



# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities: Suicide data 2022

**Australian Bureau of Statistics,  
Causes of Death, 2022**

**Released 27 September 2023**

# Notes about using data in this summary

- In 2022, the process for identifying Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander deaths was improved in NSW by sourcing information on Indigenous status from both the Death Registration Form and Medical Certificate of Cause of Death. This change brings NSW in line with all other states and territories, except for Victoria. However, this means that comparisons to previous years should be treated with caution.
- Trend analysis and detailed data for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people can only be compiled from the jurisdictions of New South Wales, Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia and the Northern Territory. The majority of data in this summary is presented for these states only. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) advises that data for Victoria, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory is not suitable for comparisons and changes over time.
- From 2022, Causes of Death data is presented by the year the death was registered. This represents a change from previous years where data was presented by the reference year. This change has been applied from 2013 onwards.



# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people: National data

- In 2022, **239** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people died by suicide. This is an increase from the 220 deaths recorded in 2021. The median age of death in 2022 was **33.4 years**.
- The number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suicide deaths increased across all jurisdictions, when comparing 2013-17 with 2018-22.

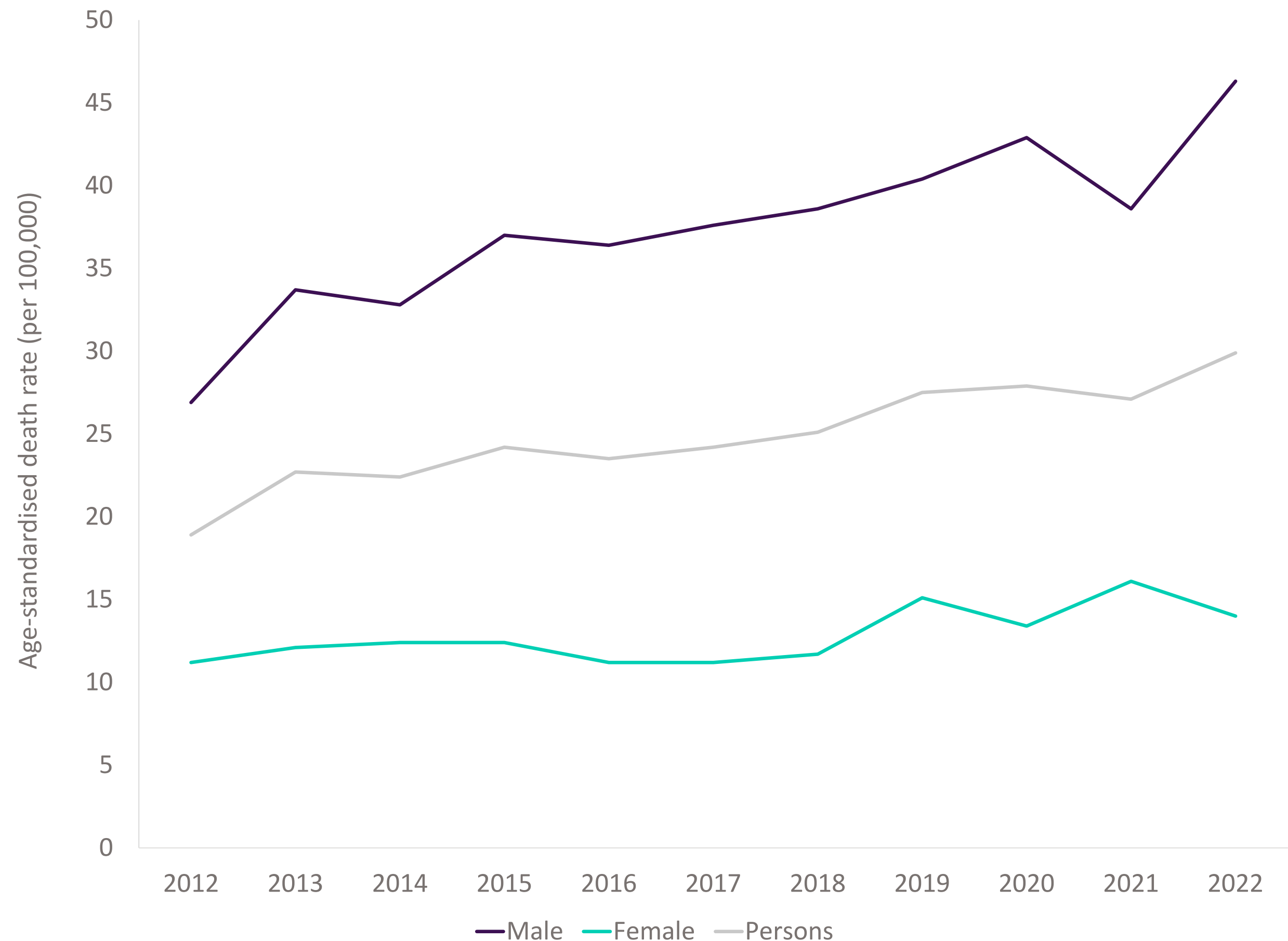
- When exploring suicide data, it is important to remember that behind the numbers are people, families and communities impacted by suicide across Australia.
- It is important that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and services speak to this data. We recommend that you contact the Centre of Best Practice in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention for advice and guidance on interpretation and communication about this data: [cbpatsisp.com.au/contact-us/](https://cbpatsisp.com.au/contact-us/)



# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people: Selected states

The following data pertains only to New South Wales, Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia and the Northern Territory.

- Suicide was the **fifth leading cause of death** for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- The age-standardised suicide rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people has increased between 2013 and 2022 by **33%**. The suicide rate is the highest in the 10-year time series at **29.9 per 100,000 people**.
- Between 2013 and 2022, the suicide rate for males increased from **33.3 to 46.3 per 100,000**. For females, the suicide rate increased from **12.1 to 14.0 per 100,000**.



Note: Age-standardised suicide rates are compiled from the jurisdictions of NSW, QLD, WA, SA and NT.

