



Health Quality &
Safety Commission
Te Tāhū Hauora

Monitoring Report: Sudden Unexpected Death in infancy

Ko te Mana o te Pēpi

31/08/2026



Doug Edwards
Health Quality and Safety
Commission Te Tāhū
Hauora

Doug will open and
close the webinar



He Mutunga Kore The National Mortality Review Committee

- Why monitoring and reporting on SUDI deaths matters
- We all need to act on these findings

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The role of He Mutunga Kore (NMRC)

- He Mutunga Kore has prioritized reducing SUDI deaths.
- **The Health Futures (Pae Ora) Act 2022** describes the role and powers of NMRC:
 - To review and report on deaths of persons, with a view to reducing the numbers of deaths
 - The chairperson may require a person to give information (schedule 5 of the act)
- **Te Pou - Māori responsive rubric**
Guides interpretation and reporting on Māori mortality.

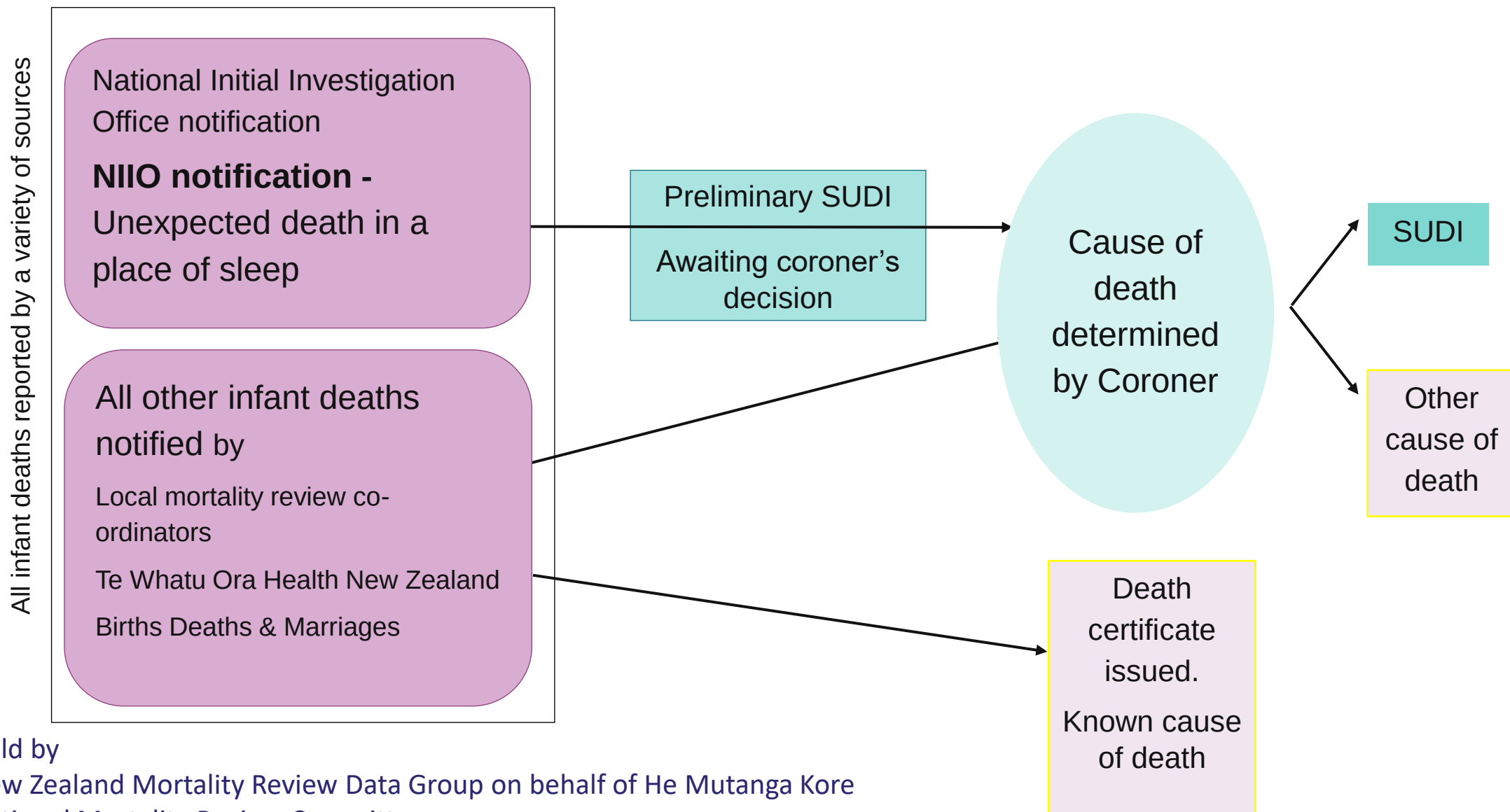
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Where does SUDI data come from

