Trends in Suicide Rates by Race and Ethnicity among Members of the United States Army

Background
- U.S. Army Veterans at high risk for suicide
- 2019
  - Decreases in overall suicide rates
  - Increases in suicide rates for certain racial groups
- Group differences in suicide trends can inform targeted suicide prevention strategies

Results

Suicide Rate per 100K

- AI/AN
- White
- AAPI
- Hispanic
- Black

- Suicide rates for American Indian/Alaska Native > White Not Hispanic > Asian American or Pacific Islander > Hispanic > Black Not Hispanic

- Due to the small sample size, Annual Percent Change and trend comparisons for AI/AN were not calculated

Methods
- Cohort: 860,930 Army Service Members who returned from deployment October 2007 - September 2014
- Design: Retrospective Cohort Study
- Data Sources:
  - Demographics: Substance Use and Psychological Injury Combat Study
  - Cause of Mortality: VA/DOD Mortality Data Repository

Results Cont.
- Veterans under 30 are at greater risk for post-deployment suicide
- Black Not Hispanic and Hispanic individuals had significantly lower suicide rates; however, analyses revealed increasing trends in hazard rates post-deployment

Conclusion
- Findings:
  - Consistent with literature regarding the general population
  - Age-specific suicide rates vary within racial/ethnic subgroups
- Post-deployment suicide prevention efforts need to address culturally relevant factors and social determinants of health