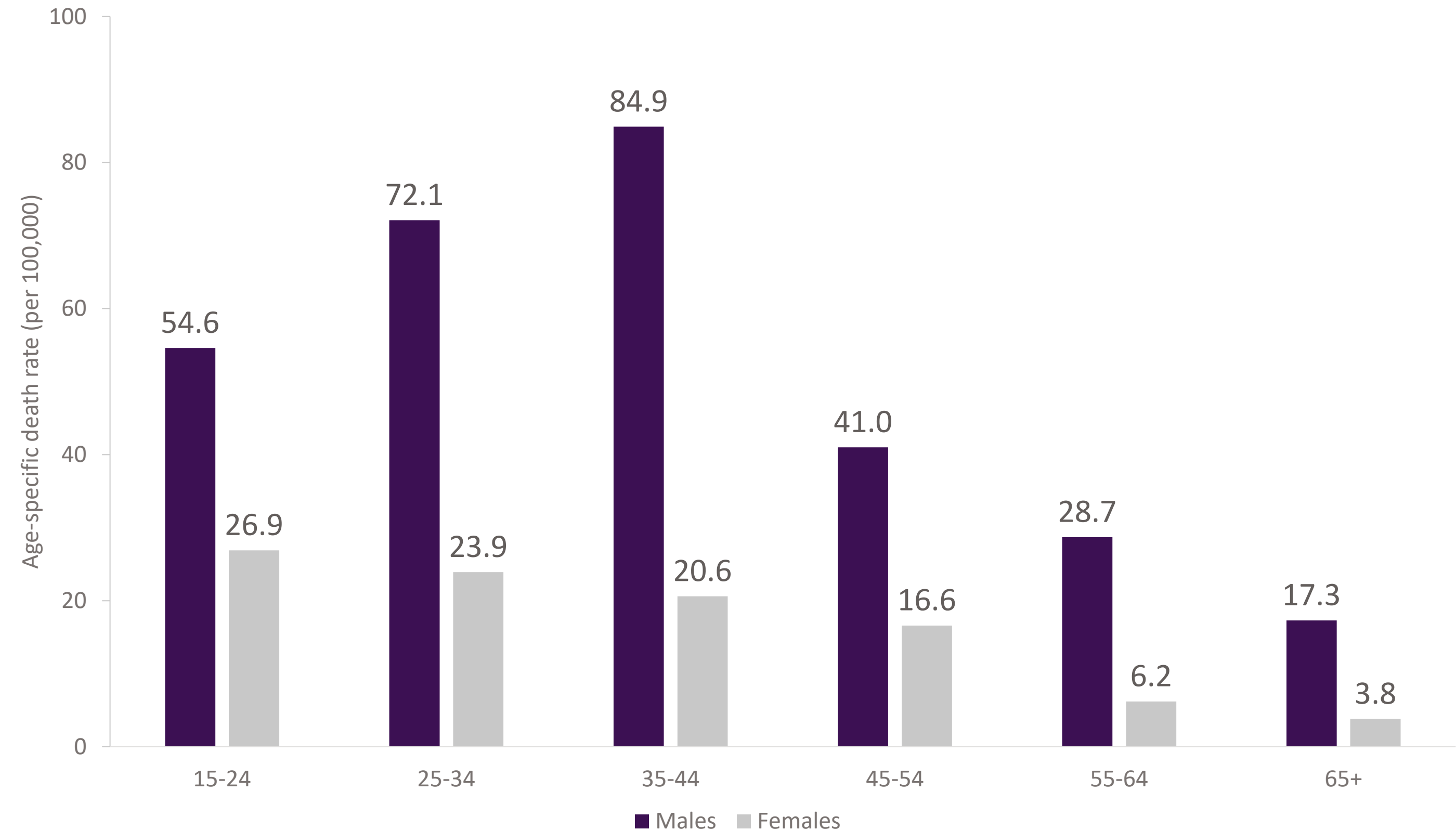
Due to changes in Indigenous death identification in NSW in 2022, use caution when comparing to previous years.



# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people: Age specific rates

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who died by suicide between 2018-2022:

- **80.6%** were aged between 15 and 44 years.
- For males, the highest suicide rate was for those aged 35-44 years at **84.9 deaths per 100,000**.
- For females, the highest rate was for those aged 15-24 years at **26.9 deaths per 100,000**.



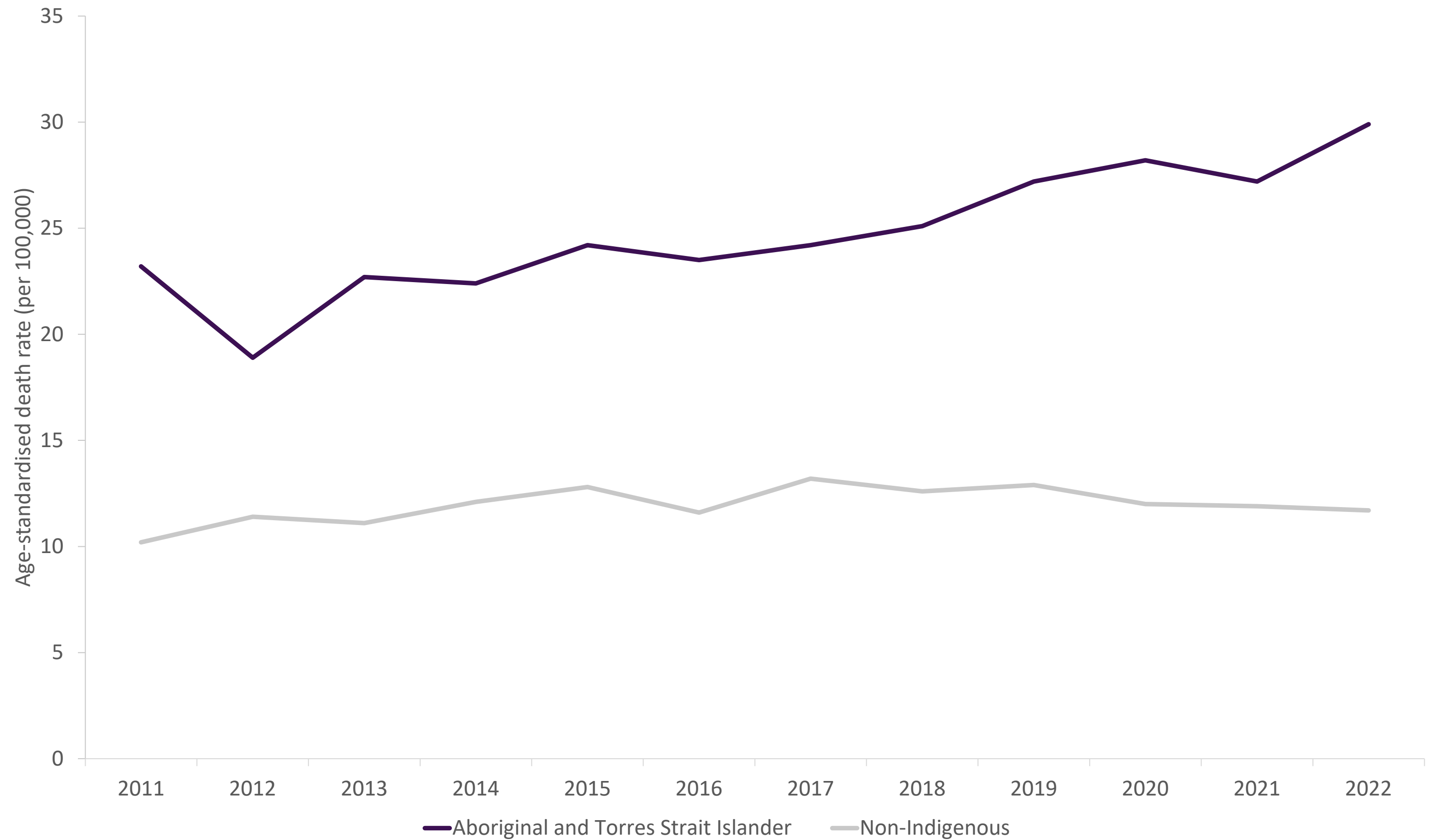
*Note: Age-specific suicide rates are compiled from the jurisdictions of NSW, QLD, WA, SA and NT.*

*Due to changes in Indigenous death identification in NSW in 2022, use caution when comparing to previous years.*



# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people compared to non-Indigenous people

- Over the period 2018-2022, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people had a suicide rate more than double that of non-Indigenous people.
- The median age for suicides was **33.4 years** for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in 2022 compared to 46.9 years for non-Indigenous people.



*Note: Age-standardised suicide rates are compiled from the jurisdictions of NSW, QLD, WA, SA and NT.*

*Due to changes in Indigenous death identification in NSW in 2022, use caution when comparing to previous years.*



# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people: Age specific rates

Deaths of children by suicide is an extremely sensitive issue and care is required when viewing and reporting on this data. It is important to remember that behind the numbers are people, families and communities impacted by suicide across Australia.

