

### Causes of Death: Patterns in the Insured Population, the Opioid Crisis and Deaths of Despair

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4 May 2020



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# Updates on the Opioid Epidemic

**Dr. Donald Sampson, Ph.D.** 4 May 2020





# **Opioid Abuse and Overdose**

Opioid Abuse and Overdose Deaths per 100,000: Ages 25-84





# How Are Deaths Recorded?

Mortality Multiple Cause-of-Death Public Use Record

- Maintained by the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) at the CDC
- Created from all death certificates filed in the US
- Includes algorithm-interpreted 'underlying cause of death'
- Secondary or contributing conditions recorded on the death certificate are also reported
- All conditions are recorded using ICD codes (currently ICD-10)



# How Are Opioid Deaths Recorded?

Overdoses

- Drug poisoning is reported in four different varieties:
  - Accidental (X40-44)
  - Suicide (X60-64)
  - Assault (X85)
  - Undetermined (Y10-14)

Abuse

- Drug deaths were sometimes reported as a severe consequence of intoxication, instead of poisoning
- Mental and behavioral disorders due to psychoactive substance use (F10-19)
- Appears to be corrected after 2006



# How Are *Opioids* Recorded?

- Aside from general categories, underlying causes do not report the *type* of drug involved. These are recorded as secondary conditions
- Poisoning by narcotics and psychodysleptics [hallucinogens] (T40):
  - T40.0 Opium
  - T40.1 Heroin
  - T40.2 Other opioids
    - Codeine
    - Morphine
  - T40.3 Methadone
  - T40.4 Other synthetic narcotics (Fentanyl)
  - T40.6 Other and unspecified narcotics
- Using secondary conditions alone leads to false signals from palliative, hospice, and end of life care.



# Opioid Deaths by Gender

Drug Abuse and Overdose Deaths per 100,000 by Gender: Ages 25-84





# **Opioid Deaths by Education**



#### College Educated Opioid Deaths by Gender

Drug Abuse and Overdose Deaths per 100,000 by Gender: Ages 25-84





# Opioids by Type





# Categories and potency of opioids

Opioid	Туре	Strength Comparison
Codeine	Natural Opiate	0.15
Morphine	Natural Opiate	1
Hydrocodone*	Semi-synthetic	1
Oxycodone*	Semi-synthetic	1.5
Hydromorphone	Semi-synthetic	5
Methadone*	Synthetic	3
Heroin	Illegal Semi-synthetic	2 – 7
Fentanyl	Synthetic	75-100
Illegally-made fentanyl	Illegal Synthetic	1000 — 10,000



# Opioid Deaths by Opioid Type

Drug Abuse and Overdose Deaths per 100,000 by Opioid Type: 25-84



#### Methadone





## Natural and Semi-Synthetic





#### Heroin





### **Other Synthetics**





# Opioid Deaths by Opioid Type

Drug Abuse and Overdose Deaths per 100,000 by Opioid Type: 25-84



# Opioid Deaths by Opioid Type

Drug Abuse and Overdose Deaths per 100,000 by Opioid Type: Ages 25-84







# Life Insurance Impacts





# College Educated Opioid Deaths by Opioid Type

Drug Abuse and Overdose Deaths per 100,000 by Opioid Type: 25-84











# Deaths of Despair

Jean-Marc Fix

4 May 2020





#### Anne Case and Angus Deaton

- Economists at Princeton
- Sir Angus Deaton won the Nobel Prize in Economy in 2015
- 2 Papers:
  - September 2015: Rising morbidity and mortality in midlife among white non-Hispanic Americans in the 21st century, Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America
  - Spring 2017: Mortality and Morbidity in the 21st Century, Brookings Papers on Economic Activity, mentioned "Deaths of Despair"



#### The Data

All-cause Mortality, Ages 45–54 for U.S. White Non-Hispanics (USW) and U.S. Hispanics (USH), and Six Comparison Countries



Source: A Case & A Deaton, Rising morbidity and mortality in midlife among white Non-Hispanic Americans in the 21st century, PNAS, 12/8/15

#### The Data

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## Criticism

- Methodology
  - Age distribution has shifted between 1999 and 2013 for such a wide age group
  - Composition of education groups has changed
- Focus
  - Even more dramatic story for women
  - Minimize story for African-American



#### Trends for White Non-Hispanics





Source: Age aggregation bias in mortality trends, A Gelman and J Auerbach, PNAS Letter 2/16/16



#### Age Adjustment

All-Cause Mortality by Country for Age 45-54, 1990-2015



Source: Mortality and morbidity in the 21st century, Brookings Paper on Economic Activity, Spring 2017



#### Group Composition by Education

Percent of Population Age 25 and Over by Educational Attainment: 1940–2018



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1947, 1952–2002 March Current Population Survey, 2003–2018 Annual Social and Economic Supplement to the Current Population Survey; 1940–1960 Census Population.