How is data looked after and protected

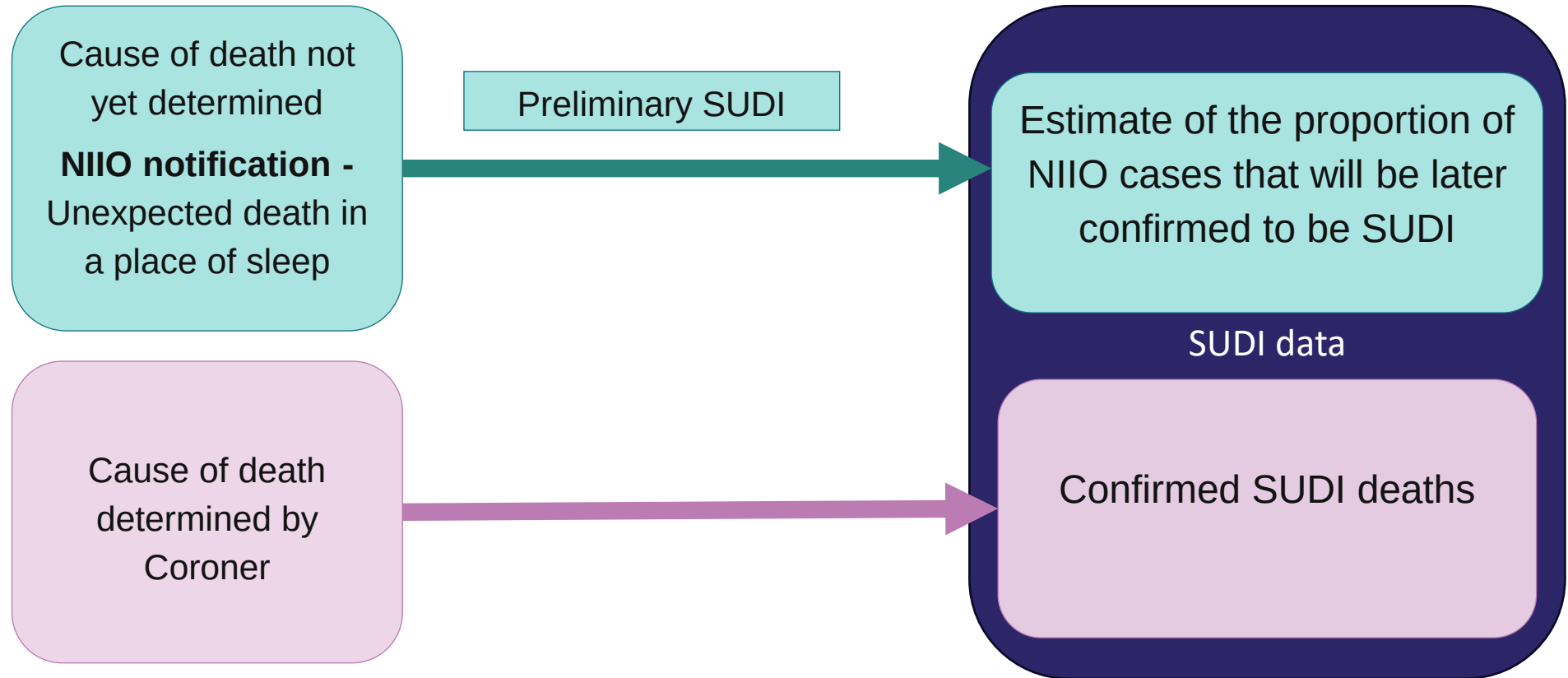
How we can use the data to prevent future deaths

Finding the SUDI cases



Held by
New Zealand Mortality Review Data Group on behalf of He Mutanga Kore
National Mortality Review Committee

The reporting dataset analysis



NIIO – National Initial Investigations Office within the Coroners Court.

A 'NIIO notification' is triggered when the police inform them of an unexpected death in place of sleep.