## Suicide of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, 5-17 years

During the period 2018-2022:

- Suicide was the leading cause of death for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, accounting for **27.2%** of all deaths among 5-17-year-olds.
- Over three quarters (**75.3%**) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who died by suicide were aged between 15-17 years.
- Over half (**57.1%**) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who died by suicide were female.



# New South Wales suicide data 2022

(ABS, 2023)

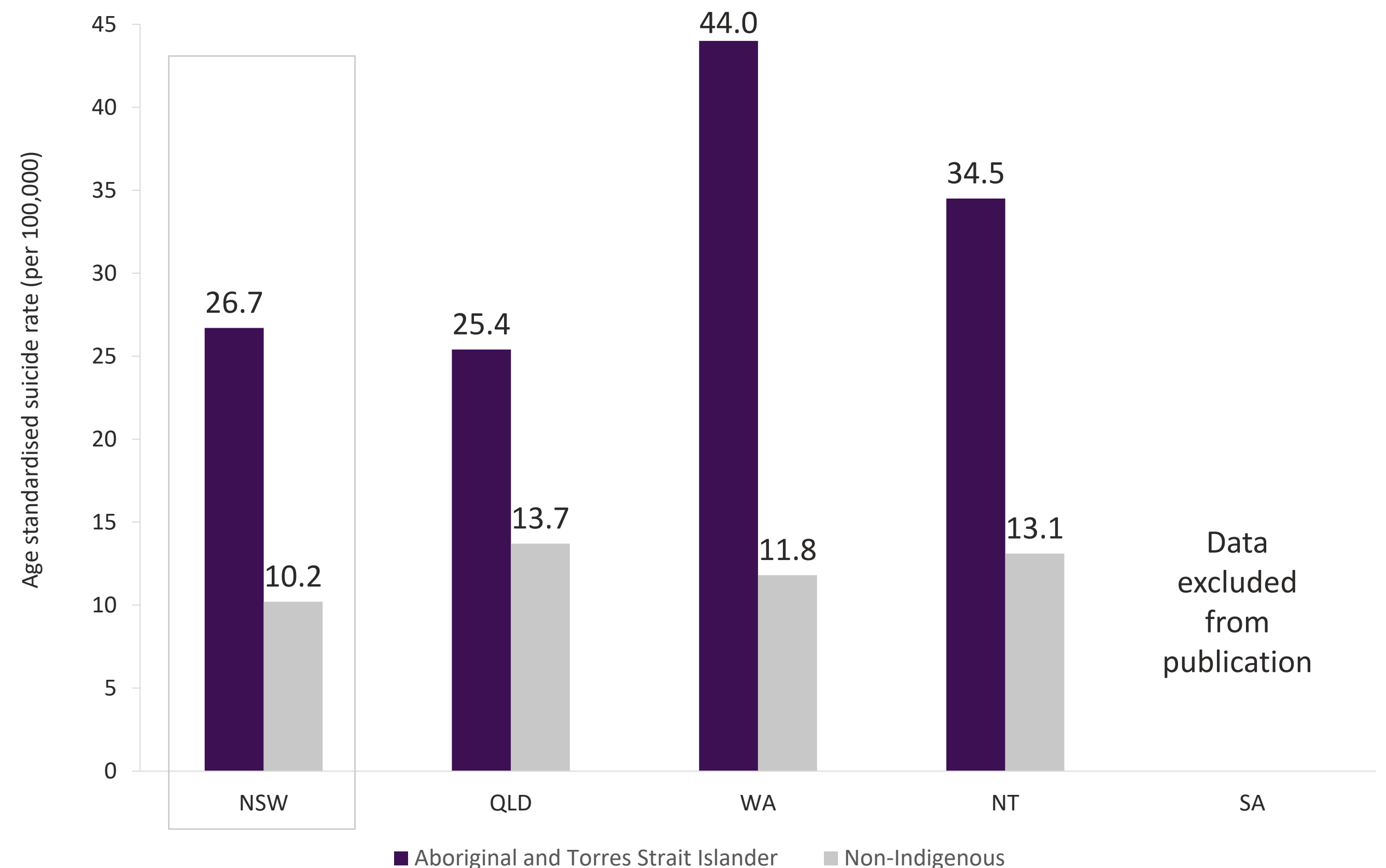




# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people: New South Wales

## New South Wales in 2022

- In New South Wales, **66 (45 male, 21 female)** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people died by suicide.
- Suicide was the **fifth leading cause of death** for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in New South Wales compared to the 19<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death for non-Indigenous people.
- The age-standardised suicide rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (**26.7 per 100,000**) was considerably higher than the non-Indigenous age-standardised suicide rate for New South Wales (10.2 per 100,000).



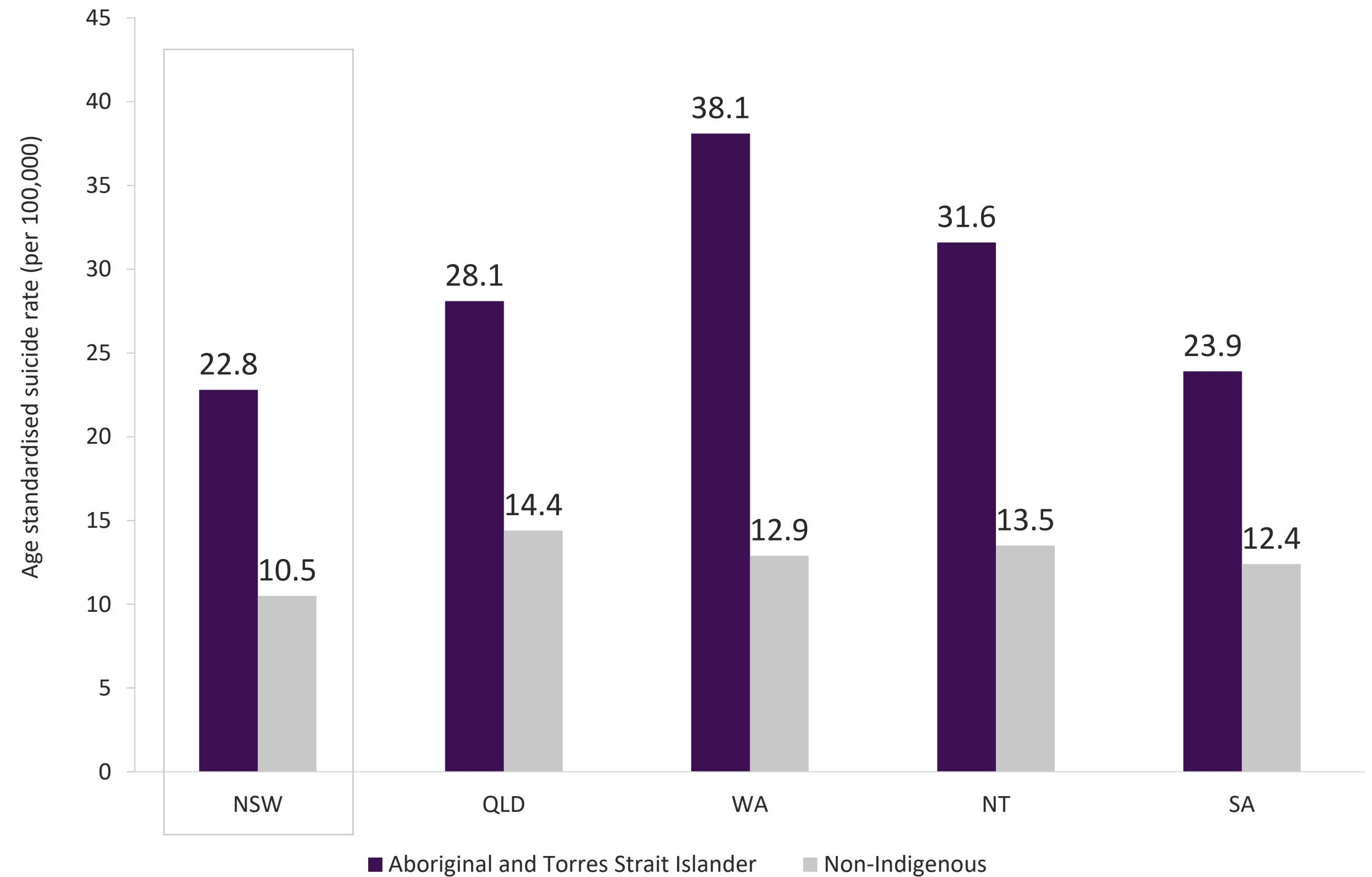
Note: Age-standardised suicide rates are compiled from the jurisdictions of NSW, QLD, WA, SA and NT.



# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people: New South Wales

## New South Wales 2018-2022

- Across a five-year period, **276** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people died by suicide.
- The age-standardised suicide rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (**22.8 per 100,000**) was higher than the non-Indigenous age-standardised suicide rate (**10.5 per 100,000**).



Note: Age-standardised suicide rates are compiled from the jurisdictions of NSW, QLD, WA, SA and NT.



# Northern Territory suicide data 2022

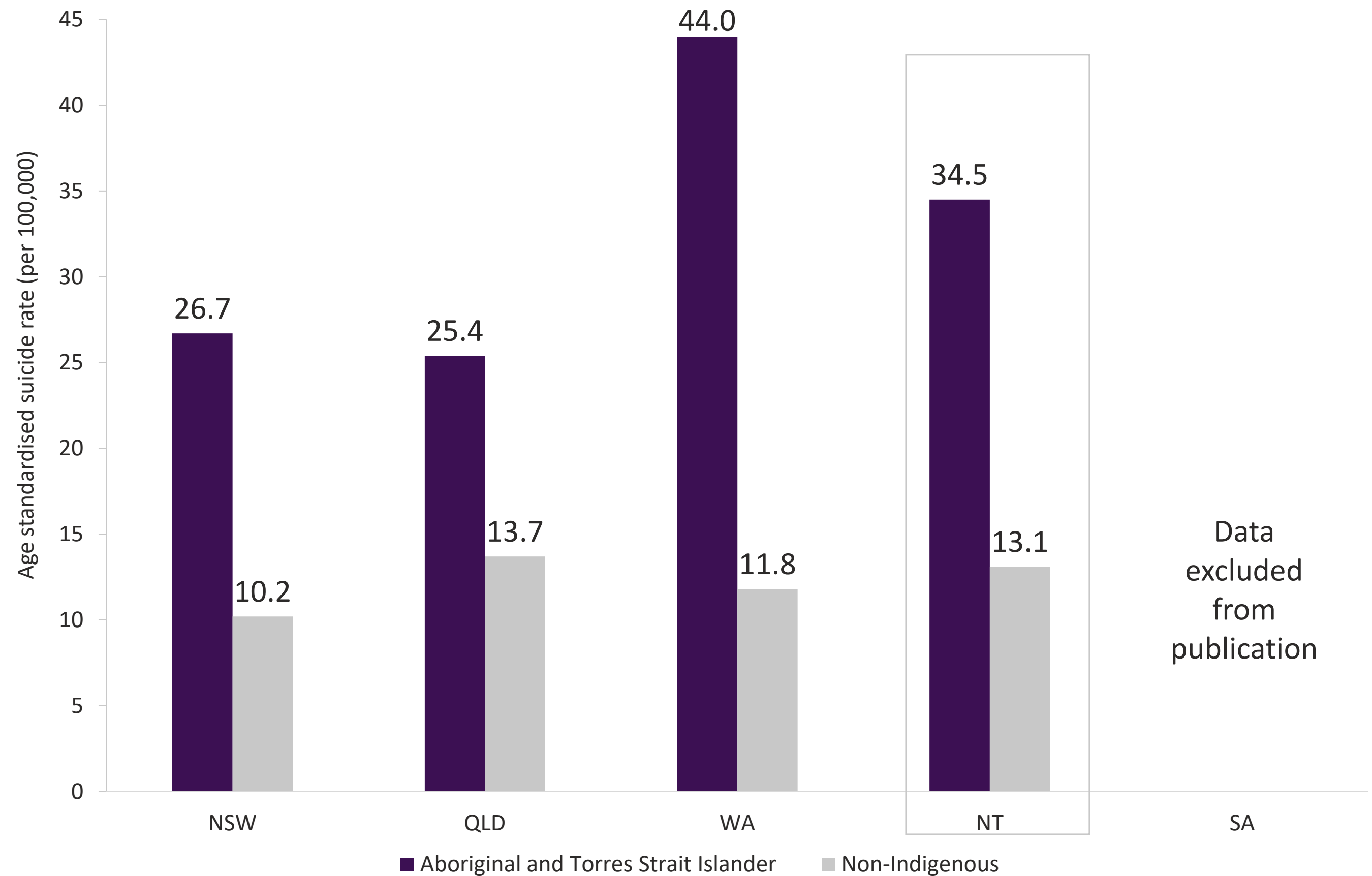
(ABS, 2023)



# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people: Northern Territory

## Northern Territory in 2022

- In the Northern Territory, **28** (20 males, 8 females) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people died by suicide.
- Suicide was the **fourth leading cause of death** for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the Northern Territory, compared to the ninth leading cause of death for non-Indigenous people.
- The age-standardised death rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (**34.5 per 100,000**) was considerably higher than the non-Indigenous age-standardised death rate (13.1 per 100,000).