#### What Are Deaths of Despair?

- Case & Deaton **defined** *deaths of despair* as suicide, alcohol-related liver disease and drug overdoses
- Despair implies a mechanism
- Despair is difficult to define. It is a psychological and sociological issue, not an economic or demographic issue
- Without a rigorous definition of *despair*, hard to really measure *deaths of despair*



#### **Causes of Death Caveat**

- Suspicious of accuracy of causes of death reporting in the U.S.
- Especially for causes with "social" implications (HIV, suicide, drugs, alcohol)




# Deaths of Despair: Suicide





### All Accidental Deaths by Means 2001-2018



Source: WISQARS

### All Accidental Deaths by Intent 2001-2018



Source: WISQARS

### Suicide Means by Gender

FEMALES

MALES



### Historical U.S. Suicide Rates

Age Adjusted



Source: Health United States 2018, Data finder Table 9; https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/hus/contents2018.htm?search=Suicide

# Suicide by Gender



Holman, R. J., C. S. MacDonald, and P. J. Miller. U.S. Population Mortality Observations-Updated with 2018 Experience. Society of Actuaries, March 2020.

*Source: https://www.soa.org/resources/research-reports/2020/population-mortality-observations* 

2017-

2018

-1.8%

-1.3%

-1.8%

-15.9%

0.0%

-0.1%

-1.5%

0.8%

-6.3%

-4.8%

-3.9%

5.1%

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### Suicide Males by County Income Group

**U.S.** Population Mortality by County Income Group



Holman, R. J., C. S. MacDonald, and P. J. Miller. U.S. Population Mortality Observations-Updated with 2018 Experience. Society of Actuaries, March 2020.

Source: https://www.soa.org/resources/researchreports/2020/population-mortality-observations

2017-

2018

-1.8%

0.3%

-2.2%

-3.1%

-11.9%

0.0%

0.9% -2.2%

0.3%

-6.4%

-6.1%

-4.4%

6.8%

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Deaths per 100,000

### Suicide Females by County Income Group

U.S. Population Mortality by County Income Group



Gender							
Female							
Annual Improvement							
All Ages	1999- 2018	2013- 2018	2017- 2018				
All	-2.4%	-2.4%	-1.396				
Top 15%	-2.6%	-3.0%	-13 396				
Middle 45-55%	-2.096	-1.2%	-1.5%				
Bottom 15%	-3.1%	-3.3%	-0.796				
Age Group+							
<li>lyear</li>							
5-14 years	-7.8%	-8.2%	-24.2%				
15-24 years	-3.5%	-5.0%	-0.396				
25-34 years	-2.6%	-4.1%	-3.7%				
35-44 years	-1.5%	-2.0%	0.796				
45-54 years	-2.3%	-0.2%	2,2%				
55-64 years	-3.2%	-1.8%	-5.9%				
65-74 years	-2.2%	-3.0%	-0.2%				
75-84 years	0.6%	-1.596	1.7%				
85+ years	0.7%	-1.8%	-2.796				

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\*See report for Cause of Death definitions +Includes all counties

Holman, R. J., C. S. MacDonald, and P. J. Miller. U.S. Population Mortality Observations-Updated with 2018 Experience. Society of Actuaries, March 2020.

