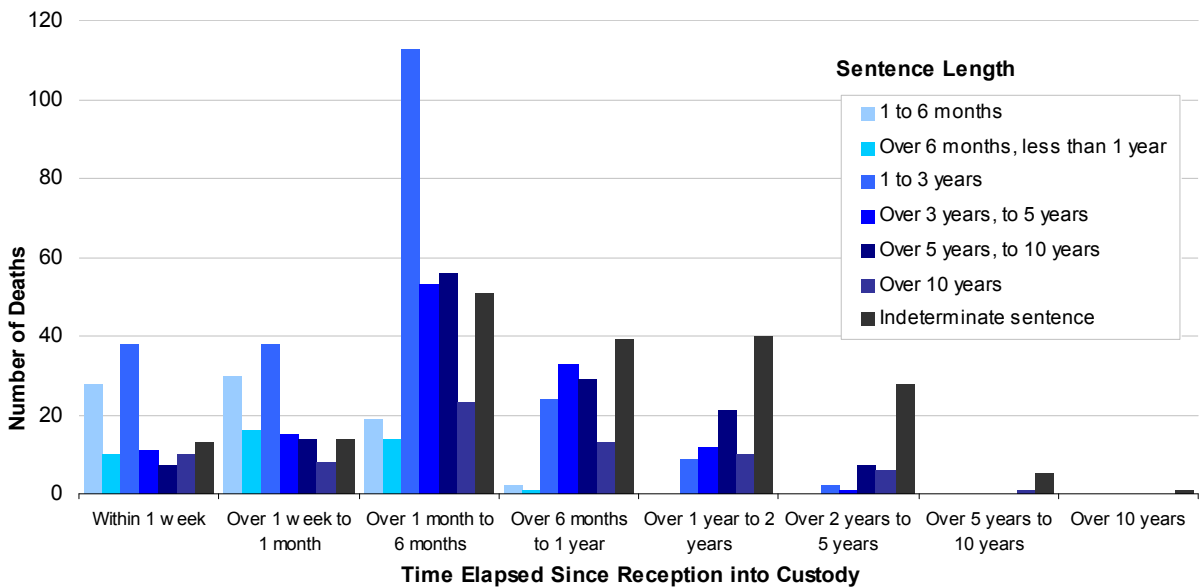
**Figure 7.1: Proportion of Self-Inflicted Deaths Occurring within One Week of Reception into their Current Prison (1988-March 2014)**



**Elapsed Time in Current Prison Prior to Self-Inflicted Death by Sentence Length**

Figure 7.2 shows the elapsed time spent in their current prison prior to self-inflicted death by sentence length. For sentence lengths of over a year, the highest proportion of self-inflicted deaths among sentenced prisoners occurred between one and six months after their arrival into their current prison (though this may be because this is the largest early time band). Self-inflicted deaths among prisoners with sentences that were less than a year were most likely within the time band of between a week and a month since arrival into their current prison.

**Figure 7.2: Elapsed Time in Prison Prior to Self-Inflicted Death by Sentence Length (1978-March 2014)**



The precise timing of a self-inflicted death after a prisoner is sentenced is difficult to predict with any degree of precision using the available data<sup>17</sup> (further detail in Annex F). Even when accounting for sentence length, sex, ethnicity, and age, the average time since sentencing was largely unexplained. When accounting for these factors, sentence length was significantly related to timing<sup>18</sup> – for every additional 100 days of sentence length, prisoners tended to take their lives around four to six days later<sup>19</sup>. This relationship, however, might not be entirely due to sentence length, as there may be other factors related to sentence length that have not been measured and that impact on the time since being sentenced. Additionally, the estimate may not be representative of all prisoners because it was affected by self-inflicted deaths of some prisoners that occurred very late in their sentence.

Table 7.2 shows the proportion of self-inflicted deaths occurring within a week of reception into the current prison with life sentences and Indeterminate Sentence Prisoners (ISP), and those with a sentence of Imprisonment for Public Protection (IPP) separated out<sup>20</sup>. Where a self-inflicted death occurred among prisoners sentenced to life/ISP/IPP, this was substantially less likely to occur during their first week in the current prison than for prisoners with other sentences. This difference did not, however, have a notable impact on the overall proportion of self-inflicted deaths occurring within a week. This is because those sentenced to life/ISP/IPP made up a relatively small proportion of self-inflicted deaths.

**Table 7.2: Proportion of Self-Inflicted Deaths Occurring within One Week of Arrival into Current Prison**

<b>Sentence Type</b>	<b>All Ages</b>	<b>Ages 18-24</b>
Life/ISP/IPP	1%	4%
All Other Sentences	25%	25%
All Sentences	22%	23%

### **Elapsed Time by Remand and Sentence Status**

Figure 7.3 shows the length of time that elapsed since arrival into their current prison for prisoners aged 18 to 24 who were either sentenced or on remand. Self-inflicted deaths among prisoners on remand appeared to occur within a shorter elapsed time, with over half occurring within the first month. By contrast, a third of self-inflicted deaths among sentenced prisoners occurred within a month.

This may be because prisoners on remand tend to have entered custody more recently than prisoners who have been sentenced. For example, many prisoners on their first day in custody are likely to be on remand, but it is unlikely someone who has been in custody for a year will still be on remand. Many prisoners who take their own lives after recently entering custody are therefore likely to be on remand, with those who do so after longer in custody being more likely to be sentenced.

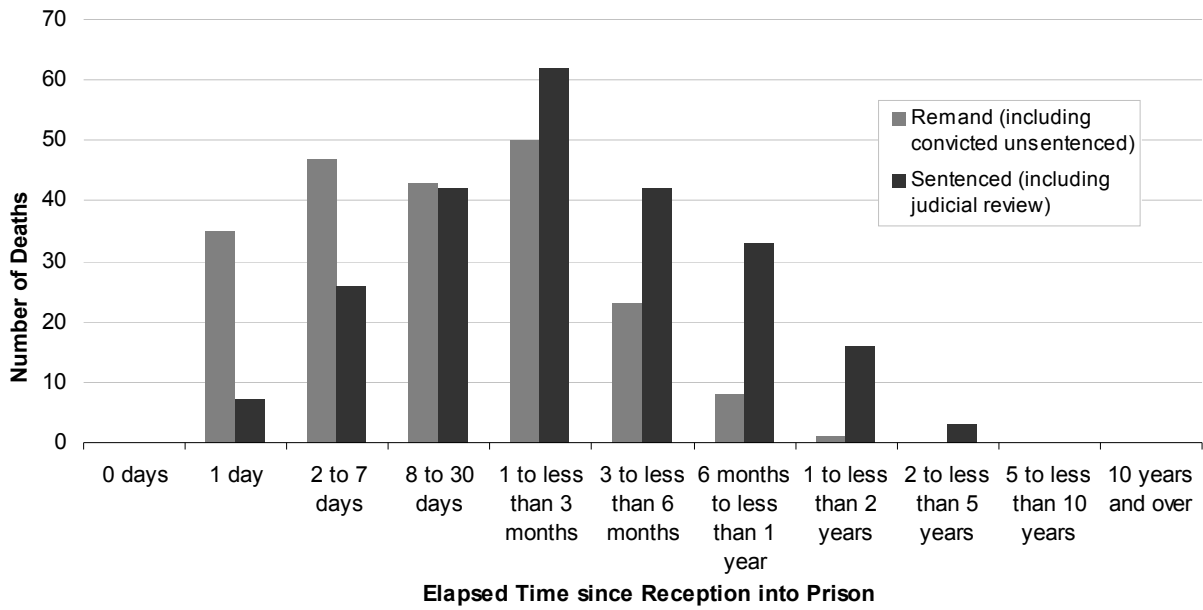
<sup>17</sup> This used regression analysis to take into account several different factors at once and isolate the relationships between these individual factors and the timing of self-inflicted death within a sentence.

<sup>18</sup> Age was also significantly associated with timing. See Annex F for further detail.

<sup>19</sup> These are the 95% confidence intervals. See Annex F for further detail.

<sup>20</sup> These figures are slightly different to those in Table 7.1 due to missing data on sentence type.

**Figure 7.3: Number of Self-Inflicted Deaths by Elapsed Time since Arrival into Current Prison and Sentence Status, 18-24 Year Olds (1978-March 2014)**



See Annex G for the length of time that elapsed since entry into custody for prisoners aged 18 to 24 who were either sentenced or on remand.

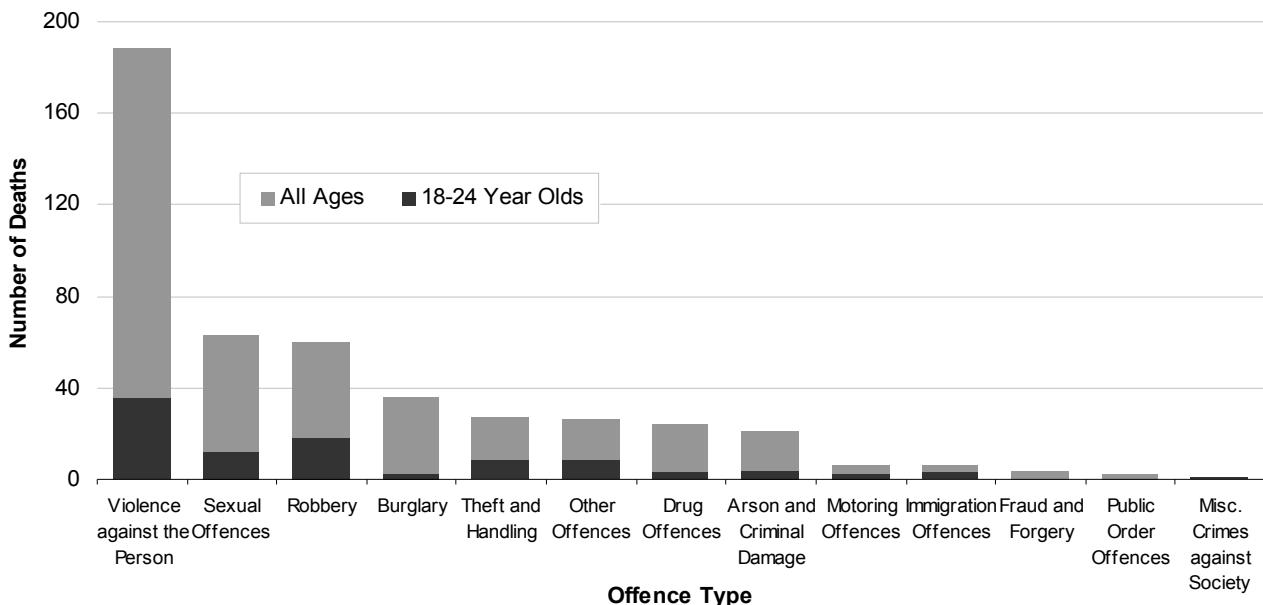
## 8. Self-Inflicted Deaths and Type of Offence Committed

### Key Point

Arson and criminal damage was the offence type with the highest rate of self-inflicted deaths, while constituting a small minority of all self-inflicted deaths overall. The offence type with the highest rate of self-inflicted deaths among 18-24 year olds was sexual offences.