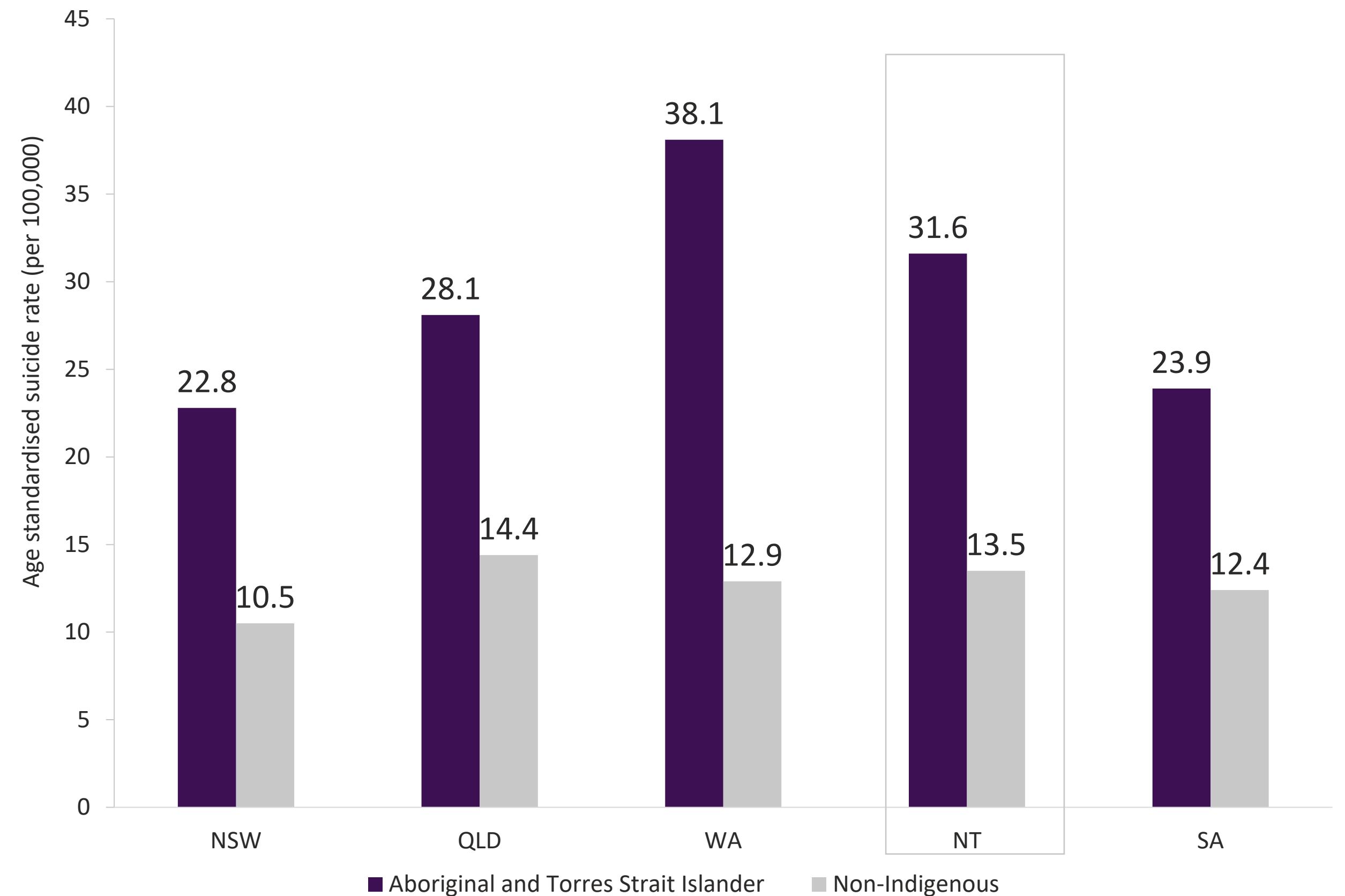
Note: Age-standardised suicide rates are compiled from the jurisdictions of NSW, QLD, WA, SA and NT.



# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people: Northern Territory

## Northern Territory 2018-2022

- Across a five-year period, **130** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people died by suicide.
- The age-standardised suicide rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (**31.6 per 100,000**) was higher than the non-Indigenous age-standardised suicide rate (**13.5 per 100,000**).



Note: Age-standardised suicide rates are compiled from the jurisdictions of NSW, QLD, WA, SA and NT.



# Queensland suicide data 2022

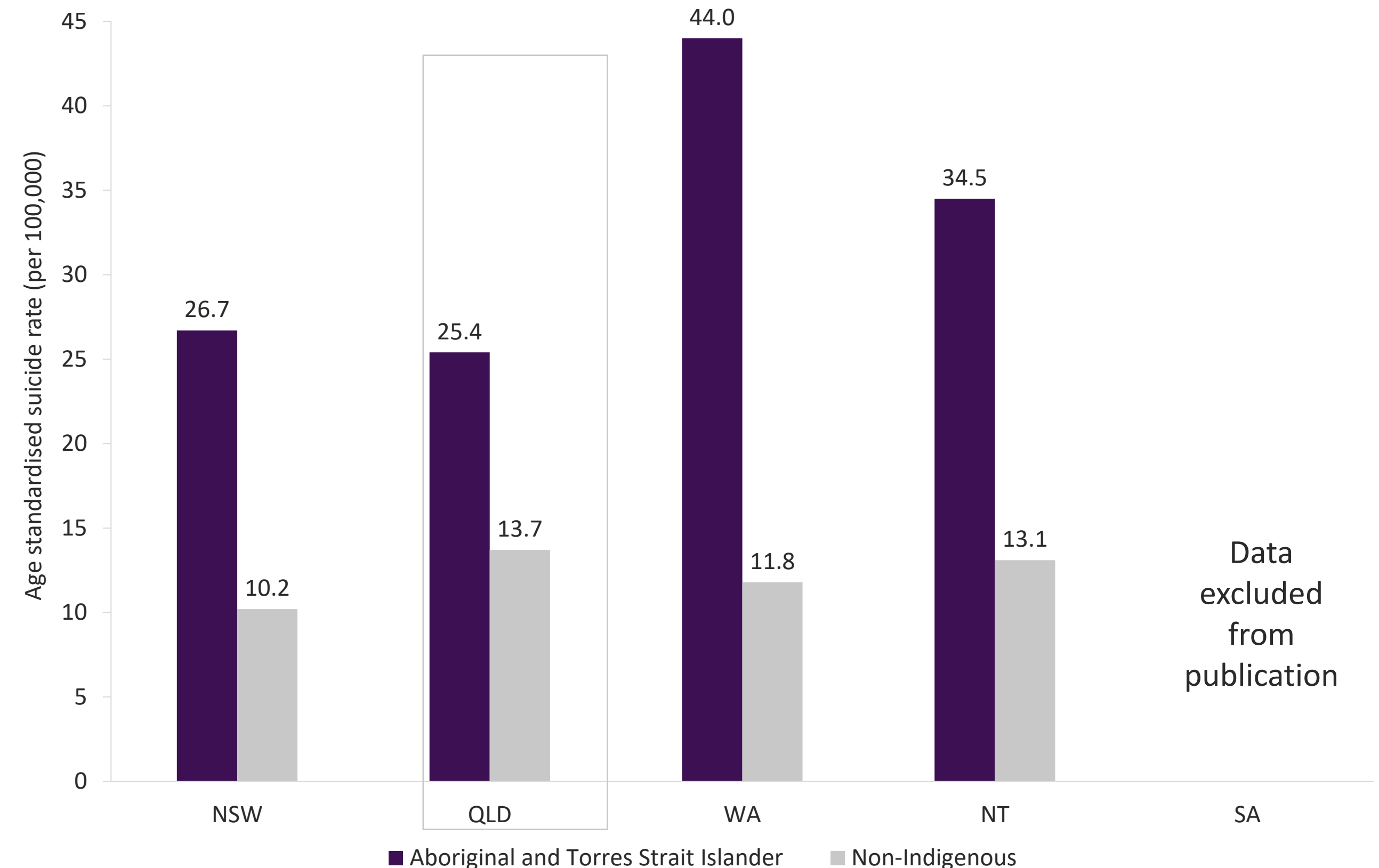
(ABS, 2023)



# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people: Queensland

## Queensland in 2022

- In Queensland, **58 (46 male, 12 female)** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people died by suicide.
- Suicide was the **fifth leading cause of death** for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Queensland, compared to the 12<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death for non-Indigenous people.
- The age-standardised death rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (**25.4 per 100,000**) was considerably higher than the non-Indigenous age-standardised death rate (13.7 per 100,000).