Source: https://www.soa.org/resources/researchreports/2020/population-mortality-observations

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### Suicide Rates by Urban/Rural



Source: Contextual Factors Associated With County-Level Suicide Rates in the United States, 1999 to 2016, DL Steelesmith et al, JAMA Network Open 9/6/19

### Suicide Is Multifactorial



Source: Adapted from Preventing suicide: A global imperative, WHO 2014



# Suicide Is Multifactorial





# Suicide Is Multifactorial







# Deaths of Despair: Alcohol





### Alcohol-related Deaths by Age

Percentage of Deaths by Category for Each Age-Group

	Age Group				
	0-19	20-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Chronic Causes					
Alcohol dependence syndrome	0%	1%	5%	7%	3%
Alcoholic liver disease	0%	2%	19%	29%	12%
Hypertension	0%	0%	1%	1%	5%
Liver cirrhosis unspecified	0%	1%	5%	12%	15%
Low birth weight	5%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Stroke hemorrhagic	0%	0%	1%	1%	5%
Subtotal Chronic	5%	5%	37%	63%	58%
Acute Causes					
Fall injuries	1%	1%	2%	3%	26%
Homicide	30%	25%	9%	4%	2%
Motor-vehicle traffic crashes	35%	35%	17%	8%	3%
Poisoning (not alcohol)	7%	16%	16%	8%	1%
Suicide	11%	13%	12%	9%	5%
Subtotal Acute	95%	95%	63%	37%	42%

For 2006-2010: average of 88 thousand deaths related to alcohol (about 3% deaths, around 7th or 8th cause of death)

Beneficial: gallstones!

Source: CDC"s ARDI: Alcohol and Public Health: Alcohol-Related Disease Impact



# Change in Alcohol-Related Death Rates, 1999-2017

Estimated AAPC in Age-Adjusted or Age-Specific Death Rates by Sex and Age-Group or Race/Ethnicity



Source: Using Death Certificates to Explore Changes in Alcohol-Related Mortality in the United States, 1999 to 2017, AM White et al, Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research 2019

## Liver by Gender



#### Holman, R. J., C. S. MacDonald, and P. J. Miller. U.S. Population Mortality Observations-Updated with 2018 Experience. Society of Actuaries, March 2020.

Source: https://www.soa.org/resources/research-reports/2020/population-mortality-observations

2017-

2018

-1.4%

-0.9%

-1.7%

-40.0%

-9.0%

-2.6%

0.1%

-0.8%

-2.6%

-3.7%

5.1%

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### Excessive Alcohol Use and Socio-Economic Status

- The Alcohol Harm Paradox: higher income/SES drink more but are less "hurt"
- Not all drinking patterns are as hurtful
  - Heavy drinking: more than 15, for males, and 8, for females drinks, a week
  - Binge drinking: more than 5, for males, and 4, for females, drinks at a sitting
- Alcohol Harm Paradox revisited: for the same drinking pattern higher SES suffer less harm!



### Liver Males by County Income Group

County Income Group

Cause of Death

2017-

2018

-1.796

-0.196

2.796

-1.996

-61.396

-5.0% -3.496

-0.796

-1.5%

-1.896

-4.296

3.296

**U.S.** Population Mortality by Co

County Income Group	Top 15% Middle 45-55% Bottom 15%	<i>Liver</i> <i>Gender</i> <i>Male</i>				
22		Annu	Annual Improvement			
20	$\sim$	All Ages	1999- 2018	2013- 2018	2	
		All	-0.5%	-1.296		
		Top 15%	0.4%	-0.3%		
18		Middle 45-55%	-0.496	-0.896		
		Bottom 15%	-1.196	-2.6%		
	$\checkmark$	Age Group+				
10		<1 year			_	
	$\sim$	1-4 years				
14		5-14 years				
14		15-24 years	-3.6%	-2.3%	-	
		25-34 years	-3.796	-4.6%		
12		35-44 years	0.596	-3.2%		
12		45-54 years	0.296	0.996		
		55-64 years	-1.5%	-0.6%		
	$\sim$	65-74 years	-0.396	-3.096		
10		75-84 years	-0.296	-2.396		
0 0 1 0 0 7 0 0 0 0	001004000	85+ years	-0.296	-2.4%		
1991 2001 2001 2001 2001 2001 2001 2001	2011 2011 2011 2011 2011 2011 2011 2011	*See report for Ca +Includes all cour	ause of Death	h definitio	ns	

Holman, R. J., C. S. MacDonald, and P. J. Miller. U.S. Population Mortality Observations-Updated with 2018 Experience. Society of Actuaries, March 2020.

Source: https://www.soa.org/resources/researchreports/2020/population-mortality-observations

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Deaths per 100,000

### Liver Females by County Income Group

County Income Group

Cause of Death

-0.9%

0.896

-4.196

0.096

-1.296

1.6%

0.5%

-4.196

-2.996

7.096

**U.S.** Population Mortality by County Income Group



Holman, R. J., C. S. MacDonald, and P. J. Miller. U.S. Population Mortality Observations-Updated with 2018 Experience. Society of Actuaries, March 2020.