Patterns within a population



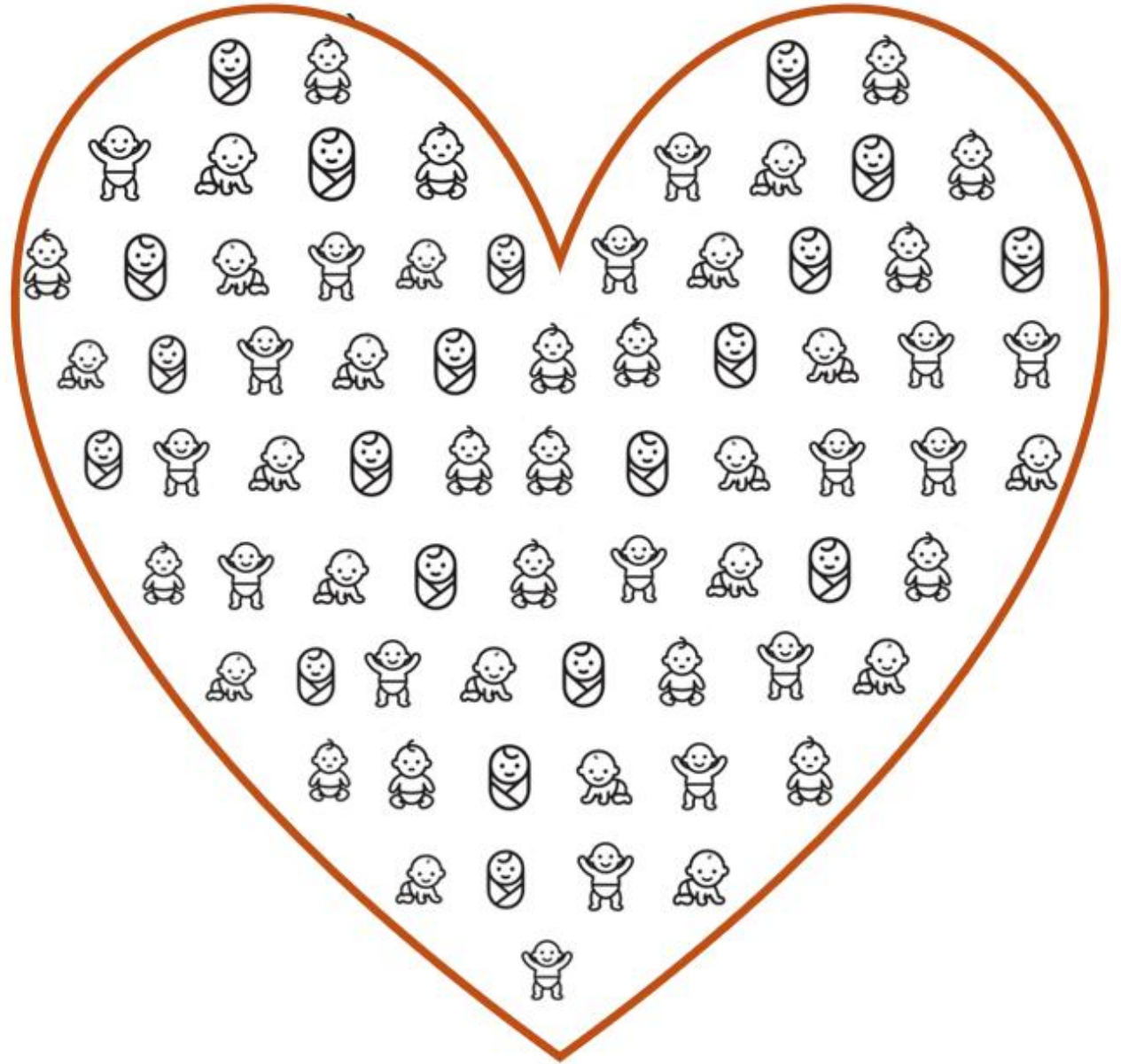
Identify commonalities,
trends, needs of different
subgroups



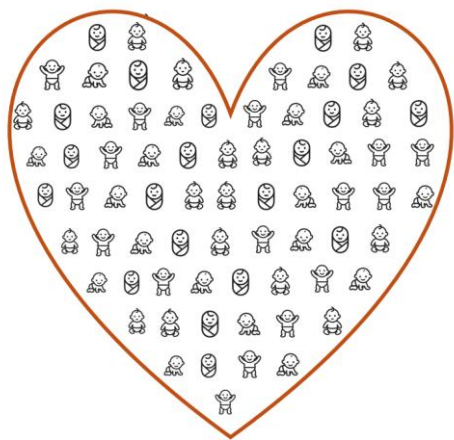
Supports evidenced-based
decision making, resource
allocation



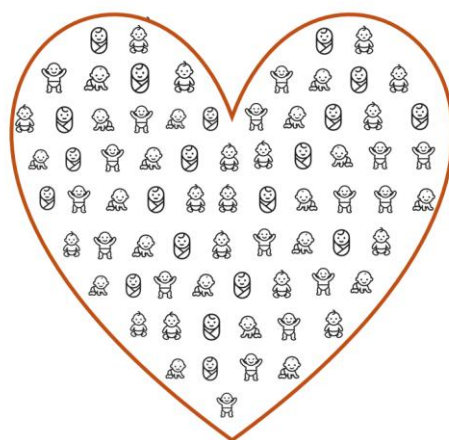
Improve outcomes



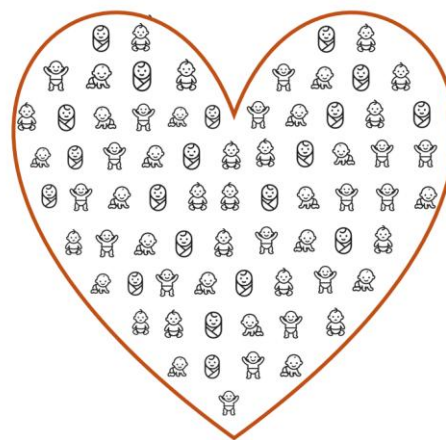
Babies born in...