Figure 8.1 shows the total number of self-inflicted deaths by the type of offence committed<sup>21</sup> by sentenced prisoners between 2002 and 2013. Prisoners convicted of violence against the person accounted for by far the highest number of self-inflicted deaths (both within the overall group and specifically among 18-24 year olds). It accounted for 41% of self-inflicted deaths in the time period for all ages and 36% for 18-24 year olds. Prisoners who had been convicted of sexual offences accounted for the second highest number of self-inflicted deaths overall, followed closely by robbery. Similarly, robbery accounted for the second highest number of self-inflicted deaths among 18-24 year olds, followed by sexual offences.

**Figure 8.1: Number of Self-Inflicted Deaths by Offence Group, Sentenced Prisoners Only (2002-2013)**



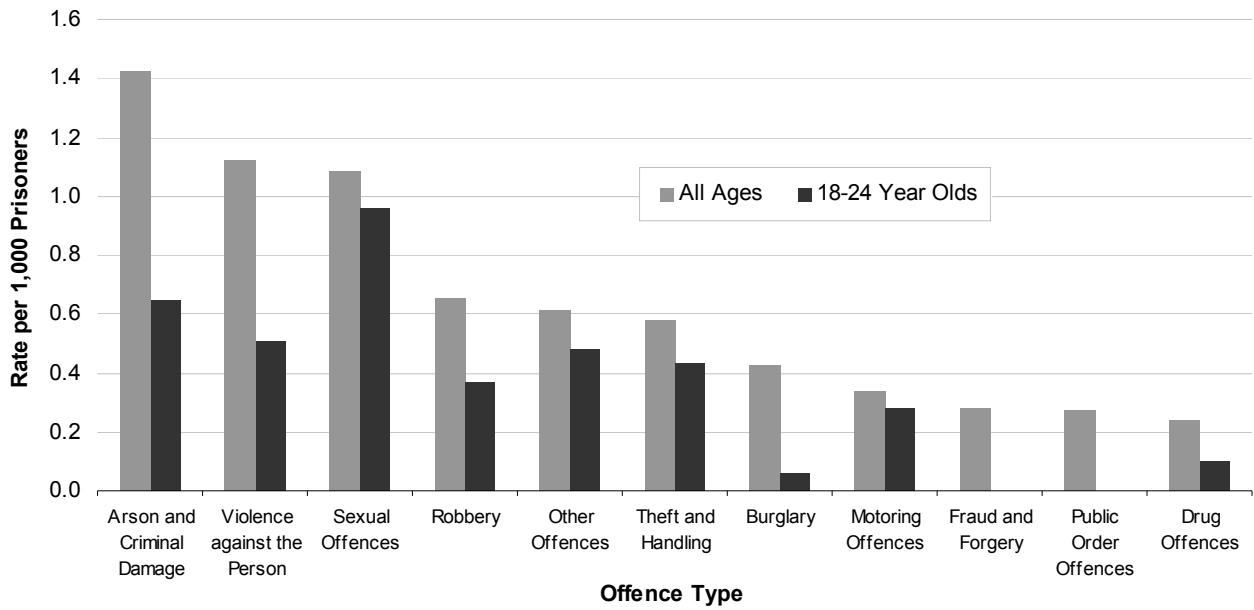
While constituting less than 5% of self-inflicted deaths, Figure 8.2<sup>22</sup> shows that the offence type with the highest rate of self-inflicted deaths overall was arson and criminal damage, with an average of 1.42 self-inflicted deaths per 1,000 prisoners who were sentenced for committing this offence. This was followed by violence against the person, with a rate of 1.12 self-inflicted deaths per 1,000 prisoners, and sexual offences, with a rate of 1.08 per 1,000 prisoners.

The offence type with the highest rate of self-inflicted deaths among 18-24 year olds was sexual offences, with an average of 0.96 self-inflicted deaths per 1,000 18-24 year old prisoners convicted of this offence per year. Arson and criminal damage was the offence type with the second highest rate of self-inflicted death among 18-24 year olds, with an average of 0.65 self-inflicted deaths per 1,000 prisoners per year.

<sup>21</sup> The offence type here is the primary offence for which a prisoner was serving a sentence.

<sup>22</sup> This does not include immigration offences or miscellaneous crimes against society because, due to categorisation, figures on total numbers of sentenced prisoners from 2002-2013 were not available.

**Figure 8.2: Rate per 1,000 Prisoners per Year of Self Inflicted Deaths by Offence Type, Sentenced Prisoners (2002-2013)**



## 9. Self-Inflicted Deaths among Male 18-20 Year Old Prisoners and Establishment Type

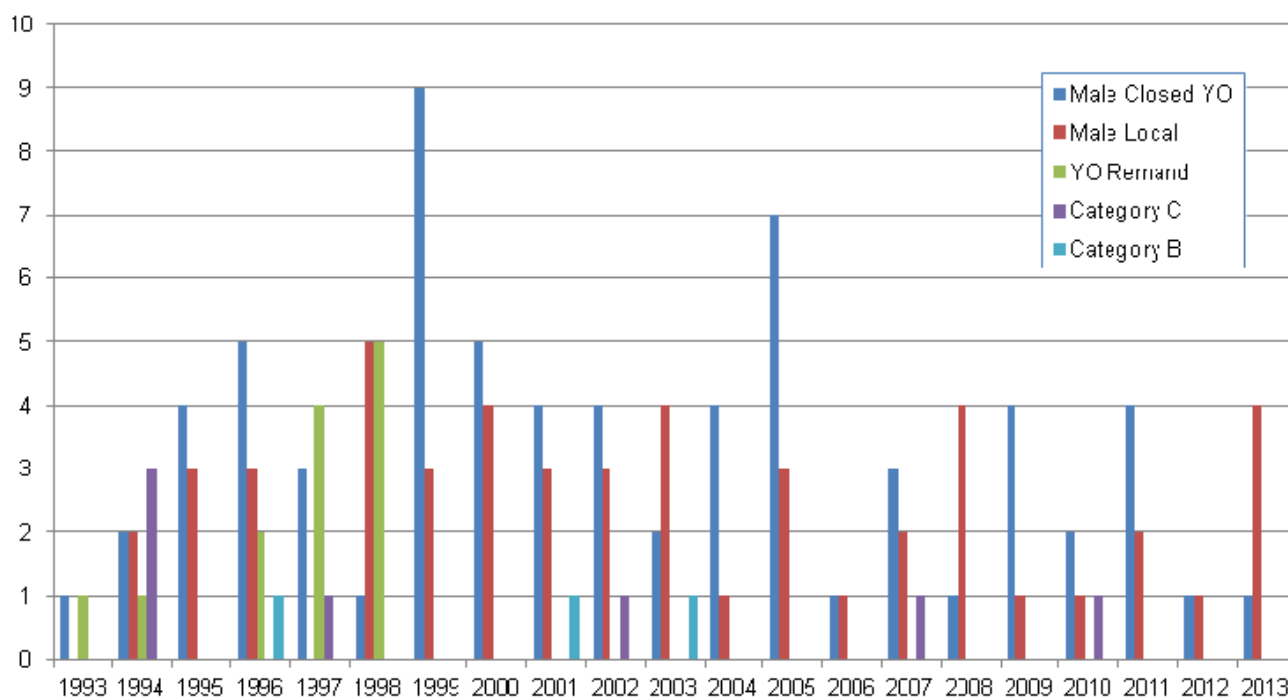
### Key Point

The rates of self-inflicted death in male local prisons and for establishments for young offenders were not significantly different.

Figure 9.1 shows the total number of self-inflicted deaths among 18-20 year old male prisoners by establishment type. Across the available time series, the highest proportion of self-inflicted deaths occurred in establishments for male closed young offender institutions (67 self-inflicted deaths out of 156 in total). Around a third of self-inflicted deaths (50) occurred within male local prisons.

Although it would have been valuable to compare the rates of self-inflicted deaths across establishments and establishment types for all ages, it has not been possible to do this. This is due to changes in the population and status within each establishment across time, and limited availability of data. It was, however, possible to compare rates for 18-20 year olds across establishment types.

**Figure 9.1: Number of 18-20 Year Old Male Self-Inflicted Deaths by Establishment Type (1993-2013)**



There were no statistically significant differences in the rate of self-inflicted deaths among 18-20 year olds across the different establishment types.<sup>23</sup> While the rate appeared to be higher within male local prisons, due to very small numbers, it is not possible to conclude whether the disparity is due to random variation or an underlying trend.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>23</sup> See Annex H for full tables.

<sup>24</sup> Rates for Male YOIs and Male Local Prisons were not significantly different and the difference had a p value of 0.11. The apparent, but not significant, difference is mainly caused by the unusually high number of self-inflicted deaths (four) in male local prisons in 2013. In the other years the establishment types have similar rates of self-inflicted deaths.

## 10. Self-inflicted Deaths and Time of Day, Day of the Week and Month

### Key Points

Incidents resulting in the self-inflicted death of prisoners of all ages were detected by staff slightly more frequently between 6.00am and 8.00am .

Numbers of self-inflicted deaths are interspersed fairly evenly across different days of the week and months of the year both for the overall group and specifically for 18-24 year olds.

Table 10.1 shows the different points in the day when self-inflicted deaths were recorded<sup>25</sup>, and does not necessarily represent the time at which the death occurred. The self-inflicted deaths of prisoners of all ages were found slightly more frequently between 6.00am and 11.59am (this may be because some deaths during the night are not detected until unlock or early morning checks. There were slightly fewer self-inflicted deaths detected in the evening (6.00pm-11.59pm).

Similarly, for 18-24 year olds the highest proportion of self-inflicted deaths were detected between 6.00am and 11.59am.

**Table 10.1: Breakdown of Self-Inflicted Deaths by Time of Day (2004-2014<sup>26</sup>)**

Time	All Ages		Ages 18-24	
	N	%*	N	%*
12.00am-5.59am	156	21	33	23
6.00am-11:59am	267	35	45	31
12.00pm-5.59pm	178	24	30	21
6.00pm-11.59pm	153	20	35	24
Total	754	100	143	100

\*Totals may not always sum due to rounding

Figure 10.1 shows the breakdown of self-inflicted deaths by each hour in the day from 2004 to 2014. The peaks in the early morning at around 5.00am-5.59am and 6.00am-6.59am are likely to include incidents resulting in a self-inflicted death which occurred over night but were only identified in the morning. Apart from this, there appear to be a slightly higher number of self-inflicted deaths which occur at around 8.00am-8.59am and again at 2.00pm-2.59pm. There was a similar pattern for 18-24 year olds.

<sup>25</sup> This uses the recorded time at which staff became aware of an incident which resulted in a self-inflicted death. It does not necessarily refer to the time at which the incident occurred, nor to the actual time of death, Self-inflicted deaths occurring overnight may not be detected until early in the morning at unlock or early morning checks. It is possible that someone could have taken their own life prior to being discovered, or that they survive after discovery and die from their attempt at a later point.

<sup>26</sup> This analysis includes deaths up to December 2014, rather than up to March 2014, as it was undertaken at a later point after much of the other analysis had been done.