Source: https://www.soa.org/resources/researchreports/2020/population-mortality-observations

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Deaths per 100,000

#### Alcohol-Induced Deaths by Gender and Race/Ethnicity 2000–2003 vs. 2013–2016



Source: S Spilane et al, Trends in Alcohol-Induce Deaths in the United States, 2000-2016, JAMA Network Open 2/21/20



# Alcohol-Induced Deaths by Gender and Race/Ethnicity

2000–2003 vs. 2013–2016



Source: S Spilane et al, Trends in Alcohol-Induce Deaths in the United States, 2000-2016, JAMA Network Open 2/21/20

# Alcohol-Induced Deaths by Gender and Race/Ethnicity

2000–2003 vs. 2013–2016





# The Confounders

- Income
- Education
- Geography
- Social class
- Urbanization



## The Whole Story

#### Difference in Age-Adjusted Mortality Rate per 100,000: 1999–2018



■ All ■ Bottom 15% ■ Mid 45-55% ■ Top 15%

*Source: https://www.soa.org/resources/research-reports/2020/population-mortality-observations/. Based on CDC data.* 



### The Key Drivers – Still...

- Smoking
- Obesity



### Conclusion

- Suicides, alcohol-related deaths and drug-related deaths have increased, alarmingly in some socio-economic group and particularly for women
- The relative increase in mortality maybe higher in some racial/ethnic groups but those groups have better mortality still
- No definite blame to be placed on "despair"
- Opens our eyes wider on the differences by sub-populations and with the insurance buying population
- From an actuarial perspective, need to look at the whole picture









# COD Observations in the Insured Population

**Anji Li, FSA, CERA, MAAA** 4 May 2020







# Setting up models





# Finding a path to COD observations

- What is <u>the question</u> we are looking to answer?
- What is the data available to answer the question?
- What is the method chosen to look at the data?



# The question

# Given a death has happened, what is the probability it is \_\_\_\_\_vs. all other COD?

### Heart / Cancer / External\*

\* Includes accidents, suicides, and assaults.



# The question

For a given risk attribute, we assess the likelihood of COD *prevalence* in claims





# The data

#### Munich Re experience study 2006 – 2017 Q2

- Fully-underwritten single life
- No post-level term, conversions or substandard
- Excludes duration 1 and 2



# The method

Logistic GLM

o Attained ageo Durationo Product

o Face amount

o Smoker status

o LexisNexis<sup>®</sup> Risk Classifier score

$$\ln\left(\frac{p}{1-p}\right) = y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_1 + \beta_2 x_2 + \cdots$$

Given a death has happened, what is the probability it is \_\_\_\_\_ vs. all other COD?



# The method

Six "one vs. all" models







# Results: Patterns picked up by the models




## Heart observations

- Evidence of underwriting
  - Higher likelihood for a claim with FA < \$100K to be Heart COD
  - Standard non-smoker claims have higher likelihood of a Heart COD relative to preferred non-smoker claims

#### Heart Claims Distribution Males only









## Heart observations

### Known medical trends

- Patterns observed by attained age and gender
- Association of smoker claims and the likelihood of a Heart COD



## Cancer observations

Demographics

- Patterns observed by attained age and gender
- Impact of smoking varies by gender due to difference in susceptibility to cancer types

## **External causes**

### Demographics

 Patterns observed by attained age and gender, in line with general population

### Policyholder attributes

 Claims with FA > \$500K have higher prevalence of External COD External Claims Distribution Males only









# **Competing risks**

Relation to overall mortality risk\*

 Claims from lower overall mortality risks have a higher likelihood of being a Cancer COD or External COD, and a lower likelihood of being a Heart COD

\* LexisNexis<sup>®</sup> Risk Classifier (LNRC) scores as a measure of overall mortality risk, where higher scores are associated with lower overall mortality risk.

#### Males Claims Distribution by LNRC score (FA > \$100k)





## Back to the question

#### Males Cancer Claims by LNRC score (FA > \$100k)

COD prevalence in claims vs. contribution to mortality rate







## **Closing remarks**





## Lessons learned

- Logistic GLM models affirm COD patterns (Heart, Cancer and External) in the insured population claims
  - Describe historical trends
  - Inform projections of future mortality risk and mortality improvement
- Limitations of the data and methods









