

Use of palliative care, oxygen therapy increasing for COPD

July 2 2018



(HealthDay)—For patients with advanced chronic obstructive pulmonary

disease (COPD), the use of formal palliative care services and long-term oxygen therapy has increased but remains low, according to a study published online June 11 in the *American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine*.

Andrea S. Gershon, M.D., from Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre in Toronto, and colleagues described trends in use of end-of-life care strategies by people with advanced COPD. The annual proportions of individuals who received formal palliative care, long-term oxygen therapy, or opioids from 2004 to 2014 were ascertained.

A total of 151,912 individuals with advanced COPD were identified in Ontario between 2004 and 2014. The researchers found that there was a 1 percent increase per year in the use of formal [palliative care services](#), from 5.3 percent in 2004 to 14.3 percent in 2014 (P for trend trend = 0.08). The likelihood of using formal palliative care services and long-term oxygen therapy was lower among younger individuals.

"Efforts should focus on increasing access to such strategies as well as educating patients and providers of their benefits," the authors write.

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Citation: Use of palliative care, oxygen therapy increasing for COPD (2018, July 2) retrieved 23 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2018-07-palliative-oxygen-therapy-copd.html>

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