**Figure 10.1: Number of Self-Inflicted Deaths by Time of Day (2004-2014)**

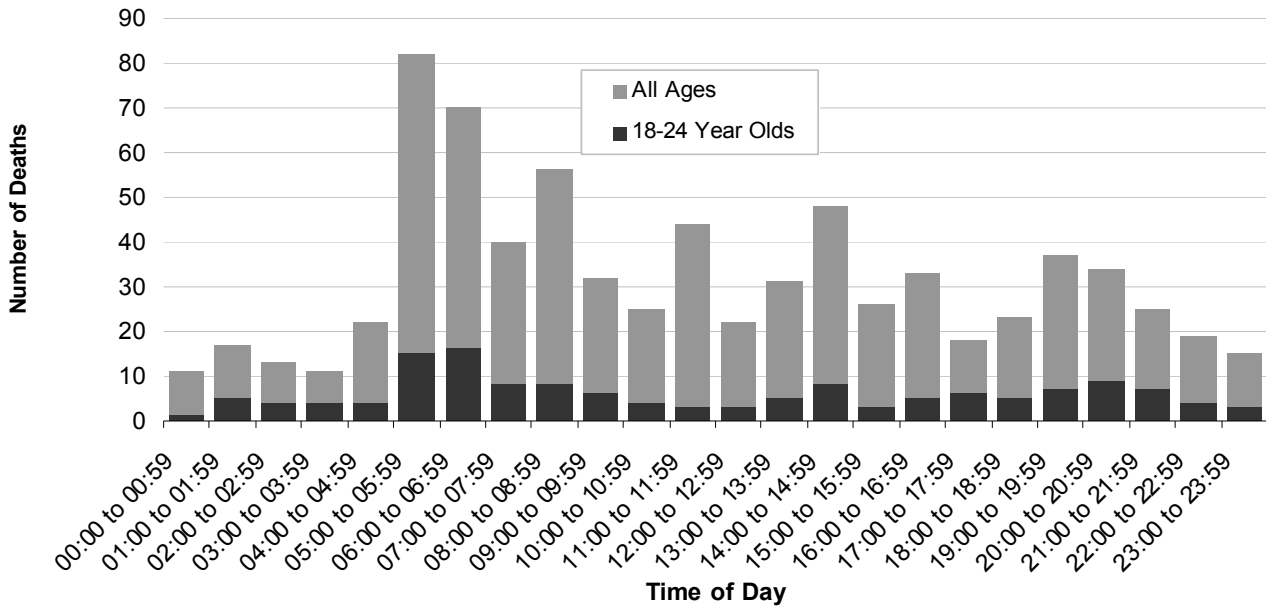


Figure 10.2 shows the breakdown of self-inflicted deaths by day of the week. Self-inflicted deaths occurred fairly evenly across different days of the week, both for the total population and for 18-24 year olds.

**Figure 10.2: Number of Self-Inflicted Deaths by Day of the Week (1978-March 2014)**

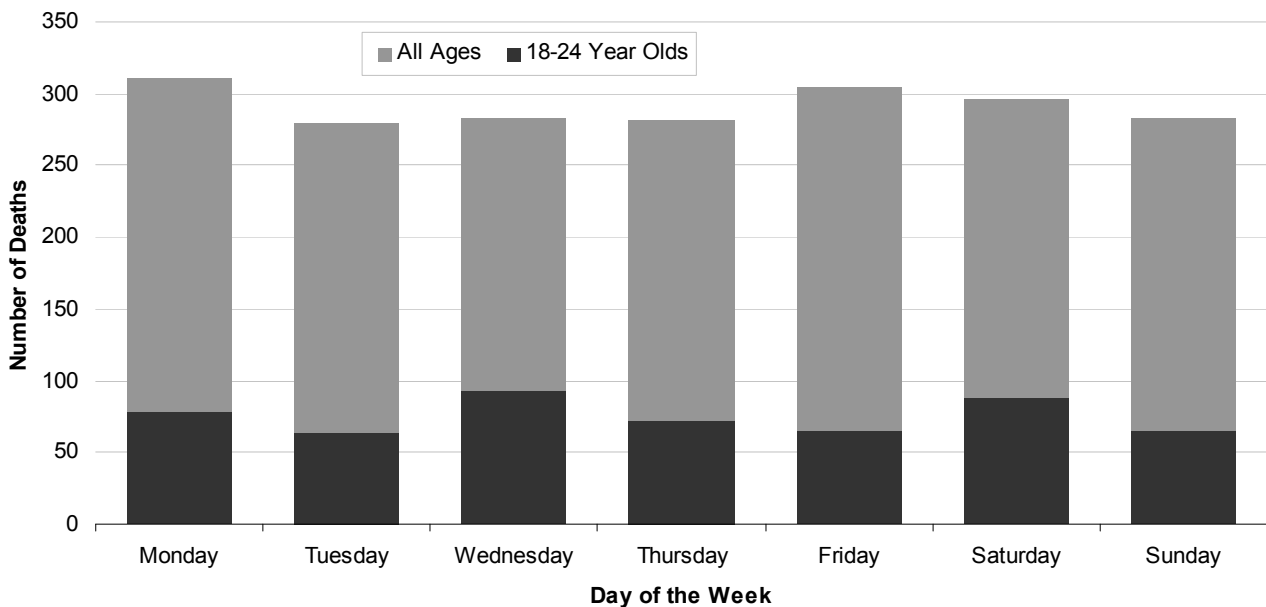
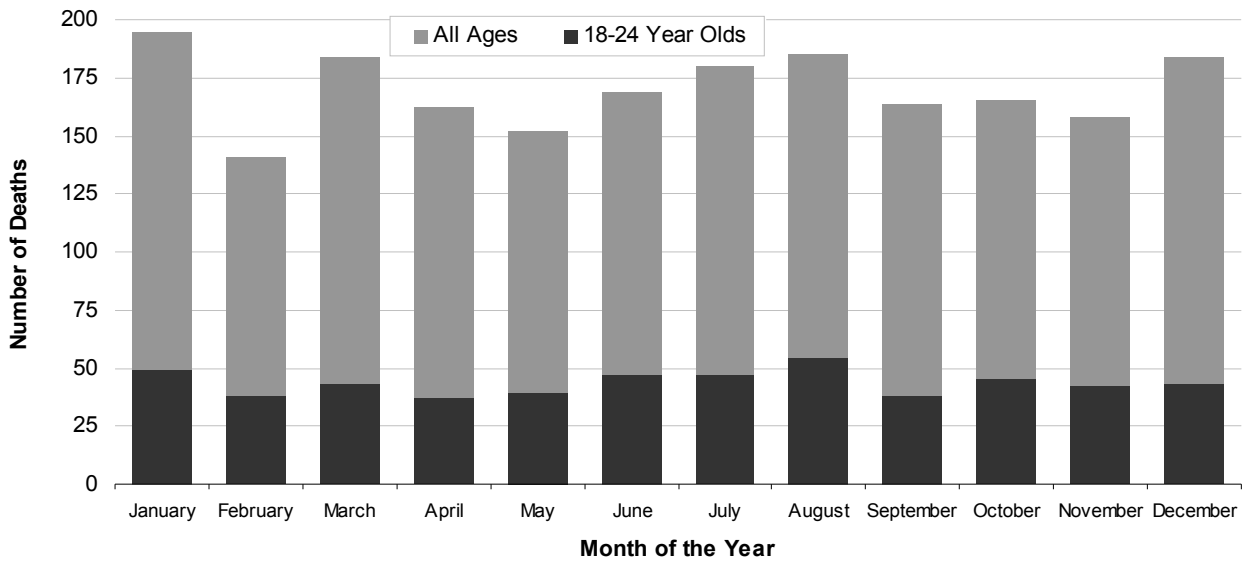


Figure 10.3 shows a breakdown of self-inflicted deaths by the month in which they occurred. The proportions of self-inflicted deaths are spread out fairly evenly across the year for the total population and for 18-24 year old prisoners.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>27</sup> The slight dip in February may be because of the slightly lower number of days within this month.

**Figure 10.3: Number of Self-Inflicted Deaths by Month of the Year (1978-March 2014)**



## 11. Location of Self-Inflicted Death

### Key Point

For all prisoners and 18-24 year olds, almost all self-inflicted deaths occurred in the prison, with a large majority taking place in a normal cell.

As Table 11.1 shows, almost all self-inflicted deaths occurred within the prison, with most of these occurring within normal cells. A much smaller proportion of self-inflicted deaths occurred within the prison health care and in segregation. Very few self-inflicted deaths occurred outside of the prison. This was the case both for the overall population and for 18-24 year olds.

**Table 11.1 Location of self-inflicted death (1978-March 2014)**

Location	All Ages		Ages 18-24	
	N	%*	N	%*
Prison: Normal cell	1,321	71	359	75
Prison: Health Care Centre	238	13	46	10
Prison: Segregation/CSU	147	8	29	6
Prison: Vulnerable Prisoners Unit	66	4	15	3
Prison: Reception/Induction/1st night centre	31	2	11	2
Prison: Elsewhere in prison	13	1	3	1
Prison: Detox/Drugs unit	14	1	1	<1
Prison: Safer Cell	1	<1	0	0
<b>Prison Total</b>	<b>1,831</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>464</b>	<b>97</b>
Elsewhere: Hospital	9	<1	4	1
Elsewhere: Court	14	1	3	1
Elsewhere: Outside prison	14	1	6	1
<b>Elsewhere Total</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,868</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>477</b>	<b>100</b>

\*Totals may not always sum due to rounding

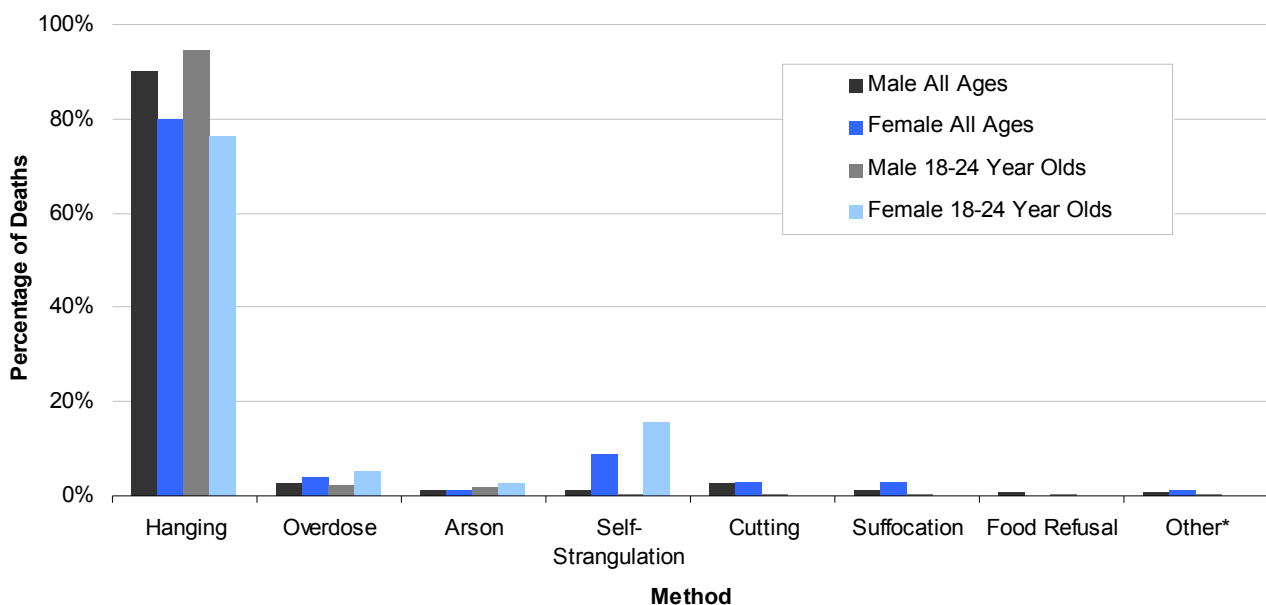
## 12. Method of Self-Inflicted Death

### Key Point

Hanging was the most frequent method used for both male and female prisoners. Bedding was the most frequently used ligature type by those who hanged themselves, and the most frequently used ligature point was a window.

