

Population-Level Vulnerabilities Relevant to Suicide Prevention in the Dominican Republic

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Background

Depression is a **major risk** factor for **suicidal behavior** and an important target for suicide prevention.

Identifying **population groups with depressive symptoms** and **related vulnerabilities** may strengthen early detection and targeted **prevention strategies**.

Population-level evidence from the **Dominican Republic** remains important for informing suicide prevention efforts within the Zero Suicide framework.

Objective

To identify factors associated with depressive symptoms among adults in the Dominican Republic and explore their implications for suicide prevention.

Methods

- Study design:** Secondary analysis of the 2024 Provincial Health Survey
- Setting:** Santiago and National District, Dominican Republic
- Sample:** 658 adults
- Data source:** Ministry of Public Health and Pontificia Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra
- Outcome:** Depressive symptoms measured using CESD-7
- Cutoff:** CESD-7 score ≥ 9

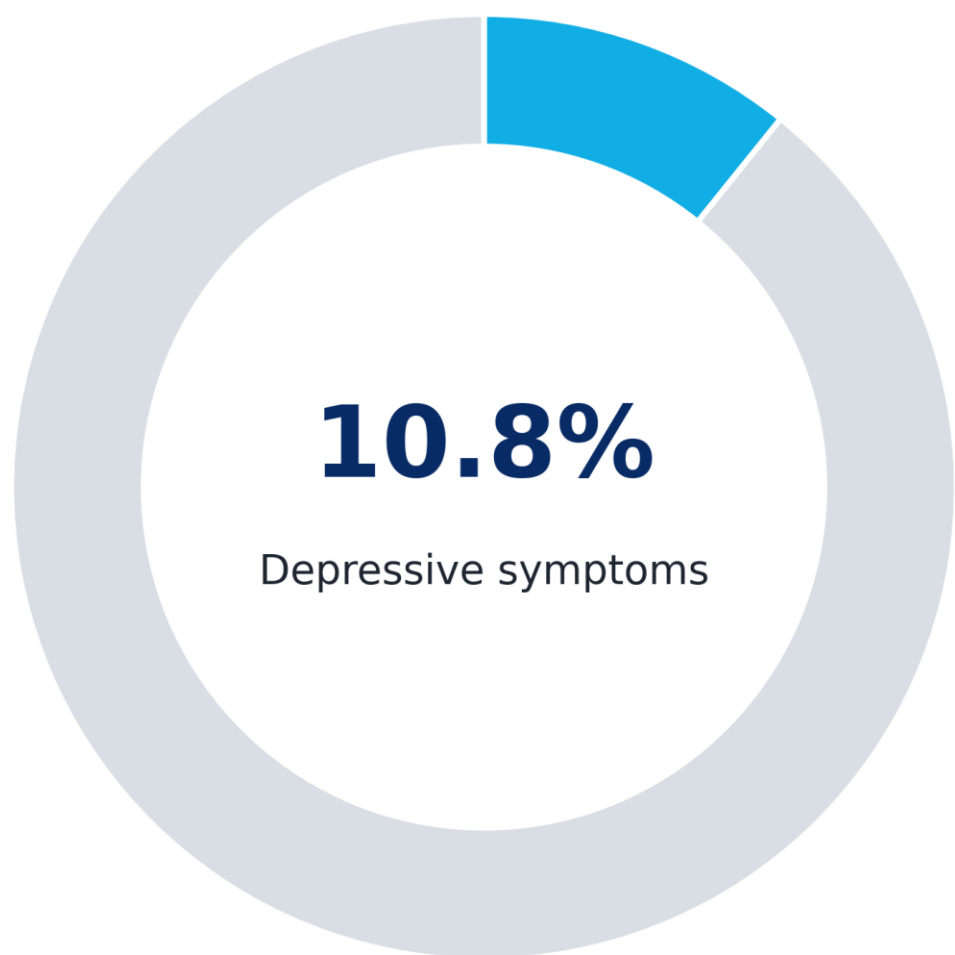
Factors evaluated:

- Sociodemographic characteristics
- Self-rated health
- Functional limitations
- Psychosocial factors
- Chronic conditions

•**Statistical analysis:** Chi-square tests; statistical significance set at $p < 0.05$.

