

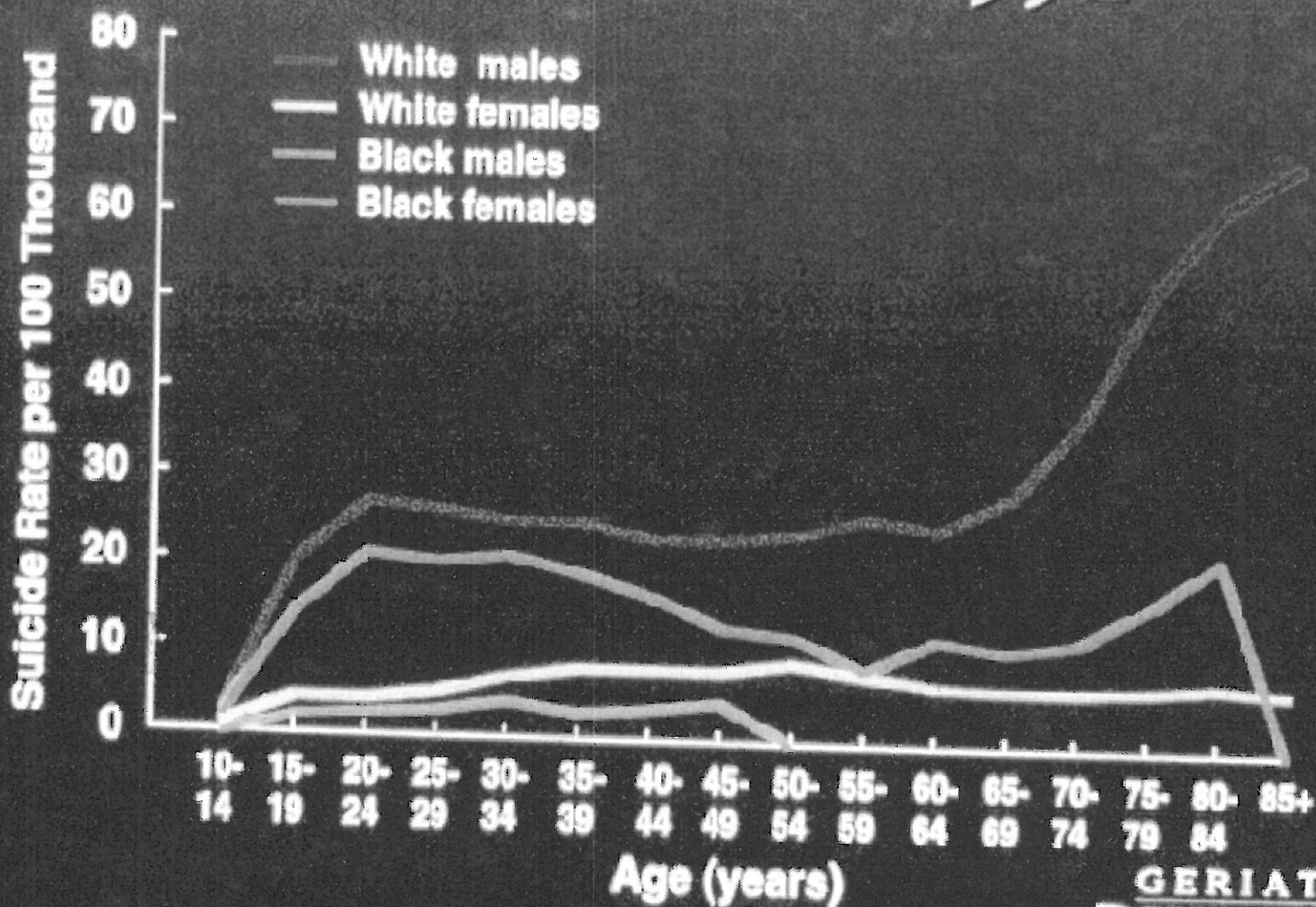
Mental Illness In Geriatric Prison Population
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1. Mental illness, including substance abuse, is common in the older prison population.
 - Depression is most common, up to 30%
 - Risks are poor self-perceived health, prior depression—not length of sentence
 - Alcohol abuse rates are very high; most have no prior substance treatment
2. Most mental illness in the prison population is undetected and untreated.
 - ½ with bipolar illness or schizophrenia have no medication
 - Only 12% with depression are getting treatment
 - The rates of treated non-mental illness are much higher
 - Suicide rates are higher in prison; suicide is the leading cause of death
 - After release, rates of referral are low; mortality in first two weeks is high
3. Mental illness in older adults causes
 - More hours of care in nursing homes
 - More days in bed
 - More medical costs, visits, prescriptions
 - Reduced productivity

Recommendations:

- A. Mental illness in prison populations should be detected (screening) and treated
- B. Treatment should be based in the public health system in collaboration with the correctional system
- C. Discharge planning and aftercare needs to be part of the standard of care.

Rate of Suicide by Age, Race and Sex — 1992



National Center for Health Statistics.

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