Figure 12.1 shows that hanging was the most frequently used method of self-inflicted death by male and female prisoners (comprising 90% and 80% of self-inflicted deaths respectively). Apart from hanging, females were significantly more likely to be recorded as using self-strangulation compared to males<sup>28</sup>, with 9% of females using this method compared to 1% of males.

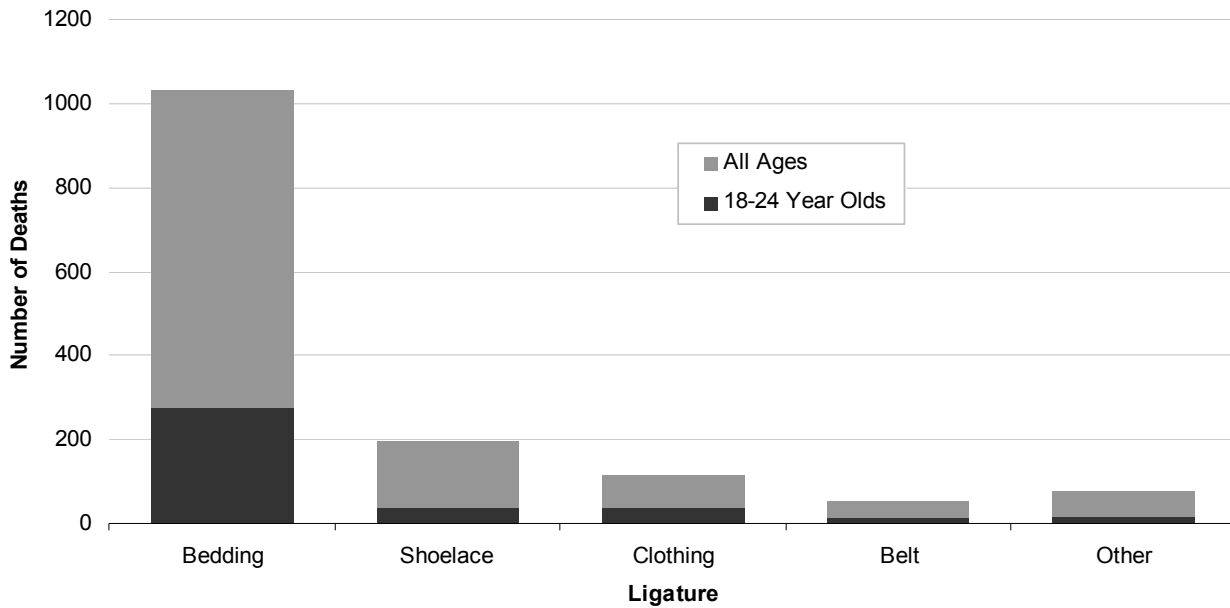
**Figure 12.1: Method of Self-Inflicted Death (1978-March 2014)**



\*Other includes falling, poison, electrocution, refusal of medication, and deaths awaiting further information at the time of recording.

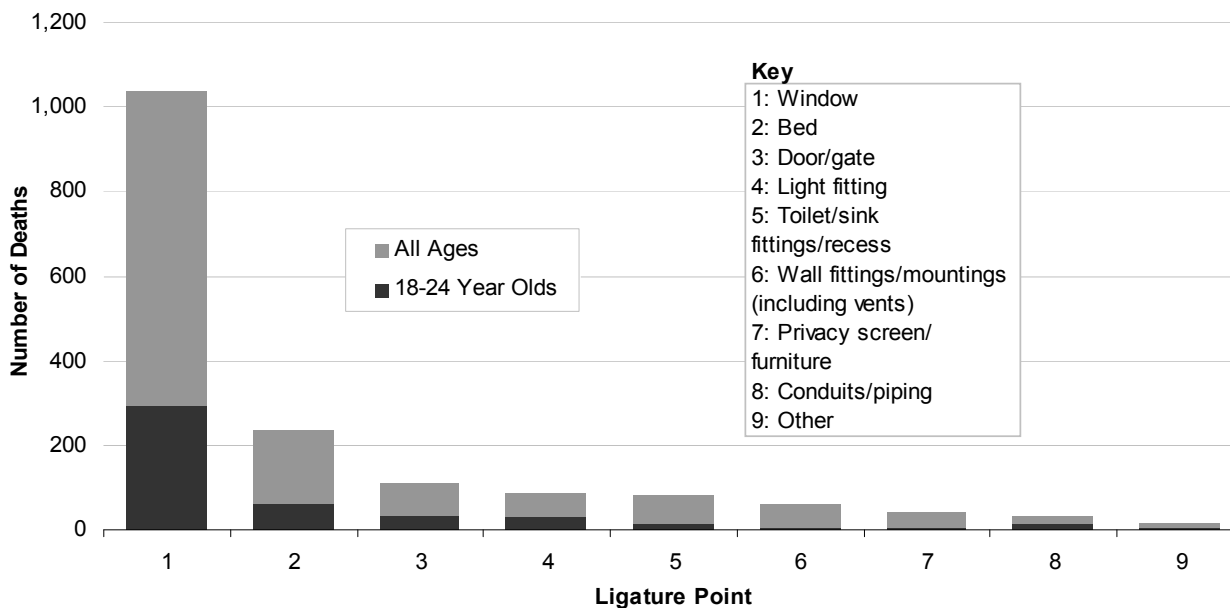
<sup>28</sup> The T statistic was 2.79, giving a significance level of over 99%.

**Figure 12.2: Number of Self-Inflicted Deaths through Hanging by Ligature Used (1978-March 2014)**



Bedding was the most frequently used ligature type for self-inflicted through hanging (1,034 overall, 276 for 18-24 year olds), as shown in Figure 12.2. Other ligatures used included shoelaces and clothing.

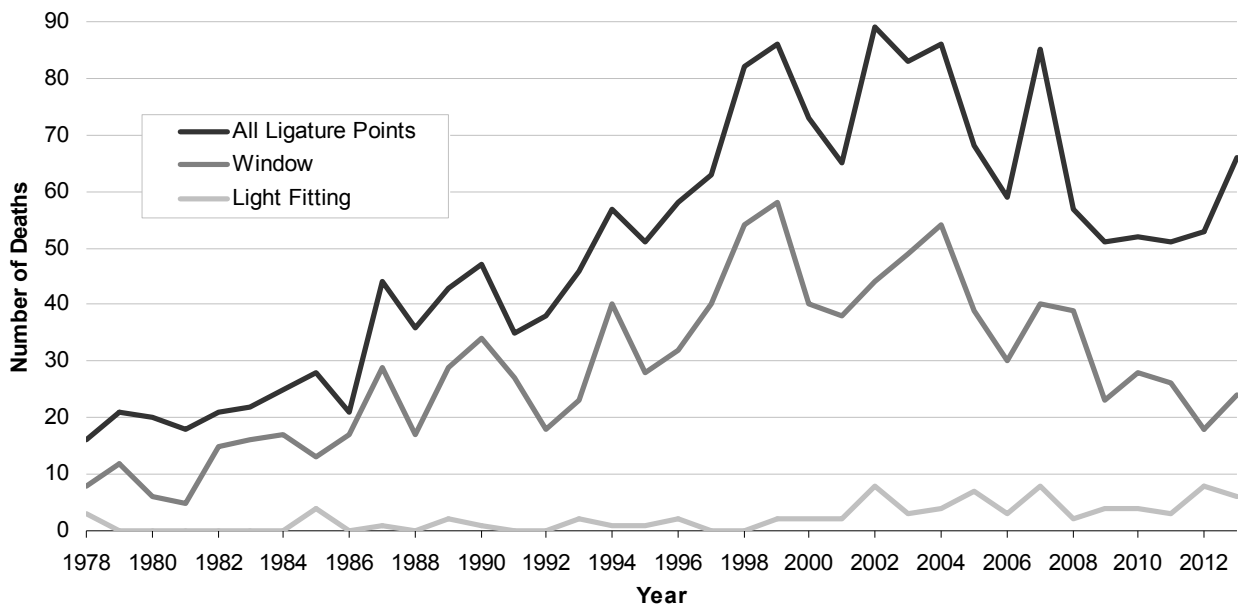
**Figure 12.3: Number of Self-Inflicted Deaths through Hanging by Ligature Point (1978-March 2014)**



As shown in Figure 12.3, the most frequently used ligature point, both for all ages and for 18-24 year olds, was a window (1,039 overall, 291 for 18-24 year olds), followed by beds and doors.

Figure 12.4 shows that the use of a window as a ligature point has generally declined since the peak in 1999 (where 58 deaths involved a window as a ligature point). It displays a similar pattern to all deaths involving hanging. Use of light fittings has become slightly more common since 2000, coinciding with the fall in the use of windows.

**Figure 12.4: Number of Deaths through Hangings by Ligature Point Used and Year**



### 13. Self-Inflicted Deaths and F2052SH/ACCT

#### Key Point

A higher proportion of female prisoners overall had been identified as being at risk at the time of their death in comparison to male prisoners.

A similar proportion of self-inflicted deaths among prisoners of all ages were on an F2052SH (i.e. identified as at risk from 1996 to 2006) as were on an ACCT (i.e. identified as at risk between 2007 and 2014). However, a higher proportion of 18-24 year olds were on an ACCT than an F2052SH.

