

## Time trends in Emergency Department visits due to self-harm among youth

### *Rates of ED visits due to self-harm in 15 to 19 year olds by First Nations status, sex, and year; Alberta, 2006-2017*

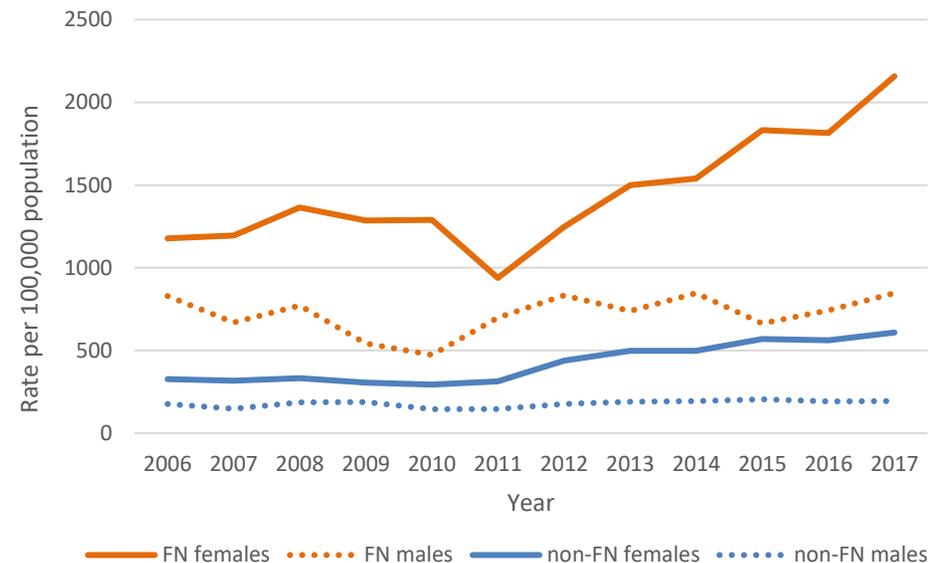
Self-harm, or self-injury, occurs when a person purposefully harms their body with a non-fatal outcome.<sup>1</sup> While numerous psychological factors increase risk, self-harm is also impacted by socio-environmental conditions.<sup>2</sup> In a previous *First Nations – Health Trends Alberta*,<sup>3</sup> we reported rates of emergency department (ED) visits due to self-harm by age group and First Nations status. Among 10 to 24 year olds, rates were highest in the 15 to 19 year old age group for both First Nations and non-First Nations people.

Here,<sup>4</sup> we explore time trends in ED visit rates due to self-harm for 15 to 19 year olds. We present ED visit rates for each year between 2006 and 2017 by sex for First Nations and non-First Nations separately.

### In 15 to 19 year old females, ED visit rates due to self-harm increased from 2011 to 2017 among both First Nations and non-First Nations

During 2006 to 2007, there was an annual average of 696 ED visits by young women aged 15 to 19 years old due to self-harm (130 in First Nations; 566 in non-First Nations). There were around half as many young men who visited the ED for the same reason over that time period: an annual average of 323 (68 in First Nations; 255 in non-First Nations).

For both First Nations and non-First Nations females between the ages of 15 and 19 years, rates of ED visits due to self-harm increased after 2011. For non-First Nations females, there was a 5.2 percent (95% CI 0.4, 10.2) estimated annual increase in rates between 2013 and 2017. For First Nations, this increase was more dramatic: rates increased each year during 2011 to 2017 by 10.7 percent (95% CI 7.6, 13.9). Rates for males in both groups remained relatively stable between 2006 and 2017 in 15 to 19 year olds.



1 Larkin et al (2014) <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3896350/>

2 Canadian Federation of Medical Students. Mental Health and Suicide in Indigenous Communities in Canada. 2017.

3 <http://afnigc.ca/main/includes/media/pdf/fnhta/HTAFN-2018-07-17-FNSelfHarm1.pdf>

4 This is the 30<sup>th</sup> in a series of First Nations-specific Health Trends compiled in collaboration by Alberta Health and the Alberta First Nations Information Governance Centre (AFNIGC). To suggest future topics, please contact the AFNIGC ([communications@afnigc.ca](mailto:communications@afnigc.ca); 403-539-5775).