Results

Prevalence of Depressive Symptoms



CESD-7 ≥ 9 • n=658 adults

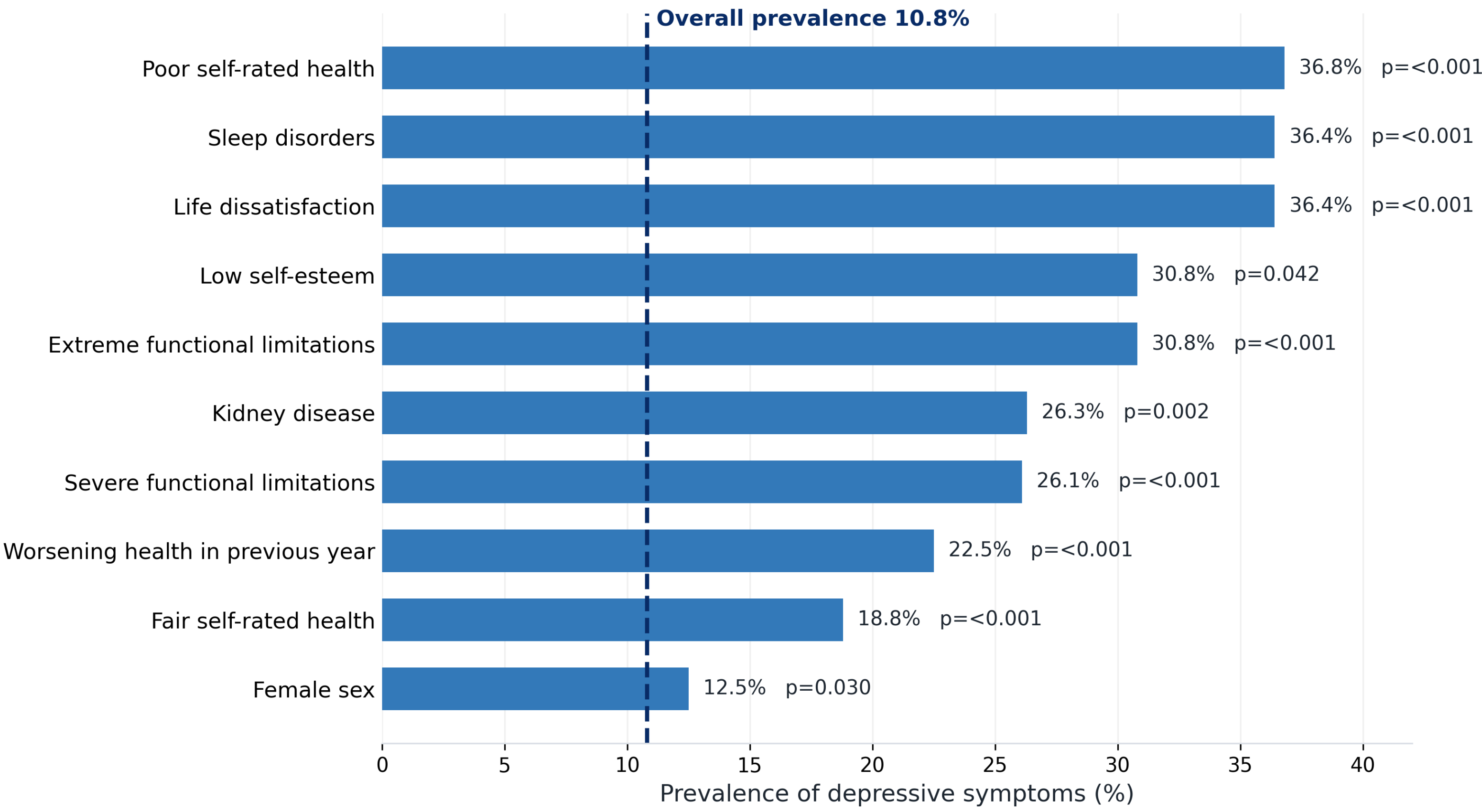
Source: 2024 Provincial Health Survey.

Overall prevalence of depressive symptoms (CESD-7 score ≥ 9): 10.8% (n=658).

No significant differences were observed between Santiago and the National District.