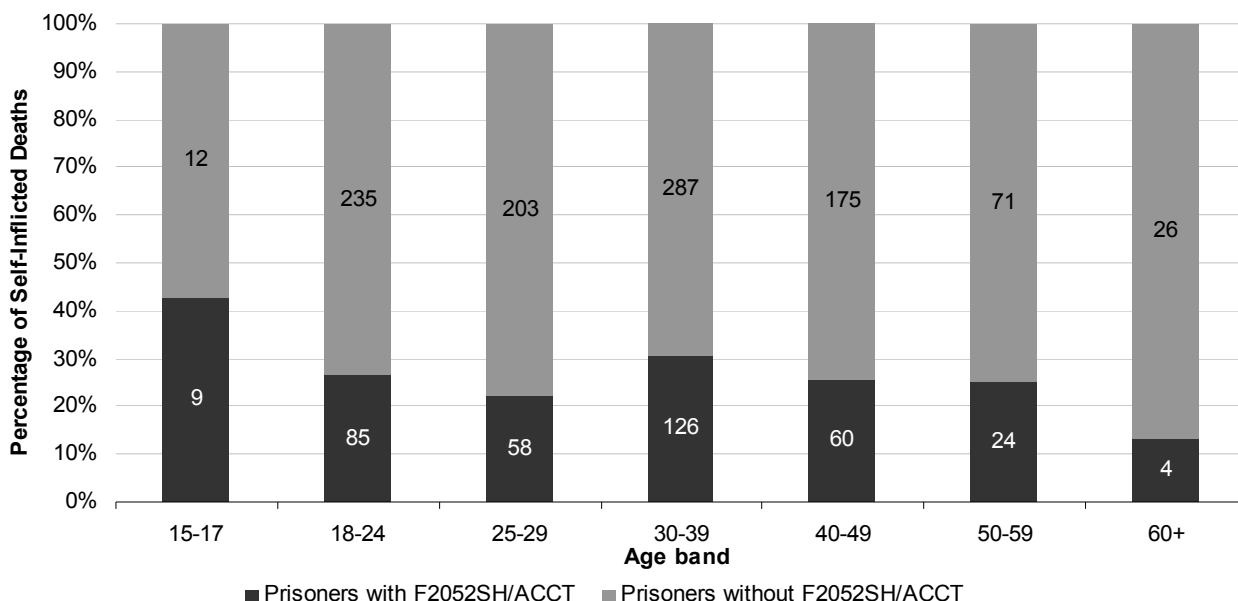
There was little difference between ethnicities in the proportion of prisoners identified as at risk at the time of their death.

F2052SH was a procedure used to monitor prisoners at risk of suicide or self-harm. It was introduced in 1995, with 1996 being the first full calendar year of use. This was replaced in 2007 by a procedure called Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork (ACCT).

Figure 13.1 shows the number and proportion of prisoners who were on an F2052SH or an ACCT at the time of their death by age band. It shows that, across the different age bands, the majority of prisoners were not identified as being at risk of self-harm at the time of their death.<sup>29</sup>

Based on the safety in custody dataset, we do not know whether the prisoners who were not on an open risk assessment at the time of their death may have previously been on one that had subsequently been closed. Furthermore, this data also does not tell us about the number of prisoners who were on an F2052SH/ACCT who did not take their own lives. The impact of F2052SH/ACCT therefore cannot be tested here.

**Figure 13.1: F2052SH/ ACCT Status by Age Band (1996-March 2014)**



<sup>29</sup> The proportion of 15-17 year olds identified as being at risk at the time of their death was not statistically significantly different to other age groups – the t statistic was 1.53 and the p value was 0.94.

## Self-Inflicted Deaths by F2052SH/ACCT and Gender

There were more male than female prisoners on an F2052SH/ACCT at the time of their death, reflecting the larger numbers in the prison population.

Figure 13.2 shows the total number of prisoners who were identified as being at risk at the time of their death and overall numbers of self-inflicted deaths by gender. A higher proportion of female prisoners had been identified as being at risk than male prisoners, with 49% of female prisoners and 25% of male prisoners identified as being at risk at the time of their death.

The average proportion of male prisoners who were on an F2052SH (i.e. between 1996 and 2006) at the time of their death was 24%, compared to 27% who were on an ACCT (i.e. between 2007-March 2014) at the time of their death. The average proportion of female prisoners who were on an F2052SH (i.e. between 1996 and 2006) at the time of their death was 49%, compared to 47% on an ACCT (i.e. between 2007-March 2014).

Over time, the proportion of male prisoners that were on an F2052SH/ACCT at the time of their death has varied from 16% in 1999 to 34% in 2013 without a clear trend. The proportion of female prisoners that were on an F2052SH/ACCT at the time of their death has varied between 0% and 100% at various times.<sup>30</sup>

This disparity likely reflects in part the higher rates of self-harm among female prisoners.<sup>31</sup> This increases the probability that female prisoners are identified as being at risk. Without overall numbers of prisoners who have ever been on an F2052SH/ACCT (and not just at the time of their death) it is not, however, possible to tell whether these figures reflect any differences between male and female prisons in managing prisoners who are at risk – i.e. whether male prisons are more successful at preventing self-inflicted deaths or whether female prisons are more adept at identifying prisoners who are at risk of self-inflicted death.

**Figure 13.2: Number of Self-Inflicted Deaths with F2052SH/ACCT by Gender (1996-2013)**

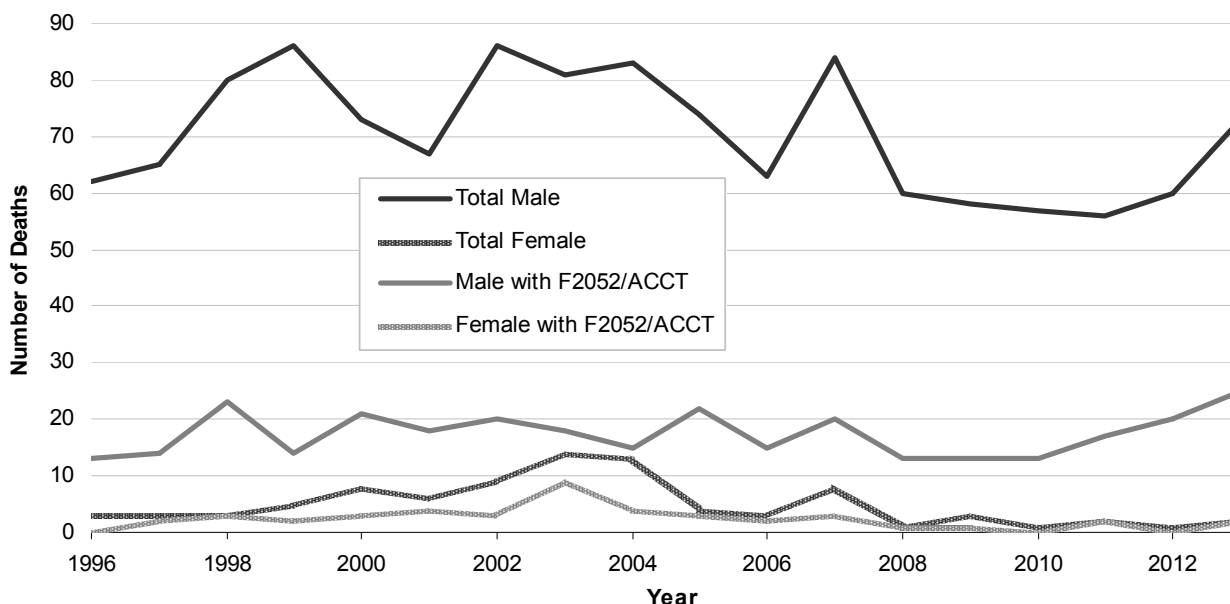


Figure 13.3 shows the number of self-inflicted deaths by gender for 18-24 year old prisoners and the number of those prisoners on an open risk assessment at the time of their death. This follows a similar pattern to the overall group, with a higher proportion of female 18-24 year old prisoners

<sup>30</sup> This variability is probably at least partly due to lower numbers of self-inflicted deaths among female prisoners.

<sup>31</sup> See Ministry of Justice statistics series on Safety in Custody, available at [www.gov.uk/government/collections/safety-in-custody-statistics](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/safety-in-custody-statistics).

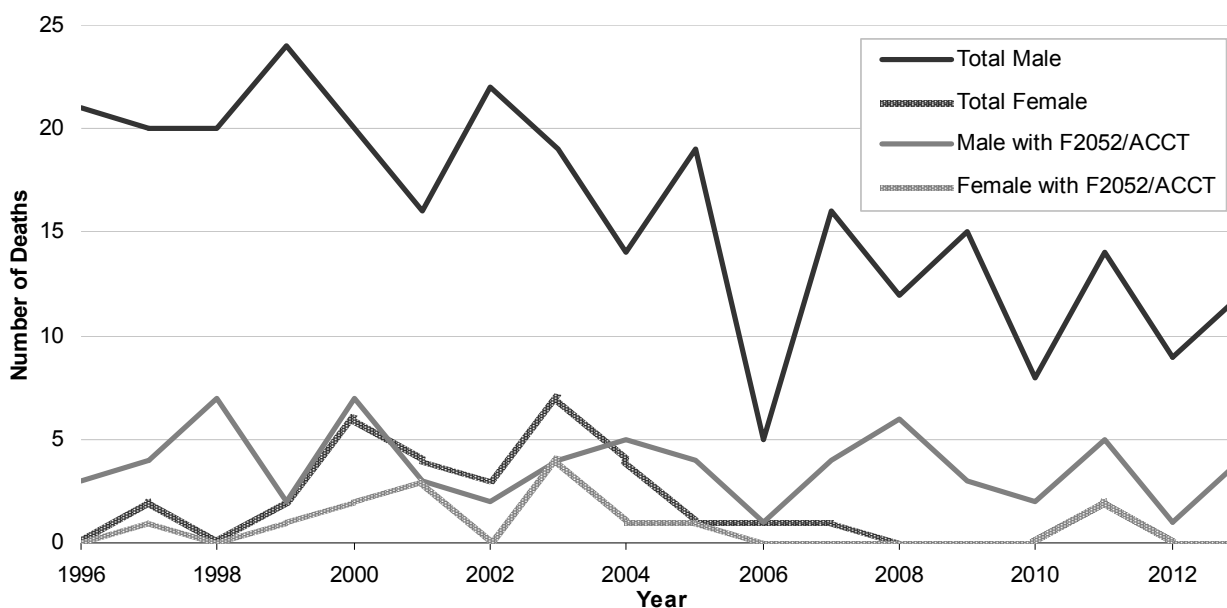


(relative to the total number of self-inflicted deaths) on a risk assessment compared to male 18-24 year old prisoners.

The proportion of male 18-24 year old prisoners who were on an F2052SH at the time of their death was 21%, compared to 31% of male prisoners who were on an ACCT. The proportion of female prisoners who were on an F2052SH at the time of their death was 43%, compared to 67% on an ACCT.

The proportion of male 18-24 year old prisoners that were on an F2052SH/ACCT at the time of their death has ranged from 8% in 1999 to 75% in 2014. The proportion of female prisoners that were on an F2052SH/ACCT at the time of their death ranged from 0% to 100% at various points over the time period.

**Figure 13.3: Number of Self Inflicted-Deaths with F2052SH/ACCT by Gender, 18-24 Year Olds (1996-2013)**



### Self-Inflicted Death and F2052SH/ACCT by Ethnicity

Figure 13.4 shows the overall numbers and proportions of prisoners who were identified as being at risk of self-harm at the time of their death by ethnicity. Due to low numbers no comparisons could be made for those of mixed ethnicity, caution should be used when interpreting figures for this group as a result of low numbers.<sup>32</sup> As above, however, it is difficult to explain these figures in further detail without complete records of all prisoners who have ever been on a risk assessment.

<sup>32</sup> The difference here between Asian and non-Asian prisoners was not statistically significant. It was not possible to test the difference for mixed ethnicity prisoners owing to small numbers within this group.