2007



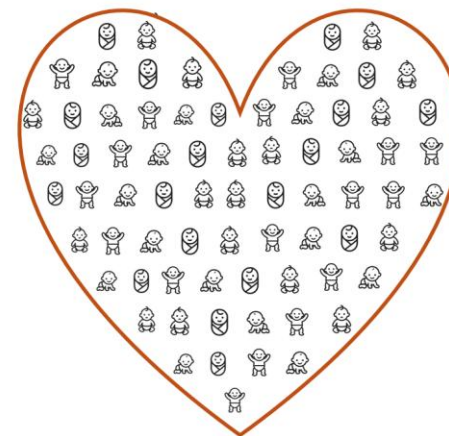
2008



2009

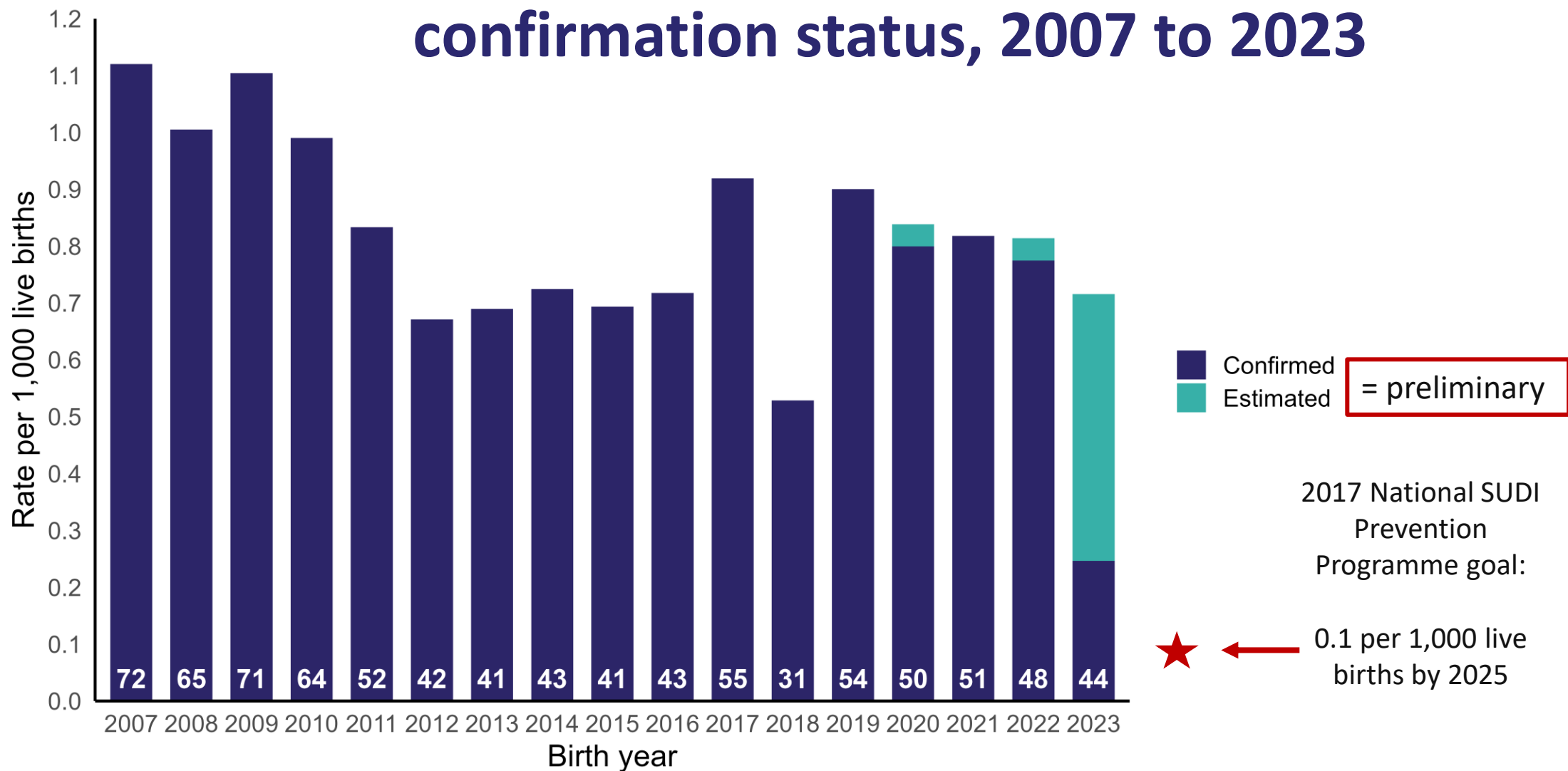


2023



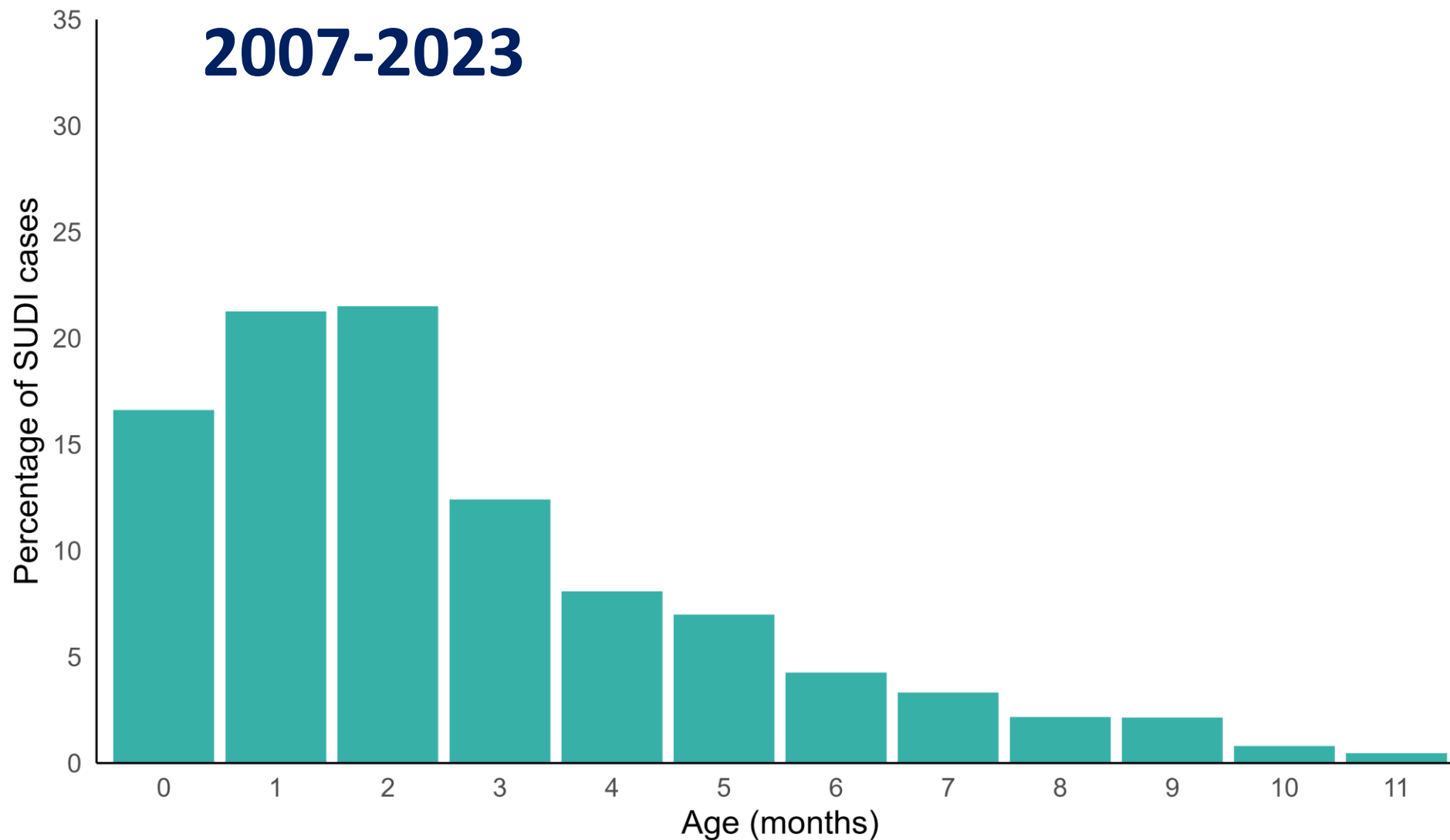
“followed” until their 1st birthday

SUDI rates (and counts) by year of birth and confirmation status, 2007 to 2023