Results

Prevalence of Depressive Symptoms Among Selected Vulnerable Groups



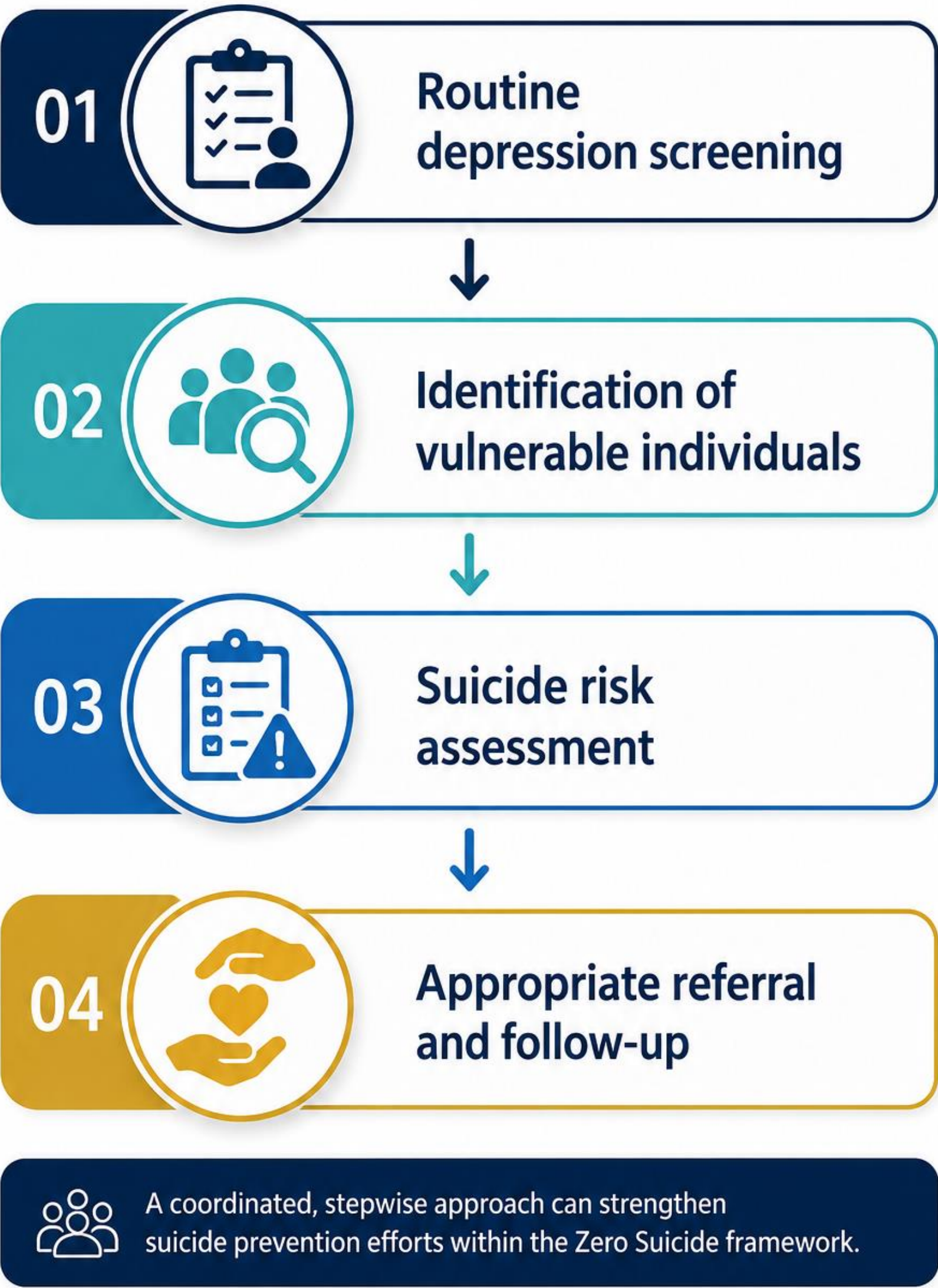
Source: 2024 Provincial Health Survey.

Dashed line indicates the overall prevalence of depressive symptoms (10.8%). All displayed associations were statistically significant ($p < 0.05$).

Depressive symptoms were significantly associated with sociodemographic, health-related, functional, and psychosocial factors, with prevalence exceeding 30% in several vulnerable groups.

Implications for Zero Suicide

Population-level evidence can support proactive identification of individuals who may require further assessment.



Conclusions

Depressive symptoms affected approximately **1 in 10 adults** in the study population.

Higher prevalence was observed among individuals experiencing **poor perceived health, functional impairment, sleep disturbances, and psychosocial vulnerabilities**.

These findings identify population groups that may benefit from **enhanced depression screening and suicide risk assessment**.

Acknowledgements

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