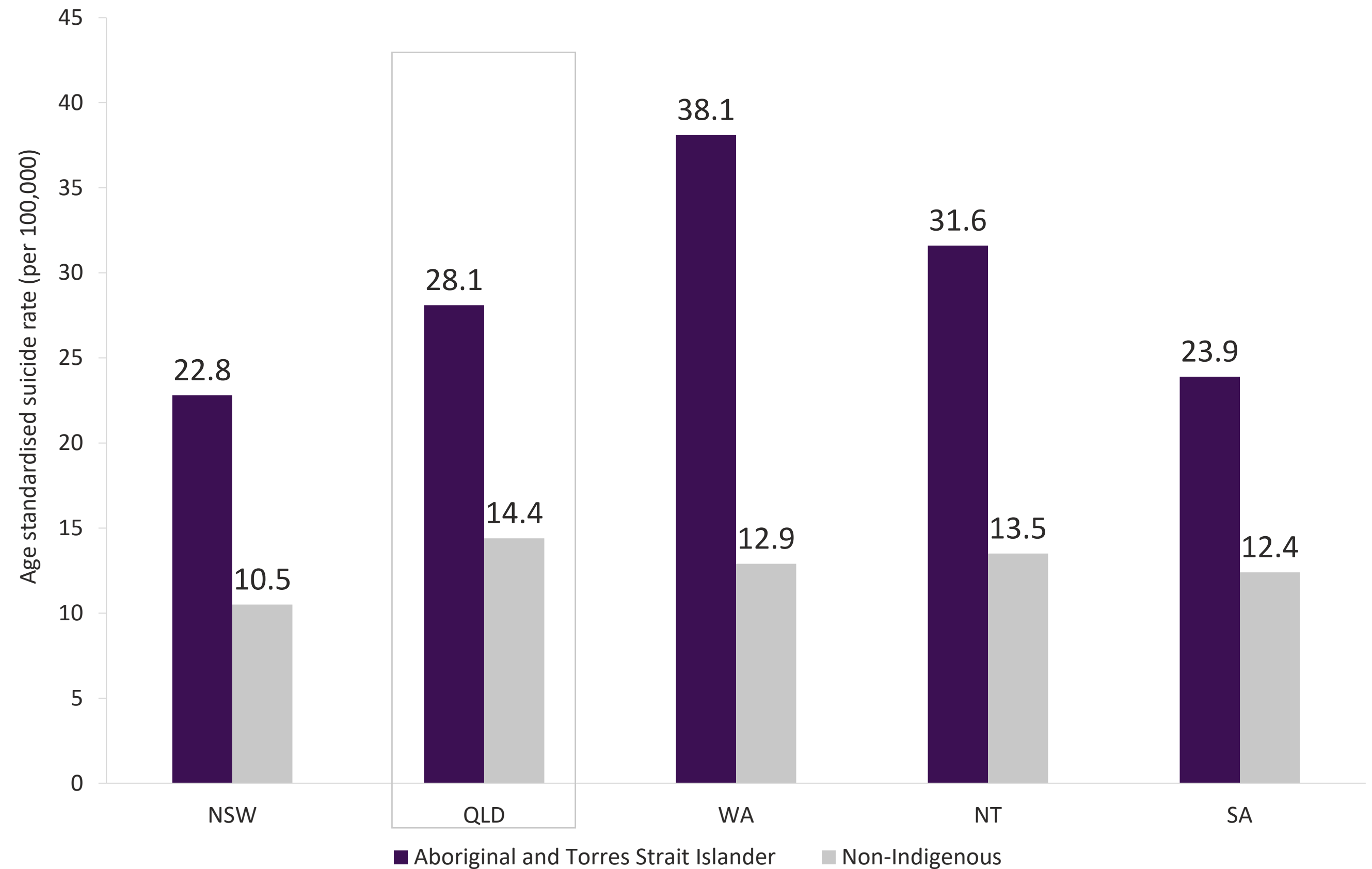
Note: Age-standardised suicide rates are compiled from the jurisdictions of NSW, QLD, WA, SA and NT.



# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people: Queensland

## Queensland 2018-2022

- Across a five-year period, **322** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people died by suicide.
- The age-standardised suicide rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (**28.1 per 100,000**) was higher than the non-Indigenous age-standardised suicide rate (**14.4 per 100,000**).



Note: Age-standardised suicide rates are compiled from the jurisdictions of NSW, QLD, WA, SA and NT.





# South Australia suicide data 2022

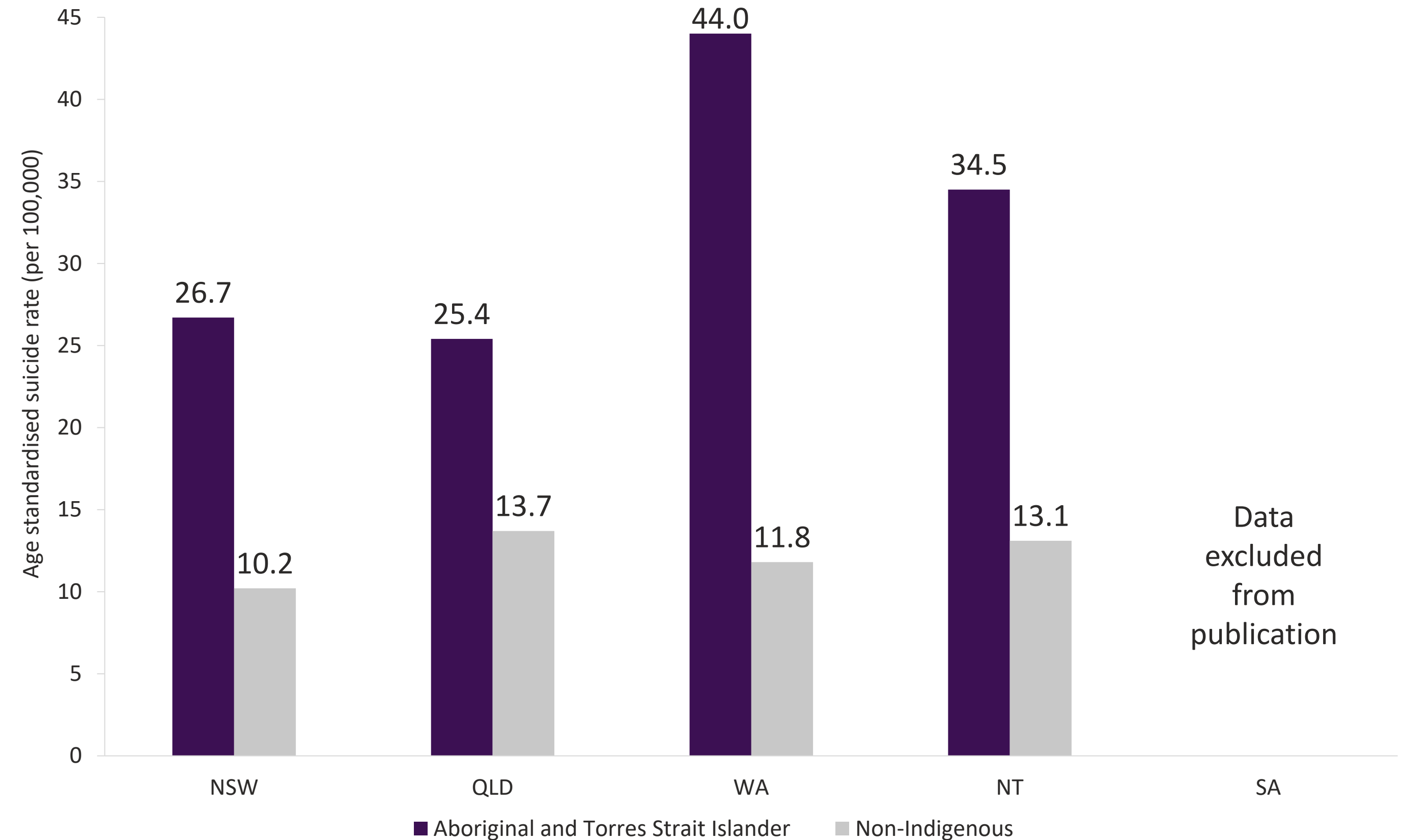
(ABS, 2023)



# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people: South Australia

## South Australia in 2022

- Data for South Australia in 2022 have been excluded in line with reporting guidelines.