**Figure 13.4: Self-Inflicted Deaths by F2052SH/ACCT Status and Ethnicity (1996-March 2014)**

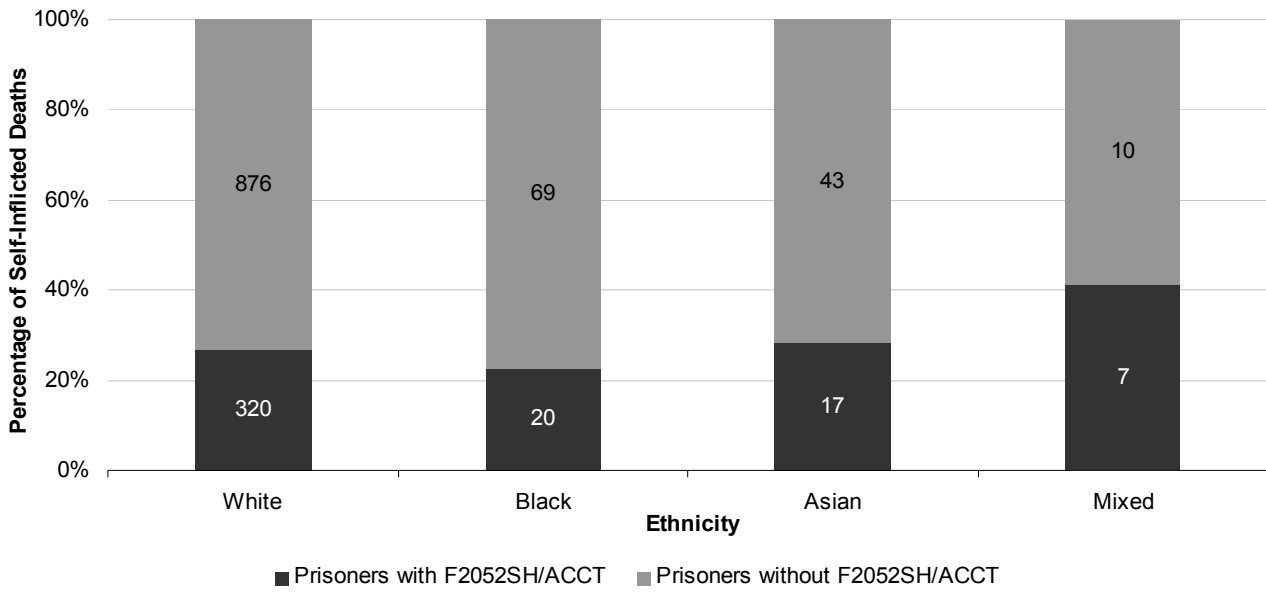
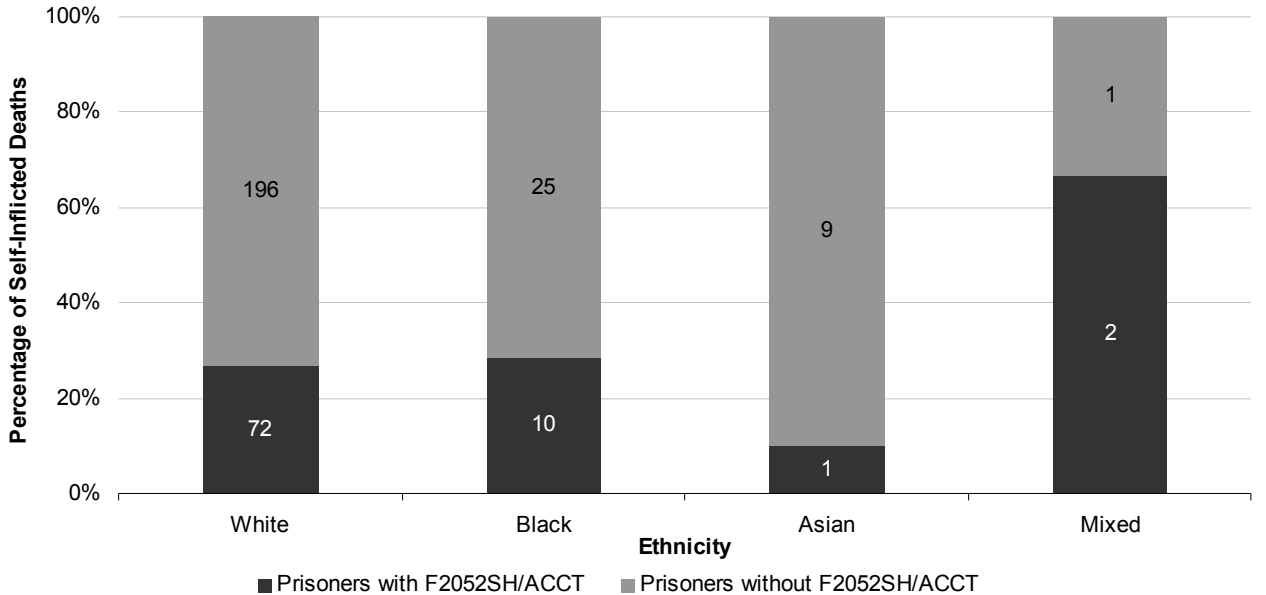


Figure 13.5 shows the total number and proportions of 18-24 year old prisoners who were on an open risk assessment at the time of their self-inflicted death by ethnicity. As with the overall group, just over a quarter of white 18-24 year old prisoners were on a risk assessment at the time of their death. The proportion of 18-24 Asian prisoners who were on a risk assessment appears to be slightly lower than for all ages, although caution is advised on drawing conclusions from this finding owing to small numbers.

**Figure 13.5: Self-Inflicted Deaths by F2052SH/ACCT Status and Ethnicity, 18-24 Year Olds (1996-March 2014)**



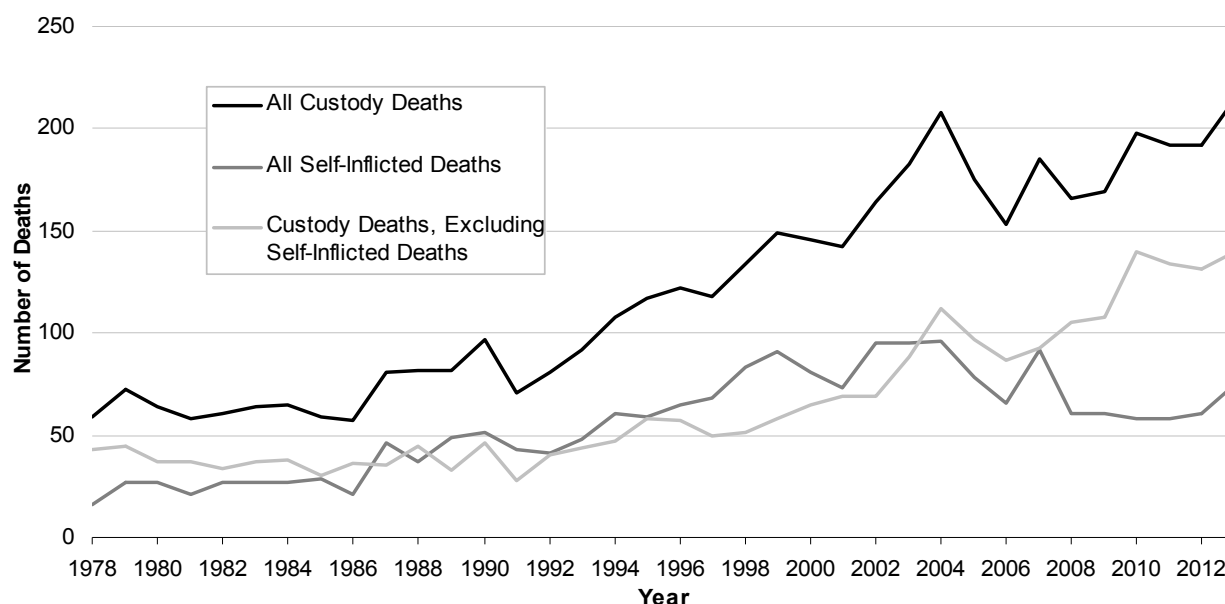
## Annex A: All Deaths in Custody

A death in prison custody is defined as ‘any death of a person in prison custody arising from an incident in or, on rare occasions, immediately prior to prison custody’. It includes self-inflicted deaths as well as deaths through natural causes, homicide, and deaths which have yet to be classified.

The total number of deaths in custody generally increased from 1978 to a peak of 208 deaths in 2004. The number of deaths in custody dropped substantially in the following two years, but has generally increased again since 2008, peaking again in 2013 with 215 deaths – the highest number across the time series.

Figure A.1 shows that from 1978 to 1996 the number of self-inflicted deaths was similar to the number of other custody deaths. From 1997 to 2000, the number of self-inflicted deaths was higher than other deaths in custody. This gap narrowed between 2001 and 2006. From 2008 onwards the number of self-inflicted deaths was substantially lower than other custody deaths.

**Figure A.1: Number of Deaths in Custody (1978-2013)**



### Deaths in Custody by Age Group

Table A.1 provides an overview of cause of death by age group from 1978 to March 2014.

The proportion of custody deaths through natural causes generally increased with age, with natural causes making up almost all custody deaths for those aged 60 and over, compared to less than one in five for those aged 15-17 years.

The highest proportion of custody deaths by homicide was among 15-17 year olds, with a total of four deaths making up 8% of all 15-17 year old custody deaths. This relatively high proportion was not due to high numbers of homicides among 15-17 year olds in comparison to other age groups, but because of lower numbers of deaths through other causes among this age group.

**Table A.1: Cause of Death by Age Group (1978- March 2014)\***

Cause of death	Ages 15-17		Ages 18-24		Ages 25-29		Ages 30-39		Ages 40-49		Ages 50-59		Ages 60+		Total	
	N	%*	N	%*	N	%*	N	%*	N	%*	N	%*	N	%*	N	%*
Self-inflicted	38	75	522	83	411	79	595	63	313	39	122	19	38	4	2,039	46
Natural Causes	9	18	79	13	88	17	280	30	447	56	515	80	804	95	2,222	50
Other/non-natural	0	0	19	3	12	2	46	5	19	2	7	1	4	<1	107	2
Homicide	4	8	11	2	8	2	21	2	11	1	2	<1	3	<1	60	1
<b>Total**</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>631</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>521</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>945</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>796</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>647</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>849</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>4,440</b>	<b>100</b>

\*Columns may not always sum due to rounding

\*\*Totals may not always sum due to missing data on the cause of death

**Table A.2: Rates of Death per 1,000 Prisoners by Age Group (2002-2013)\***

Cause of death	Ages 15-17	Ages 18-24	Ages 25-29	Ages 30-39	Ages 40-49	Ages 50-59	Ages 60+	All Ages
Self-inflicted	0.33	0.72	0.89	1.00	1.20	1.38	0.82	0.93
Natural Causes	0.00	0.08	0.14	0.45	1.60	4.65	19.37	1.27
Other/non-natural	0.00	0.02	0.03	0.11	0.09	0.10	0.11	0.06
Homicide	0.00	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.00	0.11	0.02
<b>Total*</b>	<b>0.33</b>	<b>0.82</b>	<b>1.09</b>	<b>1.59</b>	<b>2.94</b>	<b>6.13</b>	<b>20.40</b>	<b>2.29</b>

\*Totals may not always sum due to rounding

## Annex B: Self-Inflicted Deaths Tables by Gender, Year and Age Band

Table B.1: Number of Self-inflicted Deaths by Age Band (1978-2013)