Numbers show SUDI cases

Proportion of SUDI cases by age at death, 2007-2023



SUDI cases between 2007 and 2023. Rates from 2020 include confirmed and estimated SUDI cases.



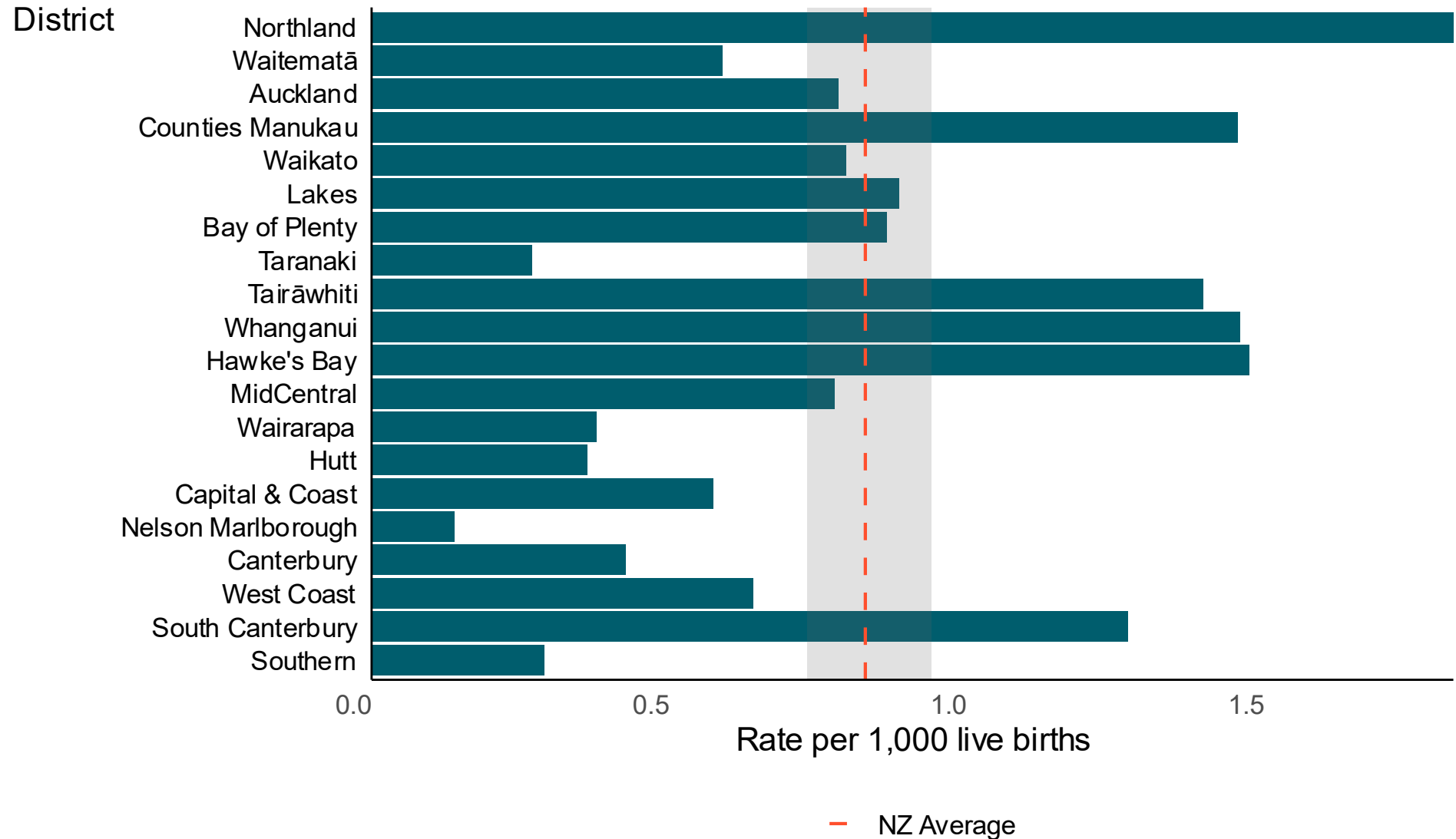
Proportion of SUDI cases by gestational age, 2007-2023