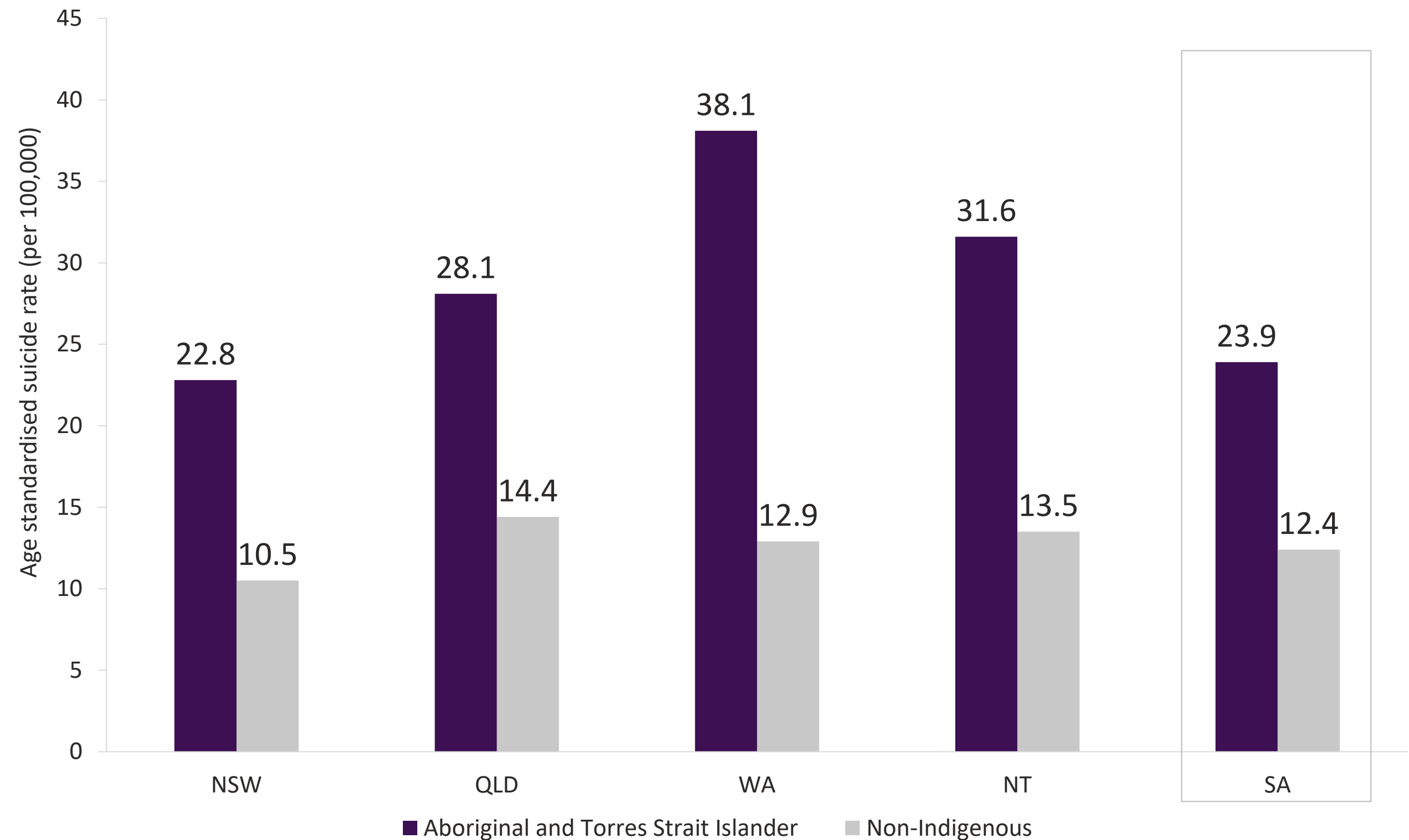
Note: Age-standardised suicide rates are compiled from the jurisdictions of NSW, QLD, WA, SA and NT.



# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people: South Australia

## South Australia 2018-2022

- Across a five-year period, **51** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have died by suicide.
- The age-standardised suicide rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (**23.9 per 100,000**) was considerably higher than the non-Indigenous age-standardised suicide rate (**12.4 per 100,000**).



Note: Age-standardised suicide rates are compiled from the jurisdictions of NSW, QLD, WA, SA and NT.



# Western Australia suicide data 2022

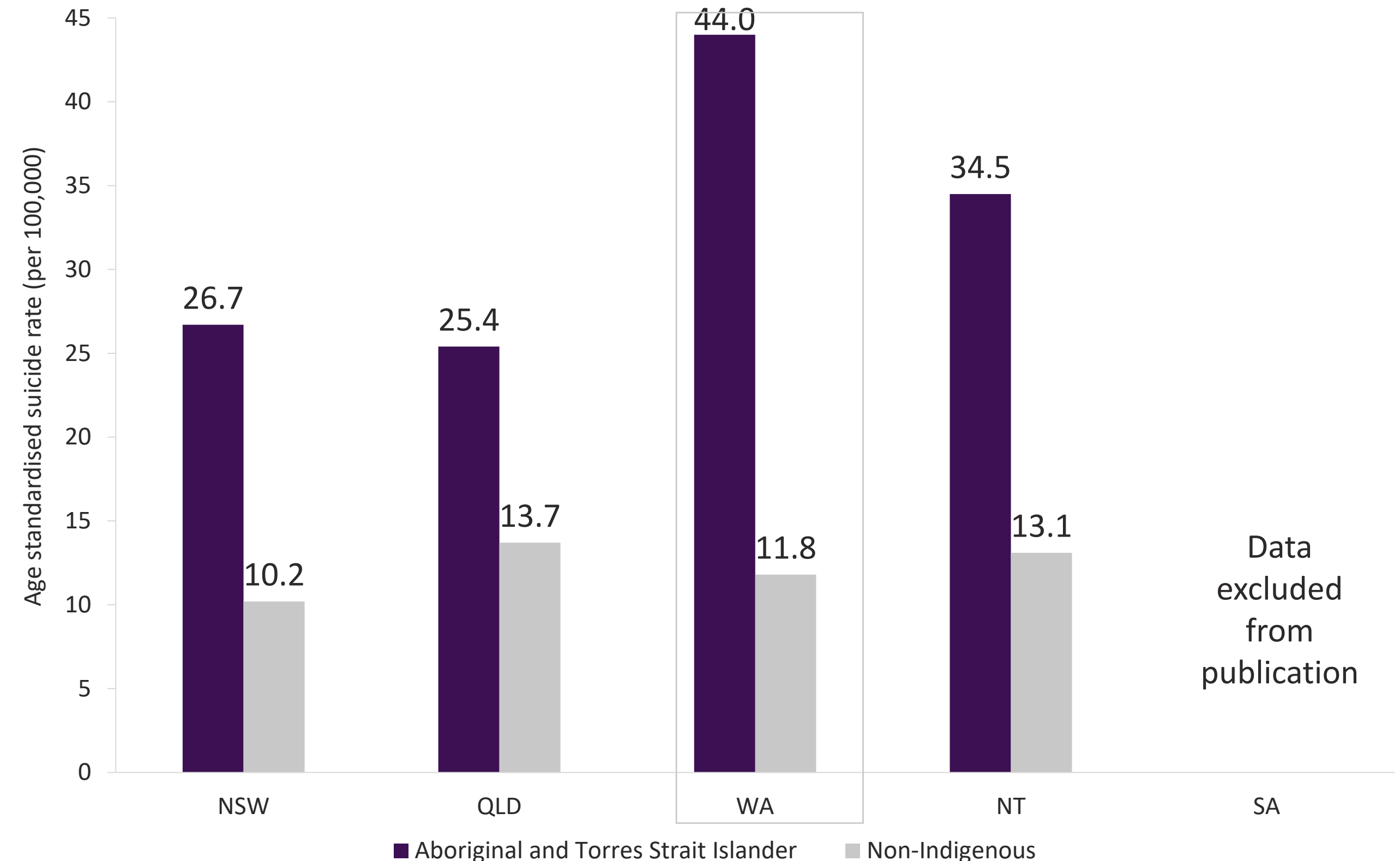
(ABS, 2023)



# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people: Western Australia

## Western Australia in 2022

- In Western Australia, **46 (37 male, 9 female)** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people died by suicide.
- Suicide was the **third leading cause of death** for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Western Australia, compared to the 15<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death for non-Indigenous people.
- The age standardised suicide rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (**44.0 per 100,000**) was considerably higher than the non-Indigenous suicide rate (11.8 per 100,000).



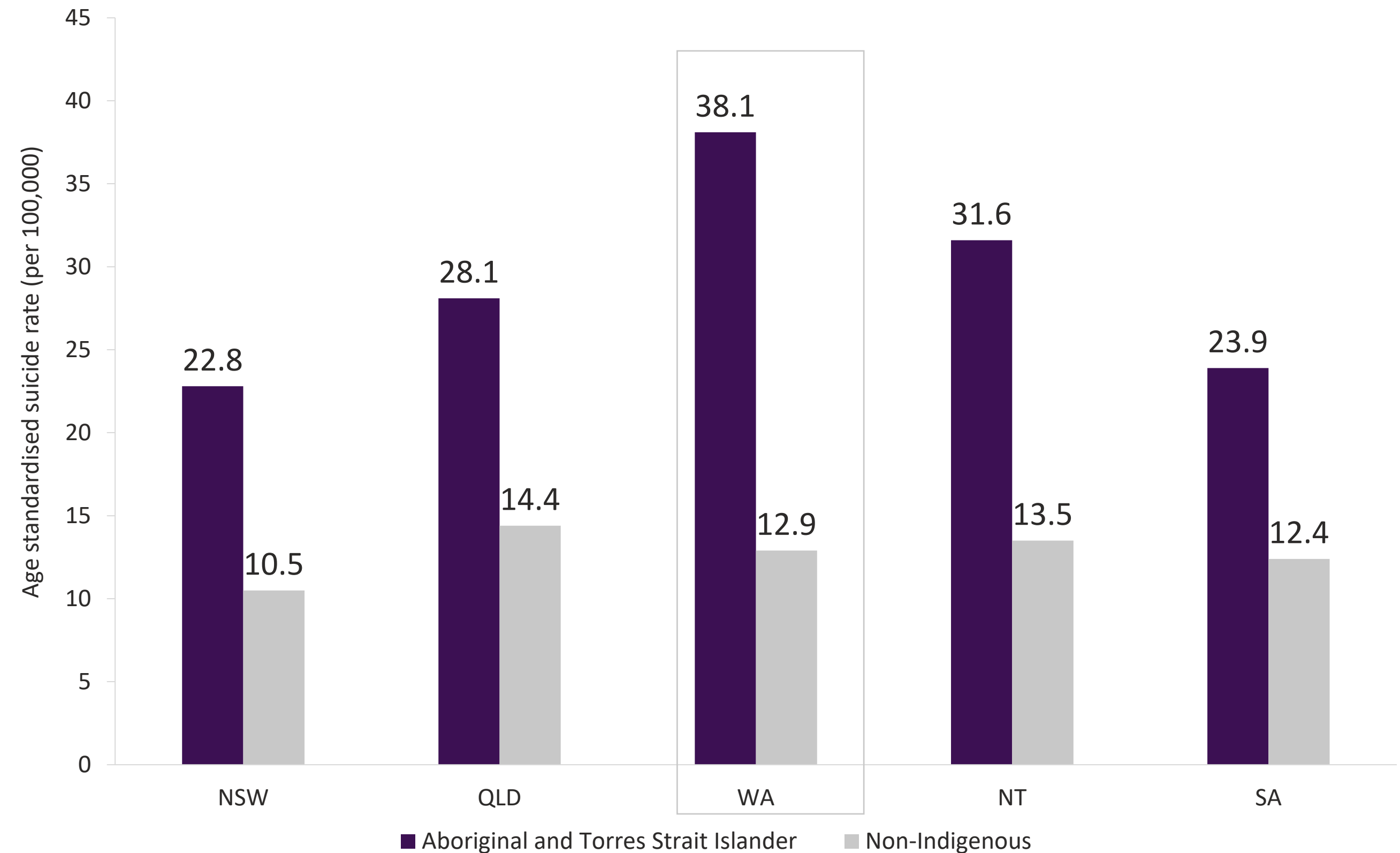
Note: Age-standardised suicide rates are compiled from the jurisdictions of NSW, QLD, WA, SA and NT.



# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people: Western Australia

## Western Australia 2018-2022

- Across a five-year period, **198** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people died by suicide.
- The age-standardised suicide rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (**38.1 per 100,000**) was higher than the non-Indigenous suicide rate (**12.9 per 100,000**).



Note: Age-standardised suicide rates are compiled from the jurisdictions of NSW, QLD, WA, SA and NT.



# Support services

Lifeline: 13 11 14 | Text 0477 131 114

[lifeline.org.au](http://lifeline.org.au)

Suicide Call Back Service: 1300 659 467

[suicidecallbackservice.org.au](http://suicidecallbackservice.org.au)

Beyond Blue: 1300 224 636

[beyondblue.org.au/forums](http://beyondblue.org.au/forums)

MensLine Australia: 1300 789 978

[mensline.org.au](http://mensline.org.au)

Standby Support After Suicide:

1300 727 247

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander: 13YARN.org.au | 13 92 76

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and/or intersex: 1800 184 527 | [qlife.org.au](http://qlife.org.au)

Culturally and linguistically diverse: [embracementalhealth.org.au](http://embracementalhealth.org.au)

Kids Helpline: 1800 551 800

[kidshelpline.com.au](http://kidshelpline.com.au)

headspace: 1800 650 890

[headspace.org.au](http://headspace.org.au)

ReachOut: [Reachout.com](http://Reachout.com)

Head to Health: mental health portal

[headtohealth.gov.au](http://headtohealth.gov.au)

*Life in Mind*: suicide prevention portal

[lifeinmind.org.au](http://lifeinmind.org.au)

SANE: 1800 187 263 | [saneforums.org](http://saneforums.org)



**Life in Mind**

An  **EVERYMIND** program

[lifeinmind.org.au](http://lifeinmind.org.au)



| @LifeinMindAU



The Centre of Best Practice in  
**Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander**  
Suicide Prevention



@CBPATSIISP



@Centre\_of\_Best\_Practice

[cbpatsisp.com.au](http://cbpatsisp.com.au)



***Life in Mind*** is a knowledge exchange portal providing translated evidence, policy, data and resources in suicide prevention, and is host of the National Communications Charter.

The Centre of Best Practice in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention (CBPATSISP) is located at the University of Western Australia (UWA) and is Australia's leading voice on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suicide prevention. The CBPATSISP is engaged in a range of activities, which ultimately aim to prevent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suicide and strengthen social and emotional wellbeing.

