

How can we better prevent railway suicide in the Netherlands? An in-depth study of risk locations, precipitating factors and personal risk factors.

Published: 26-05-2021

Last updated: 19-08-2024

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Ethical review	Approved WMO
Status	Recruitment stopped
Health condition type	Suicidal and self-injurious behaviours NEC
Study type	Observational non invasive

Summary

ID

NL-OMON51991

Source

ToetsingOnline

Brief title

Railway suicides in the Netherlands

Condition

- Suicidal and self-injurious behaviours NEC
- Age related factors

Synonym

death by suicide, Fatal suicide

Research involving

Human

Sponsors and support

Primary sponsor: 113 Zelfmoordpreventie

Source(s) of monetary or material Support: 113 Zelfmoordpreventie (opdrachtgever); ProRail, ProRail

Intervention

Keyword: Prevention, Psychological autopsy, Railway, Suicide

Outcome measures

Primary outcome

Primary study parameters are the location of railway suicides, preparations for suicide, precipitating factors and personal risk factors. Secondary parameters are demographic variables, the circumstances of death, history of suicidal behaviours of the victim and within the family, healthcare at time of death, psychiatric history, physical problems, work- or school-related problems, trauma and adverse life events, social networks, social media use, sexual orientation, gender identity and migration background.

Secondary outcome

Niet van toepassing.

Study description

Background summary

In the Netherlands, on average nearly 200 people die annually by railway suicide. Suicide has major societal impact. Aside from the victim and the bereaved, it has considerable consequences for train drivers, railway personnel, and witnesses or bystanders. Worryingly, there is an overrepresentation of youths using this violent method of suicide, 9% of victims of railway suicide in the Netherlands is aged 20 or below. Preventive measures on risk locations, such as fences, lighting and signs referring to 113 Suicide Prevention have presumably contributed to a 10% decrease of railway

suicides in 2018. This decrease was maintained in 2019. Aside from physical preventive measures, suicide prevention efforts include training staff of transport providers, improved collaboration between stakeholders and campaigns aimed to create awareness in the general public. To organize such forms of prevention, it is crucial to obtain more insight into the background, risk locations, precipitating factors and personal risk factors which contribute to railway suicide.

Study objective

The aim of the current study is to identify risk locations, precipitating factors and personal risk factors of railway suicides in order to support additional preventive measures.

This study adheres to several research questions:

- What are important characteristics of locations near or on the railway in the Netherlands where people have died by suicide?
- What patterns can be identified in the preparation, behaviours and suicide-related communication of victims who died by railway suicide in the Netherlands?
- What are personal risk factors of persons who have died by railway suicide in the Netherlands? Are there differences between youths and adults, or males and females?
- What are additional, promising preventive measures to prevent railways suicide in the Netherlands, based on the findings of the current study?

Study design

The current study has an observational design, entailing a mixed methods psychological autopsy study. People bereaved by a railway suicide of a loved one are recruited through the bereavement support program of the transport operator, as well as other organizations providing services for bereaved. A semi-structured interview of approximately two hours will be conducted with participants. The interview consists of two sections: (1) a reconstruction of the last period of the victims' lives, with focus on the location and circumstances of the incident, and precipitating factors preceding the suicide, and (2) a section dedicated to identifying personal risk factors, accounting for the age and gender of the person who died by suicide. Information gathered by interviews is supplemented by incident reports of the transport operator, to obtain additional insights into risk locations and circumstances of the suicide.

Study burden and risks

People bereaved by suicide are at higher risk to develop suicidal thoughts and are in the middle of grasping the reality of a loved one's death. Taking part

in the interview may cause psychological distress. As such, the researcher team has developed a thorough strategy to approach and recruit potential participants, clear exclusion criteria and developed a careful plan with regard to potential unmet health needs of participants.

Participants are screened ahead of the interview to examine current suicidal ideation. The general practitioner of the participant is informed about participation. The interview has been designed to obtain the desired information, while aiming to minimize the burden of participation. The interview lasts approximately two hours, and always includes a short break from the interview. All participants receive a follow-up telephone contact with the researcher to observe their wellbeing two-three weeks after the interview. Participants with unmet healthcare needs are referred to the general practitioner and actively followed until adequate care has been realized. The researchers are under supervision of a clinical psychologist from 113 Suicide Prevention.

Contacts

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Trial sites

Listed location countries

Netherlands

Eligibility criteria

Age

Adults (18-64 years)

Elderly (65 years and older)

Inclusion criteria

Individuals aged 18 years or older. Parents, children, friends, relatives and other direct bereaved of an individual who died by railway suicide from January 2017 and on. Secondary informants are individuals aged 18 or older who have had intensive contact with the deceased in the last month alive, and can for example be relatives, friends or colleagues.

Exclusion criteria

- People reporting suicide ideation. This is measured using the Suicidal Ideation Attribute Scale (SIDAS), where people with a score of 21 or higher on the SIDAS scale are excluded from the study.
- People reporting clear symptoms of persistent grief, as measured by the Traumatic Grief Inventory (TGI-SR), a questionnaire for symptoms of persistent grief. People scoring 61 or higher are excluded.
- People living outside of the Netherlands.
- People who do not speak Dutch

Study design

Design

Study type: Observational non invasive

Masking: Open (masking not used)

Control: Uncontrolled

Primary purpose: Prevention

Recruitment

NL

Recruitment status: Recruitment stopped

Start date (anticipated): 26-05-2021

Enrollment: 150

Type: Actual

Ethics review

Approved WMO

Date: 26-05-2021

Application type: First submission

Review commission: METC Amsterdam UMC

Approved WMO

Date: 31-01-2022

Application type: Amendment

Review commission: METC Amsterdam UMC

Study registrations

Followed up by the following (possibly more current) registration

No registrations found.

Other (possibly less up-to-date) registrations in this register

No registrations found.

In other registers

Register	ID
CCMO	NL76295.029.21