Gestational group	Percent of all live births 2007-2023*	Number of SUDI cases	SUDI cases (%)
Pre-term < 37 weeks	7.9	167	19.3
Term and beyond 37 weeks plus	92.0	666	77.0
Unknown	0.1	32	3.7

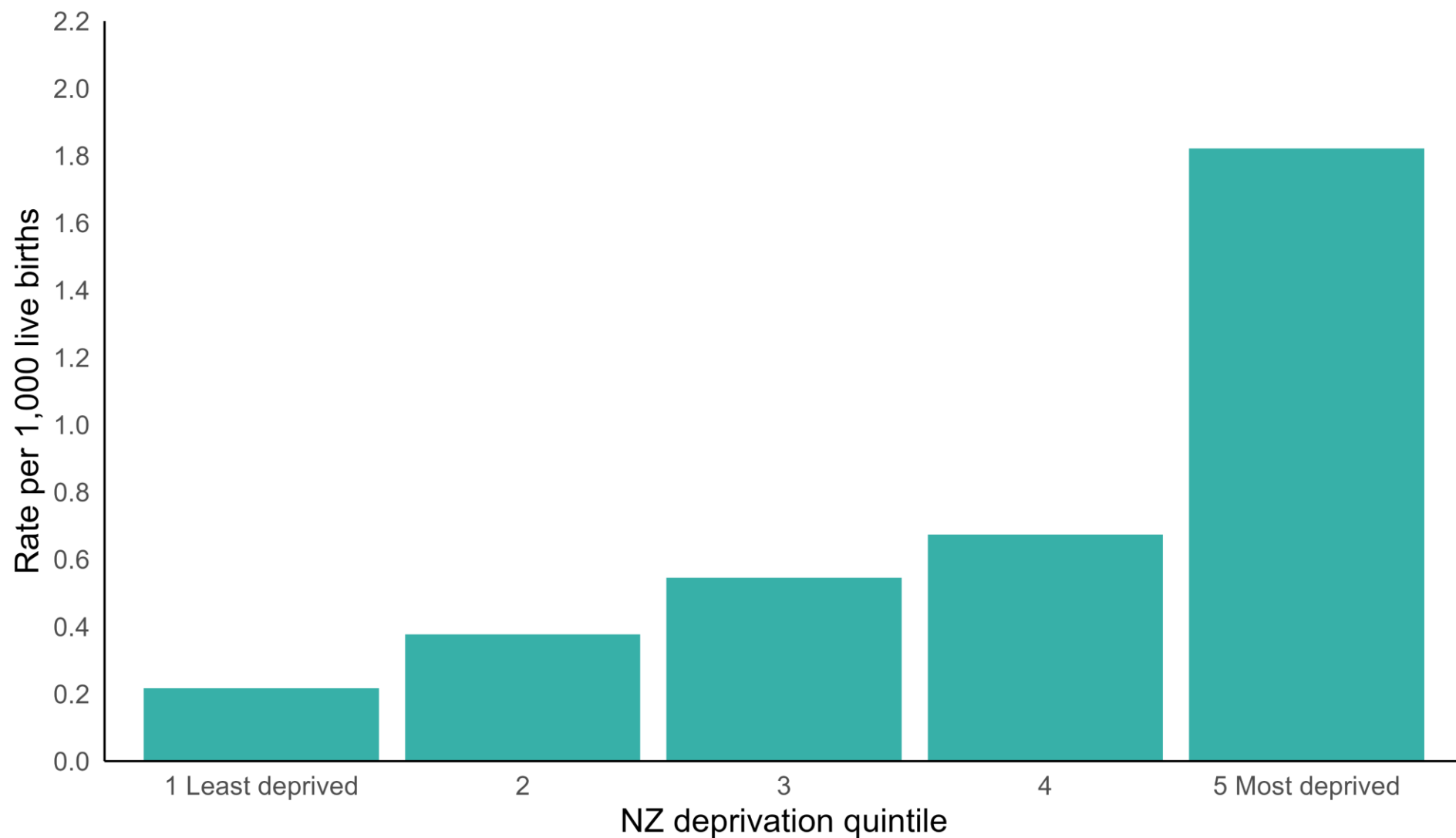
Notes: From 2020 SUDI cases include confirmed plus 85 percent of preliminary cases. Rounding of these estimated cases impacts on SUDI case counts.

