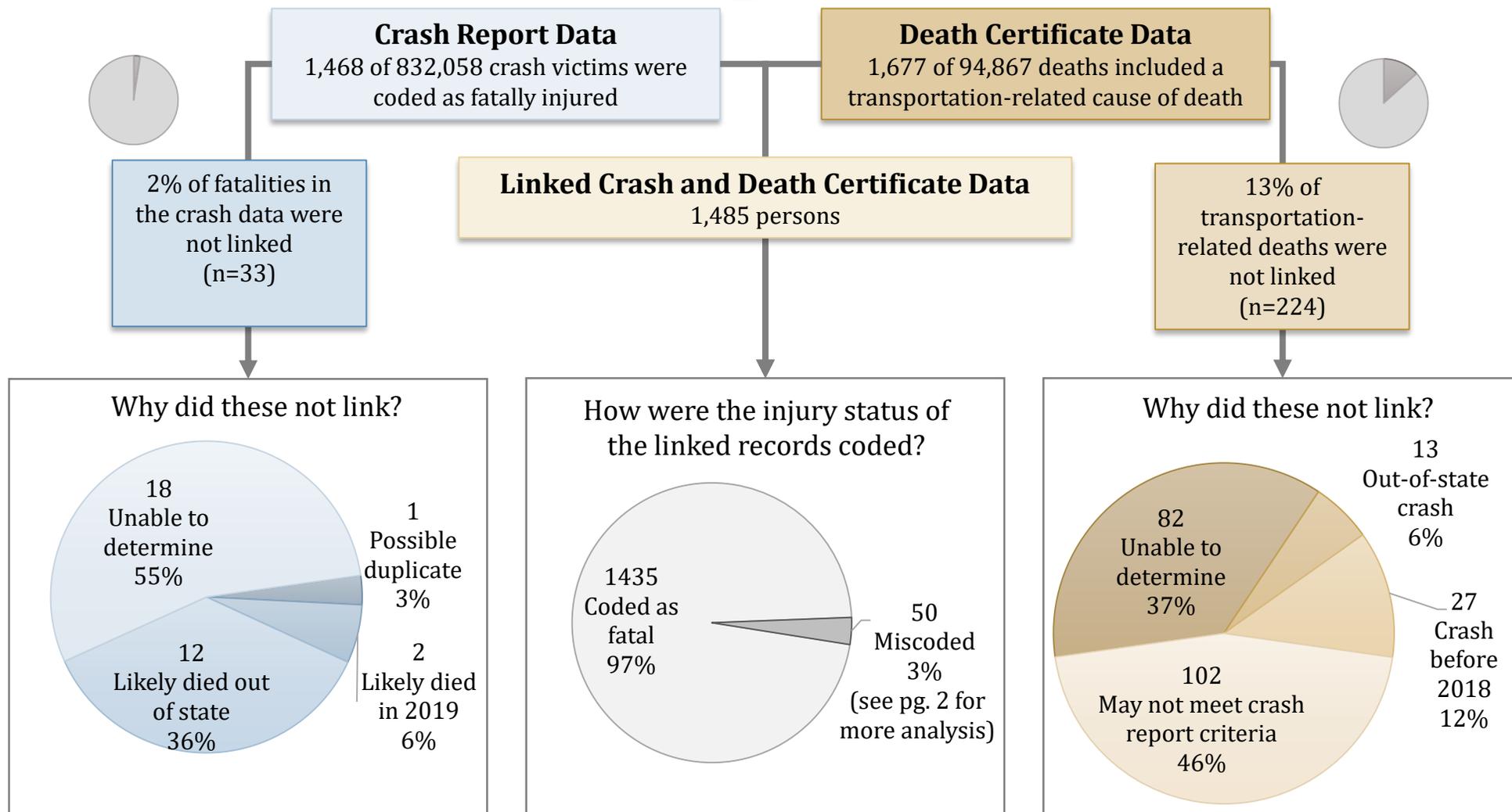


Linking 2018 Crash Reports with Death Certificates in North Carolina: Overall Results and Miscoded Crash Fatalities

As part of a CDC-funded project to create the North Carolina Crash Injury Surveillance System (NC-CISS), we linked 2018 crash report data with death certificate data. We reviewed all matches to create a ‘gold standard’ linked dataset, resulting in 1,485 linked records. All linked records were either reported as a fatality in the crash data or had a transportation-related cause of death.



