

**ABSTRACT**

Research that compares mortality data in large urban jail systems in the United States can provide valuable information for policy makers about ways to reduce the risk of inmate deaths. This paper examines mortality rates by cause of death in representative jail populations and compares them to mortality rates by cause of death in the U.S. resident population. It builds on extensive data collected by researchers for a ten year period. Recent trends and future directions for research are discussed.

**KEY WORDS:** DEATH IN CUSTODY; PRISONER MORTALITY; SUDDEN DEATH RISK FACTORS; LONGITUDINAL STUDY.