*[Report on Maternity web tool – tewhatauora.govt.nz](https://www.tewhatauora.govt.nz/report-on-maternity-web-tool)

SUDI rates by district, 2019 to 2023

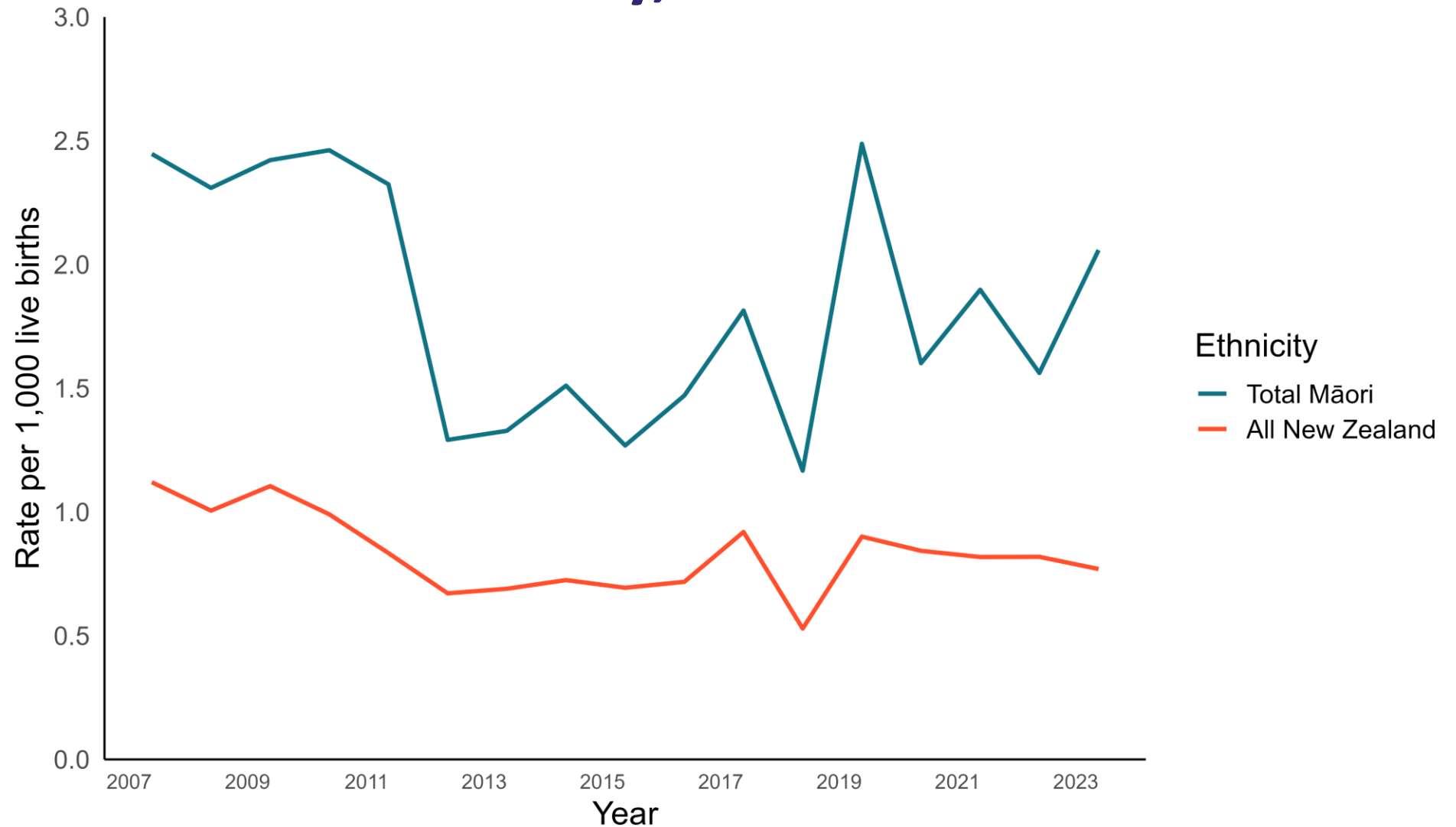


SUDI rates by NZ deprivation quintile, 2019 to 2023



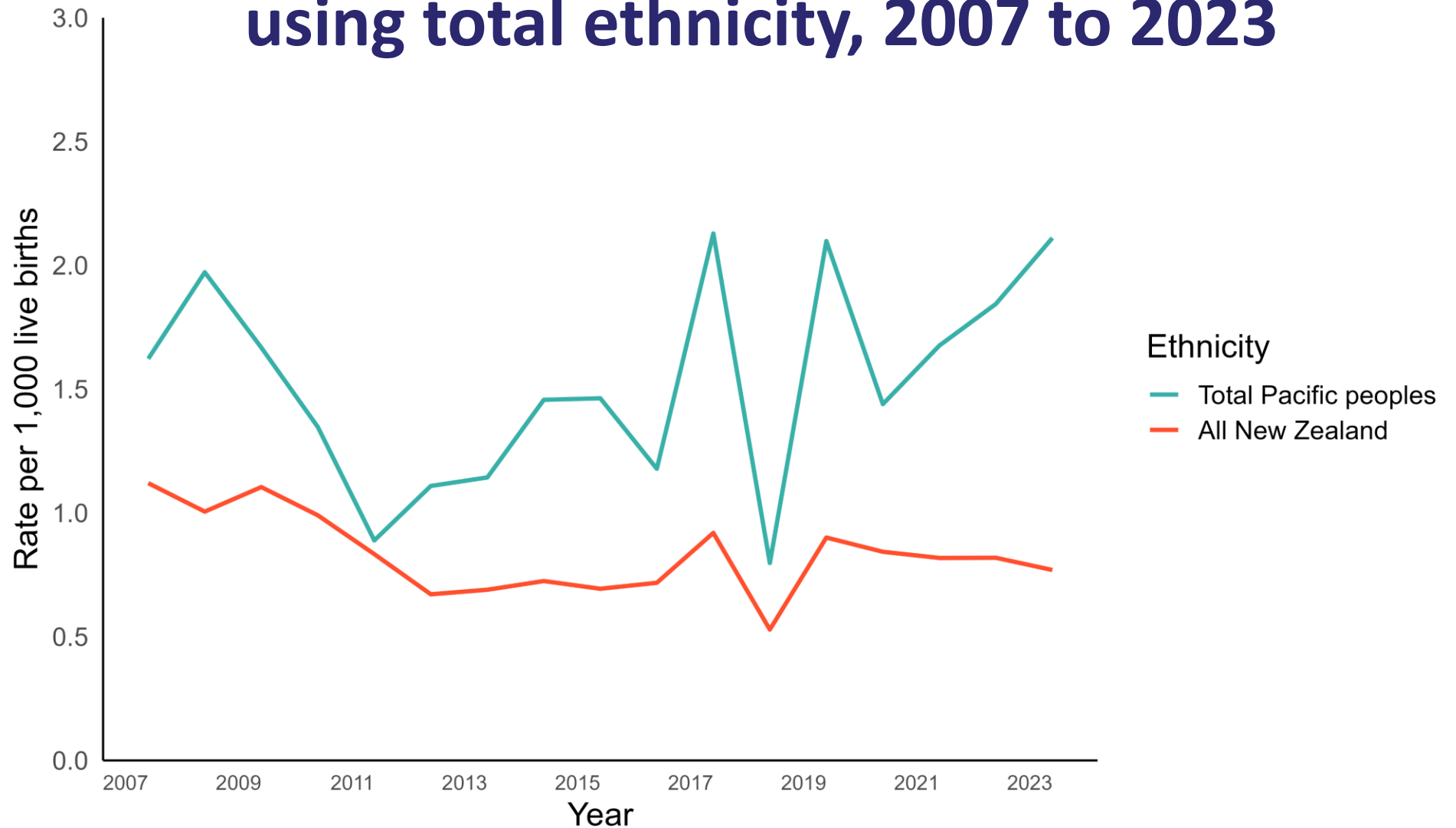
SUDI cases between 2019 and 2023. Rates from 2020 include confirmed and estimated cases.

SUDI rates for Māori vs. all New Zealand using total ethnicity, 2007 to 2023



Rates from 2020 include confirmed and estimated cases.

SUDI rates for Pacific peoples vs. all New Zealand using total ethnicity, 2007 to 2023



Rates from 2020 include confirmed and estimated cases.



More analytical results are included in the full report which is available on the Health Quality and Safety Commission Te Tāhū Hauora website

Upcoming:

- These analyses will be updated to include SUDI cases among infants born in 2024, and will be published in a new report with interactive features
- We are improving our data systems, aiming to publish more timely analyses



The report findings

- The current national SUDI rate is 0.8 per 1000 live births
- SUDI rates are highest in areas of greater social and economic deprivation
- The SUDI rate is higher for Māori and Pacific infants

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findings continued ...