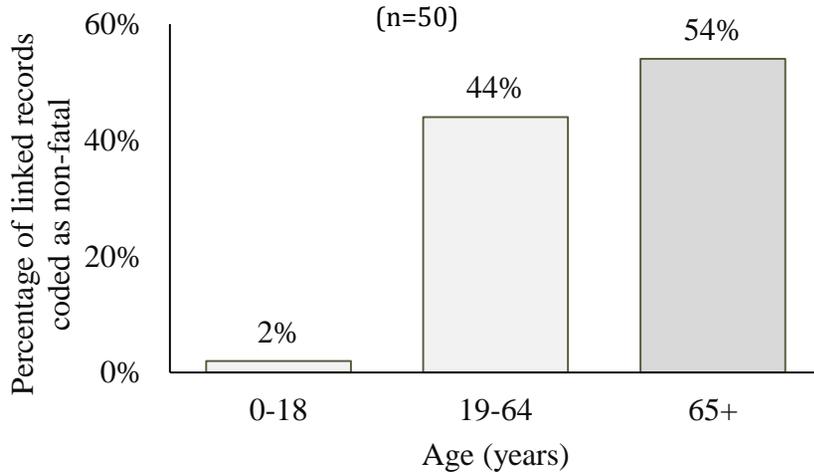
Based on linked and unlinked 2018 crash and death certificate data. All percentages have been rounded to the nearest integer value, so percentage totals may not sum to 100%.

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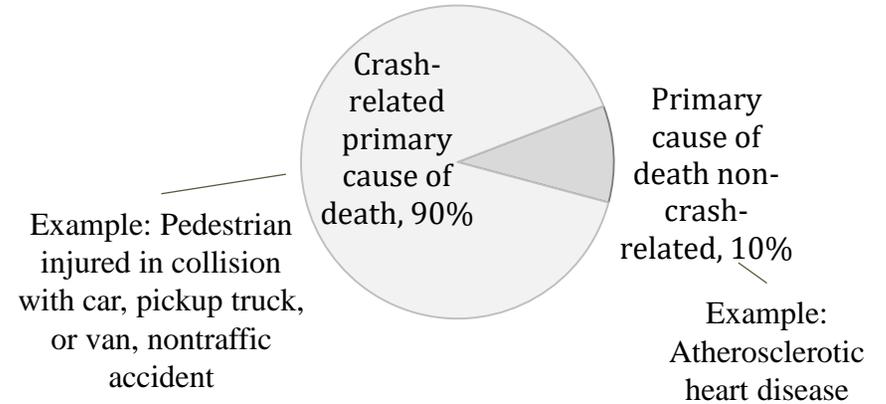
Crash Fatalities Miscoded as Non-Fatal in 2018 North Carolina Crash Reports

Any death resulting from a motor vehicle crash within 12 months after the crash should be reported as a fatality in the crash data, according to the 2018 NC DMV-349 Crash Report Instructional Manual. However, 50 of the 1,485 linked crash and death certificate records were coded as non-fatal in the crash reports. We described these linked records and reviewed some of the reasons these fatalities may have been miscoded as non-fatalities.

Most of the fatalities were at least 65 years old.

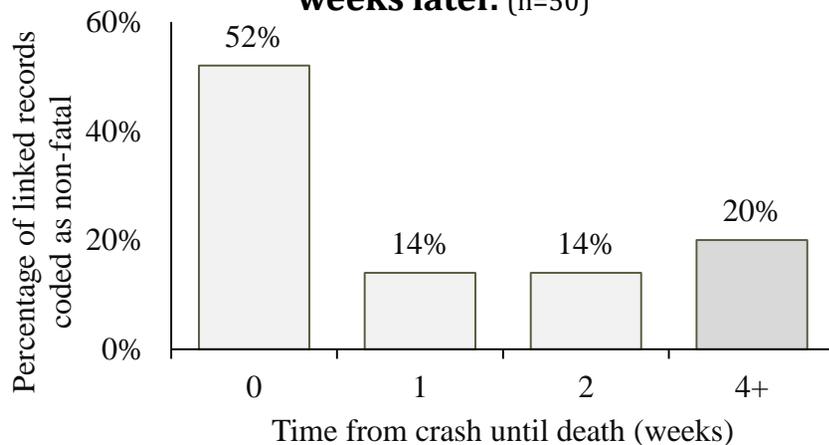


10% of the fatalities had non-crash-related primary causes of death*. (n=50)



*Based on the ICD-10 ACME primary cause of death variable

Almost half of the deaths occurred at least one week after the crash and 20% died four or more weeks later. (n=50)



Summary of possible factors why crash fatalities were miscoded as non-fatalities in the crash report

- Older crash victims may not be able to recover from injuries that appear non-fatal at the crash site.
- Fatalities may be missed due to the lag time between the crash and the death.
- The crash may have only been a contributing cause of death, rather than the primary cause of death.

Miscoded fatalities are uncommon. However, small changes in crash fatality numbers may have a large influence on policy and planning for some jurisdictions.

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