## Background

### Definition of Suicide
- Suicide is defined as: death caused by injuring oneself with the intent to die. Suicide is not influenced by one individual factor, it includes a combination of psychosocial, biological, interpersonal, environmental and societal influences (Stone, et. al., 2017).

### National & State Firearm Laws
- State firearm laws include: mandatory waiting periods, universal background checks, gun lock requirements, open carry limitations)
- State laws (permit to purchase a handgun, registration of handgun, license to own a handgun) are useful in decreasing the overall suicide rates (Kenney et al. 2019). Laws such as requiring a permit to purchase a handgun, registration of handgun, and license to own a handgun are useful in decreasing suicide completion rates.

### Current Statistics
- In 2017, suicide was the tenth leading cause of death in the United States (CDC).
- Suicide rates increased 28% from 2000 to 2015 (CDC, 2015).
- In 2015, suicide by firearm accounted for half of all suicide completions (CDC).

### National & State Firearm Laws
- The Association Between State Laws Regulating Handgun Ownership and Statewide Suicide Rates, 2015
- The Association Between State Laws Regulating Handgun Ownership and Statewide Suicide Rates, 2017
- The Association Between State Laws Regulating Handgun Ownership and Statewide Suicide Rates, 2019

## Question
- In the United States, do increased gun regulations compared to minimal gun regulations affect suicide completion rates?

## Study

### Associations Between Gun Laws and Suicides, 2019
- Level III retrospective comparative study that examined the impact of state legislation (scored A, B, C, D, F on Brady Violence Scale) on suicide completion rates in hospitals.
- Results indicated that “stricter gun laws were associated with lower rates of firearm suicides in the overall population” (Ghiani et al. 2019). Laws such as requiring a permit to purchase a handgun, registration of handguns, and license to own a handgun are useful in decreasing the overall suicide rate.

### Handgun Legislation and Changes in Statewide Overall Suicide Rates, 2017
- Level III retrospective comparative study that examined the impact of four state laws (mandatory waiting periods, universal background checks, gun lock requirements, open carry limitations) on suicide completion rates.
- Results indicated all three laws (universal background checks, mandatory waiting periods) are useful in decreasing overall suicide rates (Anestis et al., 2017).

### Weaker Gun State Laws are Associated with Higher Rates of Suicide Secondary to Firearms, 2017
- Level III retrospective comparative study that examined the impact of 14 state laws on suicide completion rates.
- Results indicated that in states that were less strict there was a significantly higher rate of firearm suicide attempts; nevertheless, based on the study design it does not prove that there is a direct association between the incidence and mortality from firearm guns and specific regulations (Alban et al. 2017).

### Conclusion
- Overall, implementing stricter firearm regulations decrease suicide rates.
- Majority of the articles supported the PICOT question; however, some articles did not show decreased suicide completion rate.
- As a result, more research is needed to definitively answer the PICOT question.

## Application
- Nurses can potentially apply the information from this study to advocate for stricter firearm regulation and decrease suicide rates in the United States.
- Nurses must be informed on current issues and laws in their state and nation.
- Possible interventions the nurse could implement include: education on gun safety, organizing educational community classes to increase gun safety, providing mental health resources, and fostering an environment for discussion around legislation.
- Nurses may use the findings of this research to screen for gun usage and accessibility in mental health assessments.