Year	Ages 15-17	Ages 18-24	Ages 25-29	Ages 30-39	Ages 40-49	Ages 50-59	Ages 60+	Total
1978	1	2	4	7	2	0	0	16
1979	1	7	2	11	5	0	1	27
1980	0	7	7	9	3	1	0	27
1981	1	7	1	7	1	4	0	21
1982	0	12	3	5	5	1	1	27
1983	1	2	8	4	9	3	0	27
1984	1	9	4	8	3	1	1	27
1985	0	8	5	10	5	0	1	29
1986	0	10	6	3	1	0	1	21
1987	1	12	11	17	4	1	0	46
1988	2	15	7	6	4	2	1	37
1989	0	21	14	7	4	2	1	49
1990	3	12	14	14	3	4	1	51
1991	1	11	10	13	6	2	0	43
1992	1	19	5	10	5	1	0	41
1993	1	9	15	15	6	2	0	48
1994	2	18	19	13	8	1	0	61
1995	1	18	14	21	3	2	0	59
1996	1	21	17	14	8	3	1	65
1997	1	22	14	19	8	3	1	68
1998	3	20	18	33	6	2	1	83
1999	2	26	21	33	8	1	0	91
2000	3	26	13	26	10	2	1	81
2001	3	20	13	19	14	3	1	73
2002	2	25	16	29	16	6	1	95
2003	0	26	17	30	16	5	1	95
2004	0	18	20	34	18	5	1	96
2005	2	20	12	28	10	4	2	78
2006	0	6	10	28	12	7	3	66
2007	1	17	18	27	22	4	3	92
2008	0	12	17	14	9	7	2	61
2009	0	15	10	14	13	7	2	61
2010	0	8	10	12	17	9	2	58
2011	1	16	9	13	14	5	0	58
2012	2	9	6	16	15	10	3	61
2013	0	12	14	19	17	10	3	75
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>518</b>	<b>404</b>	<b>588</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>2,014</b>

**Table B.2: Number of Male Self-Inflicted Deaths by Year and Age Band (1978-2013)**

Year	Ages 15-17	Ages 18-24	Ages 25-29	Ages 30-39	Ages 40-49	Ages 50-59	Ages 60+	Total
1978	1	2	4	7	1	0	0	15
1979	1	7	2	11	5	0	1	27
1980	0	7	7	9	3	1	0	27
1981	1	6	1	7	1	4	0	20
1982	0	12	3	5	5	1	1	27
1983	1	2	8	4	9	3	0	27
1984	1	9	4	8	3	1	1	27
1985	0	8	5	10	4	0	1	28
1986	0	9	6	3	1	0	1	20
1987	1	12	10	17	4	1	0	45
1988	2	15	7	6	4	2	1	37
1989	0	20	13	7	4	2	1	47
1990	3	12	14	13	3	4	1	50
1991	1	11	10	13	6	2	0	43
1992	1	18	5	9	5	1	0	39
1993	1	9	15	15	5	2	0	47
1994	2	17	19	13	8	1	0	60
1995	1	18	13	20	3	2	0	57
1996	1	21	16	12	8	3	1	62
1997	1	20	14	19	7	3	1	65
1998	3	20	17	31	6	2	1	80
1999	2	24	20	31	8	1	0	86
2000	3	20	12	25	10	2	1	73
2001	3	16	13	18	13	3	1	67
2002	2	22	14	27	15	5	1	86
2003	0	19	14	28	14	5	1	81
2004	0	14	17	30	16	5	1	83
2005	2	19	11	26	10	4	2	74
2006	0	5	9	28	11	7	3	63
2007	1	16	15	24	21	4	3	84
2008	0	12	17	13	9	7	2	60
2009	0	15	10	12	12	7	2	58
2010	0	8	10	11	17	9	2	57
2011	1	14	9	13	14	5	0	56
2012	2	9	6	16	15	9	3	60
2013	0	12	14	18	16	10	3	73
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>480</b>	<b>384</b>	<b>559</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>1,911</b>

**Table B.3: Number of Female Self-Inflicted Deaths by Year and Age Band (1978-2013)**

Year	Ages 15-17	Ages 18-24	Ages 25-29	Ages 30-39	Ages 40-49	Ages 50-59	Ages 60+	Total
1978	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
1979	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1980	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1981	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
1982	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1983	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1984	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1985	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
1986	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
1987	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
1988	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1989	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
1990	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
1991	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1992	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	2
1993	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
1994	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
1995	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	2
1996	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	3
1997	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	3
1998	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	3
1999	0	2	1	2	0	0	0	5
2000	0	6	1	1	0	0	0	8
2001	0	4	0	1	1	0	0	6
2002	0	3	2	2	1	1	0	9
2003	0	7	3	2	2	0	0	14
2004	0	4	3	4	2	0	0	13
2005	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	4
2006	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	3
2007	0	1	3	3	1	0	0	8
2008	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
2009	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	3
2010	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
2011	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
2012	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
2013	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	2
Total	0	38	20	29	14	2	0	103

## Annex C: Rates of Self-Inflicted Deaths for Male and Female Offenders per 1,000 Prisoners by Age Band

**Table C.1: Rates of Self-Inflicted Deaths for Male and Female Offenders per 1,000 within the Prison Population by Age Band (2002-2013)**

<i>Male</i>														
<b>Age Band</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2002-2013</b>	<b>2009-2013</b>
15-17	0.81	0.00	0.00	0.89	0.00	0.42	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.64	1.59	0.00	0.34	0.41
18-24	1.10	0.94	0.71	0.97	0.26	0.79	0.57	0.69	0.37	0.66	0.44	0.65	0.67	0.56
25-29	1.10	1.08	1.29	0.82	0.64	1.06	1.14	0.68	0.67	0.61	0.40	0.95	0.86	0.66
30-39	1.42	1.39	1.46	1.26	1.36	1.19	0.63	0.59	0.52	0.61	0.74	0.82	0.99	0.66
40-49	1.91	1.63	1.72	0.97	0.99	1.77	0.71	0.92	1.26	1.01	1.05	1.13	1.21	1.08
50-59	1.58	1.52	1.46	1.08	1.75	0.92	1.55	1.48	1.76	0.89	1.47	1.55	1.41	1.43
60+	0.67	0.65	0.61	1.14	1.57	1.39	0.86	0.81	0.72	0.00	0.94	0.89	0.83	0.68

<i>Female</i>														
<b>Age Band</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2002-2013</b>	<b>2009-2013</b>
15-17	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
18-24	2.22	5.31	3.28	0.86	0.93	0.99	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.21	0.00	0.00	1.51	0.46
25-29	2.29	3.13	3.21	1.09	1.09	3.48	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.27	0.00
30-39	1.49	1.37	2.93	1.41	0.00	2.31	0.74	1.57	0.81	0.00	0.00	0.79	1.13	0.63
40-49	1.88	3.32	3.09	0.00	1.34	1.35	0.00	1.26	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.19	1.01	0.48
50-59	6.45	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.88	0.00	0.67	0.64
60+	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00



## Annex D: Elapsed Time Prior to Self-Inflicted Death

Table D.1 shows the length of time that elapsed prior to self-inflicted death since arriving into custody, into prison and after being sentenced. Figure D.2 shows only prisoners aged 18-24. 'Arrival into custody' refers to when a prisoner first entered any prison on their current sentence. 'Arrival into prison' refers to when a prisoner entered the current prison for either their current sentence or a previous sentence (if there was no break between the sentences).

**Table D.1: Elapsed Time Prior to Self-Inflicted Death for All Ages (1978-March 2014)**

<b>Time Elapsed</b>	<b>Since Arrival into Custody</b>		<b>Since Arrival into Prison</b>		<b>Since Being Sentenced</b>	
	<b>N</b>	<b>%*</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%*</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%*</b>
0 days	27	2	35	2	6	1
1 - 2 days	152	9	193	11	31	3
3 - 7 days	145	8	194	11	42	5
<b>Total within first week</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>422</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>9</b>
Over a week to 1 month	234	14	325	19	100	11
<b>Total within first month</b>	<b>558</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>747</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>20</b>
Over 1 – 3 months	287	17	411	24	133	15
Over 3 – 6 months	221	13	259	15	114	13
<b>Total within first 6 months</b>	<b>1,066</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>1,417</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>426</b>	<b>47</b>
Over 6 months to 1 year	201	12	181	10	118	13
Over 1 year to 2 years	176	10	99	6	121	13
<b>Total within first 2 years</b>	<b>1,443</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>1,697</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>665</b>	<b>73</b>
Over 2 years to 5 years	141	8	44	3	117	13
Over 5 years to 10 years	79	5	6	0	70	8
Over 10 years	62	4	2	0	59	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,725</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,749</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>911</b>	<b>100</b>
Missing	314		290		1,128**	

\*Totals may not sum due to rounding

\*\*Not all prisoners had been sentenced at the time of their death, so this data is not necessarily missing

**Table D.2: Elapsed Time Prior to Self-Inflicted Death for 18-24 Year Olds (1978-March 2014)**

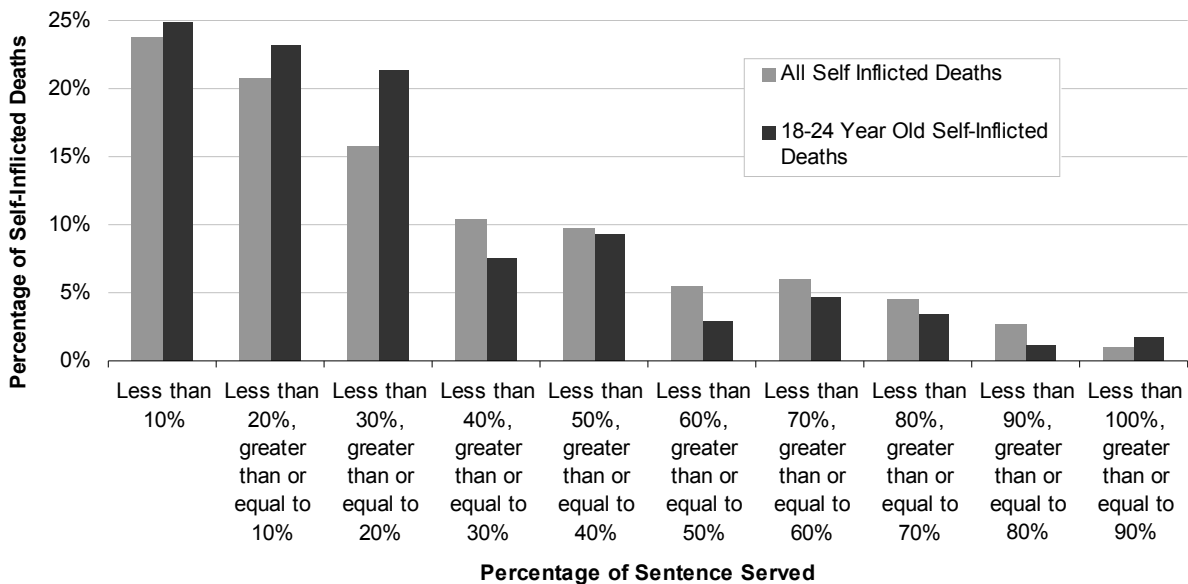
Time Elapsed	Since Arrival into Custody		Since Arrival into Prison		Since Being Sentenced	
	N	%*	N	%*	N	%*
0 days	10	2	12	3	1	<0
1 - 2 days	50	12	59	13	12	5
3 - 7 days	29	7	44	10	7	3
Total within first week	89	21	115	26	20	9
Over a week to 1 month	59	14	86	20	40	18
Total within first month	148	34	201	46	60	27
Over 1 – 3 months	89	21	116	26	40	18
Over 3 – 6 months	58	13	62	14	39	18
Total within first 6 months	295	69	379	86	139	63
Over 6 months to 1 year	64	15	40	9	36	16
Over 1 year to 2 years	42	10	17	4	25	11
Total within first 2 years	401	93	436	99	200	91
Over 2 years to 5 years	21	5	3	1	15	7
Over 5 years to 10 years	7	2	0	0	6	3
Over 10 years	1	<0	0	0	0	0
Total	430	100	439	100	221	100
Missing	92		83		301*	

\*Totals may not sum due to rounding

\*\*Not all prisoners had been sentenced at the time of their death, so this data is not necessarily missing

Figure D.1 shows the proportion of the prisoners' sentences that had been served since arrival into custody prior to self-inflicted death<sup>33</sup>. For the overall group and for 18-24 year olds, around a quarter (24% and 25%, respectively) took their own lives after serving less than 10% of their prison sentence. The proportions largely decreased with time served.

