

## Many with cancer hospitalized, undergo imaging at end of life

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(HealthDay)—About half of cancer patients are hospitalized and

undergo at least one imaging scan at the end of life, according to a study published online July 24 in the *Journal of Oncology Practice*.

Cara L. McDermott, Pharm.D., Ph.D., from the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center in Seattle, and colleagues linked [insurance claims](#) to [clinical information](#) to examine indicators of high-quality end-of-life care. Patients aged  $\geq 18$  years with an invasive solid tumor with a recorded death date, who were enrolled in a commercial plan for the last month of life, and who made at least one insurance claim in the last 90 days of life were enrolled.

The researchers found that among 6,568 commercially insured [patients](#), 56.3 percent were hospitalized and 48.6 percent underwent one or more imaging scans in the last month of life. Overall, 31.4 percent of patients younger than 65 years were enrolled in [hospice](#); 40.5 percent of those not enrolled in hospice had received an opioid prescription. Among young adults not enrolled in hospice, opioid use in the last 30 days of life decreased over time, from 44.7 percent in 2007 to 2009 to 42.5 percent in 2010 to 2012, and to 36.7 percent in 2013 to 2015.

"Our findings suggest that policies that facilitate appropriate imaging, opioid, and hospice use and that encourage supportive care may improve end-of-life care and quality of life," the authors write.

One author disclosed financial ties to the pharmaceutical industry, and second author disclosed ties to a company that provides virtual care.

**More information:** [Abstract](#)  
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