- For all infants, the greatest risk period for a SUDI death is in the first four months of life
- There is an increased risk of SUDI for premature babies
- Northland, Counties Manukau, Tairāwhiti, Whanganui, Hawke's Bay and South Canterbury have SUDI rates above the national average



Key Questions

Answered by the Panel

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Acknowledgments

- The significant impact on whānau, each life represented in this report is precious, we undertake the work with aroha, humility, and respect for the grief and strength carried within each family's story
- He Mutunga Kore National Mortality Review Committee
- Kaimahi: NMRC Management Group, Health Quality Intelligence Group, Māori Data Governance and Equity, People Culture and Capability
- SUDI Engagement Hui: representation from MoH, Health NZ, Researchers, Hāpai Te Hauora, Moana Connect, Communio, Whānau Āwhina Plunket, Eastern Institute of Technology (EIT)
- Review and advice by EAG Hāpai Te Hauora, Moana Connect.



ICD coding for SUDI

ICD - International Classification of Diseases

- R95 Sudden infant death syndrome
- R96 Other sudden death, cause unknown
- R98 Unattended death
- R99 Other ill-defined and unspecified causes of mortality
- W75 Accidental suffocation and strangulation in bed;
- W78 Inhalation of gastric contents
- W79 Inhalation and ingestion of food causing obstruction of respiratory tract.