**Figure D.1: Number of Self-Inflicted Deaths by Proportion of Sentence Served Since Entry into Custody (1978-March 2014)**



<sup>33</sup> This excludes prisoners on indeterminate sentences (as it is not possible to calculate a fraction of their sentence) and prisoners who are recorded as serving more than 100% of their sentences, which indicates a data error.

## Annex E: Proportion of Self-Inflicted Deaths Occurring within One Week

Table E.1 shows the proportion of self-inflicted deaths occurring within one week of reception into prison for different time periods. It shows that comparing the period 1988-2004 with 2005-March 2014 gives the largest and most statistically significant difference. All differences with a T statistic of more than 1.96 are considered statistically significant<sup>34</sup>. It appears that there was a change in the proportion of self-inflicted deaths occurring within a week in the early 2000s.

**Table E.1: Difference between Time Periods in the Proportion of Self-Inflicted Deaths for All Ages Occurring within One Week**

Time Periods Compared	Time Period 1	Time Period 2	Percentage Point Difference*	T Statistic
1988-2002 and 2003-March 2014	26%	22%	4%	2.14**
1988-2003 and 2004-March 2014	26%	21%	5%	2.66**
1988-2004 and 2005-March 2014	27%	19%	7%	3.61**
1988-2005 and 2006-March 2014	26%	19%	7%	3.27**
1988-2006 and 2007-March 2014	26%	20%	5%	2.35**
1988-2007 and 2008-March 2014	25%	21%	4%	1.80
1988-2008 and 2009-March 2014	25%	21%	3%	1.36
1988-2009 and 2010-March 2014	25%	19%	6%	2.23**
1988-2010 and 2011-March 2014	25%	20%	5%	1.73
1988-2011 and 2012-March 2014	25%	19%	6%	1.81
1988-2012 and 2013-March 2014	24%	20%	4%	1.00
1988-2013 and 2014-March 2014	24%	13%	12%	1.73

\*Differences may not always sum due to rounding

\*\*Statistically significant for a two-way 95% confidence interval

<sup>34</sup> This is at the 95% confidence level with a two-tailed test.

## Annex F: Regression Analysis of Elapsed Time since Sentencing

Regression analysis in Table F.1 allowed some examination of the factors that are linked to the timings of self-inflicted deaths. This measures the time since the prisoner was sentenced. The impacts of the sentence length and the sex, ethnicity, and age of the prisoner on the number of days served since sentencing were considered<sup>35</sup>.

### Data

Of the 2,039 self-inflicted deaths from 1978 to March 2014, 852 (or 42%) had recorded sentencing dates. Of those, 31 implied they had served over 100% of their sentence, indicating the data was incorrect. These were removed from the analysis, leaving 821 observations. The analysis assumes the data were missing completely at random (MCAR) and the likelihood of missing data did not correlate with the other variables. If the data were not MCAR, this could distort the results of the regression.

### Results

The impact of sentence length in days was significant at the 99% level. On average, increasing the sentence length by 100 days increased the time between sentencing and self-inflicted death by five days.

This may, however, be skewed by unusually large values, as self-inflicted deaths tend to occur close to the start of a sentence, with a long tail making the mean time and proportion of sentence served larger than the median.

Age was also significant at the 99% level, with each additional year of age associated with self-inflicted death occurring around 36 days later. This may not indicate that age causes later timings, however. Prisoners who take their own lives after a long time in prison are likely to be older than the majority of prisoners – prisoners are very unlikely to have spent 10 years in prison if they are aged 18-24.

At the 95% confidence level, white prisoners tended to take their own lives later than those not classed as white or black (defined as 'other' category). The difference between white and black prisoners, and between black and other prisoners, was not significant.

Female prisoners tended to take their own lives around 307 days earlier than male prisoners, but (possibly due to small sample sizes) this was not statistically significant.

### Limitations

This analysis only provides a limited explanation for why prisoners who take their own lives do so at particular points in their sentences. The low  $R^2$  of around 0.34 indicates that other factors not captured here are also important.

Additionally, the regression only measures associations and not causal relationships. It is possible that, for example, an unobserved factor causally influenced the point at which someone took their own life and was correlated with age. Because that factor is not included

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<sup>35</sup> Earlier regressions also included whether the prisoner was religious and whether they were from another country, but this data was often missing, leading to anomalous results. As these variables had little impact on the  $R^2$  and coefficients of the other variables, they were removed from the final regression.

in this regression, it appears instead that age was important. The model is therefore constrained by the limited number of variables used.

Finally, this analysis only considers time elapsed since sentencing. It is possible different results may emerge if time since entry into custody or since entry into the prison that recorded the self-inflicted death is used instead. These modifications are not, however, expected to substantially change the results.

**Table F.1: Regression Statistics**

SUMMARY OUTPUT						
<i>Regression Statistics</i>						
Multiple R		0.586				
R <sup>2</sup>		0.344				
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>		0.340				
Standard Error		1367.622				
Observations		821				

ANOVA						
	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>	
Regression	5	797,803,256	159,560,651	85.309	0.000	
Residual	815	1,524,366,850	1,870,389			
Total	820	2,322,170,105				

	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>Lower 95%</i>	<i>Upper 95%</i>
Intercept***	-1144.536	237.270	-4.824	0.000	-1609.585	-679.487
Sentence length (days)***	0.050	0.003	15.230	0.000	0.043	0.056
Sex (0=Male, 1=Female)	-306.656	188.425	-1.627	0.052	-675.970	62.657
White**	380.160	193.735	1.962	0.025	0.439	759.880
Black	101.533	265.341	0.383	0.351	-418.534	621.601
Age***	36.339	4.629	7.850	0.000	27.266	45.413

\*Significant at 90% level

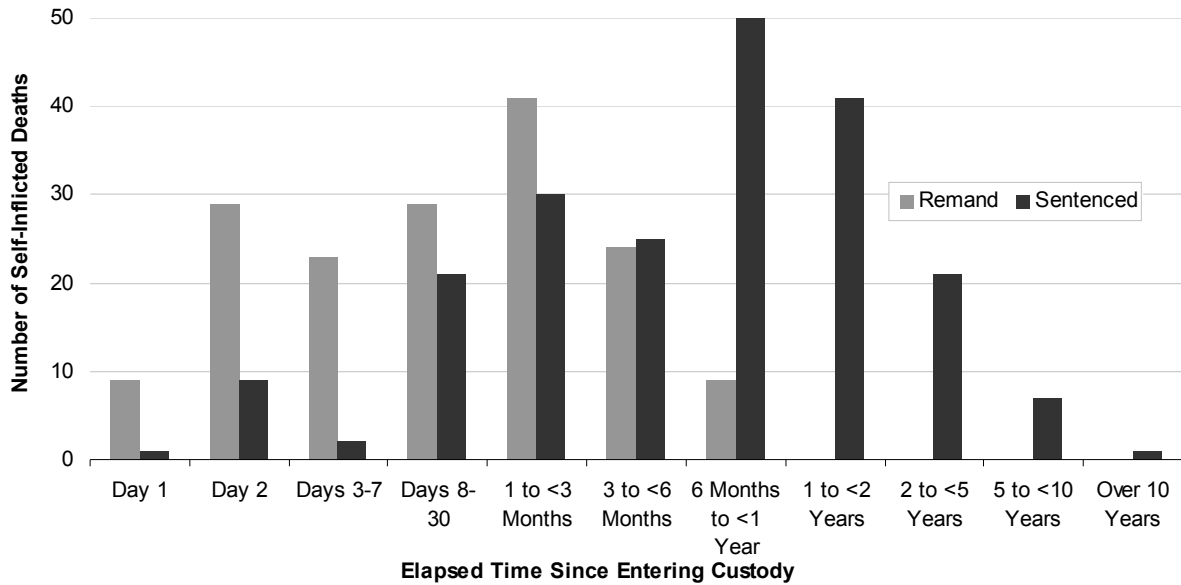
\*\*Significant at 95% level

\*\*\*Significant at 99% level

## Annex G: Elapsed Time since Entry into Custody by Remand and Sentenced Status

Figure G.1 shows the length of time that elapsed since entering into custody for prisoners aged 18 to 24 who were either sentenced or on remand. Prisoners on remand appeared to take their own lives within a shorter elapsed time of arriving into custody, with over half occurring within the first month. By contrast around half of self-inflicted deaths of prisoners who had been sentenced occurred over six months after entry into custody.

**Figure G.1: Number of Self-Inflicted Deaths by Elapsed Time since Entering Custody, 18-24 Year Olds (1978-March 2014)**



## Annex H: Self-Inflicted Deaths of 18-20 Year Old Prisoners by Establishment Type

**Table H.1: Number of Self-Inflicted Deaths of 18-20 Year Olds by Establishment Type**

<b>Establishment Type</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>Average</b>
Male Closed Young Offender Institute	4	2	4	1	1	2
Male Local Prison	1	1	2	1	4	2
Category B Prison	0	0	0	0	0	0
Category C Prison	0	1	0	0	0	<1
Female Local Prison	0	0	1	0	0	<1
Female Closed Prison	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>

**Table H.2: Rate of Self-Inflicted Deaths Among 18-20 year Olds per 1,000 Prisoners by Establishment Type**

<b>Establishment Type</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>Average</b>
Male Closed Young Offender Institute	0.74	0.38	0.93	0.27	0.31	0.55
Male Local Prison	0.49	0.53	1.05	0.61	2.75	1.01
Category B Prison	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Category C Prison	0.00	1.64	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.25
Female Local Prison	0.00	0.00	4.10	0.00	0.00	0.90
Female Closed Prison	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>All Establishment Types</b>	<b>0.60</b>	<b>0.49</b>	<b>0.96</b>	<b>0.30</b>	<b>0.87</b>	<b>0.64</b>



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