

## Publicly Reported Hospice Characteristics based on Public Use File (PUF) Data Fact Sheet

This Fact Sheet provides information about the Post-Acute Care and Hospice Utilization and Payment Public Use File (PUF)-based characteristics publicly reported by the Hospice Quality Reporting Program (HQRP).

### Summary

The CMS HQRP publicly reports data from the PUF alongside quality and patient experience measures. As part of broader efforts to support safe, high-quality hospice care, CMS expanded the hospice-specific information available for consumers. These data describe Medicare-certified hospice providers and the patients they serve in a user-friendly format. Because the PUF reflects information that many consumers consider when choosing a hospice, these data can help people make more informed decisions using publicly available information. Stakeholders can find these PUF-based characteristics on [the Compare Tool on Medicare.gov](#).

### The characteristics include:

- Average number of patients a hospice cares for each day (average daily census)
- Levels of hospice care provided
- Conditions treated\*
- Location where hospice care was provided\*\*
- Types of Medicare patients served (including Medicare Advantage patients and those dually eligible for Medicaid and Medicare coverage)

### Notes:

\* Each patient is counted in only one of the six diagnostic categories, based on the primary diagnosis associated with the most hospice care days.

\*\*Location of care is based on where the patients received the most hospice care days.

### Background on the Public Use File data

CMS publishes the PUF annually on its website. The file includes 100% of Medicare enrollment and fee-for-service final claims data. Although widely downloaded for research, the original files were not user-friendly and did not help consumers compare providers. To make public data more useful for beneficiaries and their caregivers, CMS

finalized a policy in the FY 2019 Hospice Wage Index Final Rule (83 FR 38622, August 8, 2018) to report information from public files, like the PUF, in a more accessible format.

The Post-Acute Care PUF began with Calendar Year 2017 and replaced the legacy Hospice PUF, which covered calendar years 2014 through 2016. After its initial release in May 2019, CMS made several updates and added two more publicly reported characteristics in May 2021. The HQRP no longer reports national averages for the conditions treated or location of care, allowing users to focus on the characteristics of individual hospices. The location of care measure now also shows the percentage of the hospice's patients served in each setting.

As noted in the [PAC and Hospice PUF Methodology](#), use caution when comparing metrics in the stand-alone PUFs with those in the current Post-Acute Care PUF, because some metric names and definitions were adjusted to support consistent calculations across settings.

For more information, please visit: [Medicare Post-Acute Care & Hospice | CMS Data](#)