

## Importance to Social Work

Hospice social workers understand the dying process and help hospice patients and their family with end of life care

Understanding the diagnosis of the patient is important to be able to give full care to the patient and provide them with the resources needed

## Background of the Problem

Before a patient can be admitted to hospice a Dr. has to indicate they have less than 6 months to live

Median length of hospice stay is 17 days; M = 90 days; 1 in four less than 5 days

Palliative Care- Care for patients who are at the end of their terminal illness, still wanting to seek treatment.

Hospice- Focuses on a person's last six months of life, when curative treatment is no longer an option.

Worldwide most people die at home.



## PURPOSE

- The purpose of this study was to determine the diagnosis of patient's in hospice.
- Understanding the diagnosis of the patient is important to be able to give full care to the patient and provide them with the resources needed

## PARTICIPANTS

- Sample = 284 hospice patients
- Ages ranged in age from 26 to 105.
- Mean age = 81.2 (SD =12.5)
- 12 different diagnosis: the largest group of participants were heart patients (n =66)

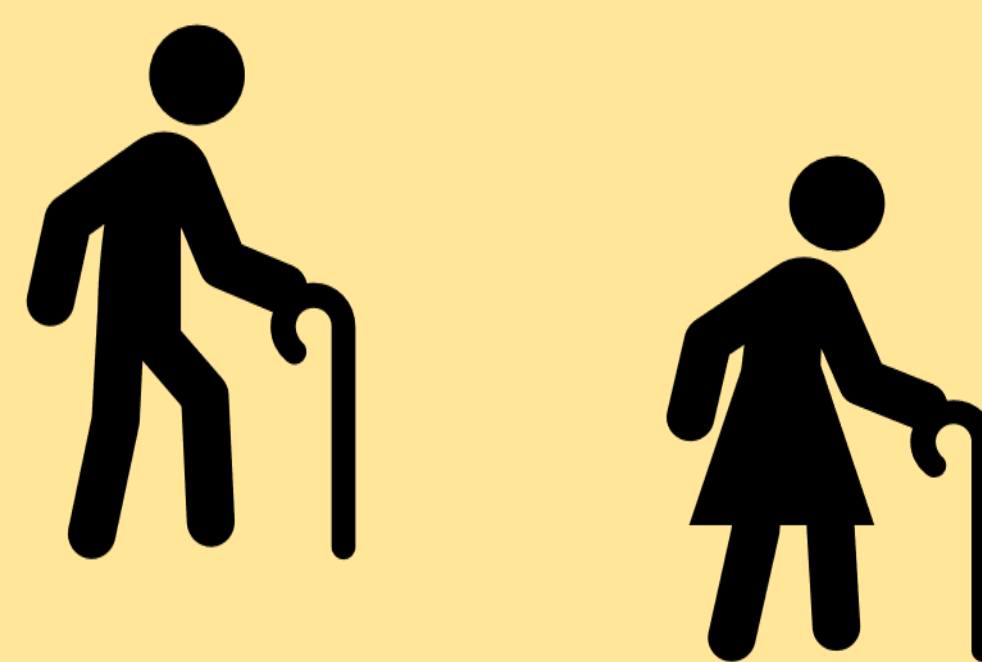
## METHODS

Secondary analysis of data collected on a population of 384 subjects

Diagnosis with 5 or more subjects were included in this study (N = 284)

Each diagnosis was analyzed for frequency and length of stay in hospice

Each of the 12 diagnosis subgroups were compared for length of stay in hospice



## Research Questions

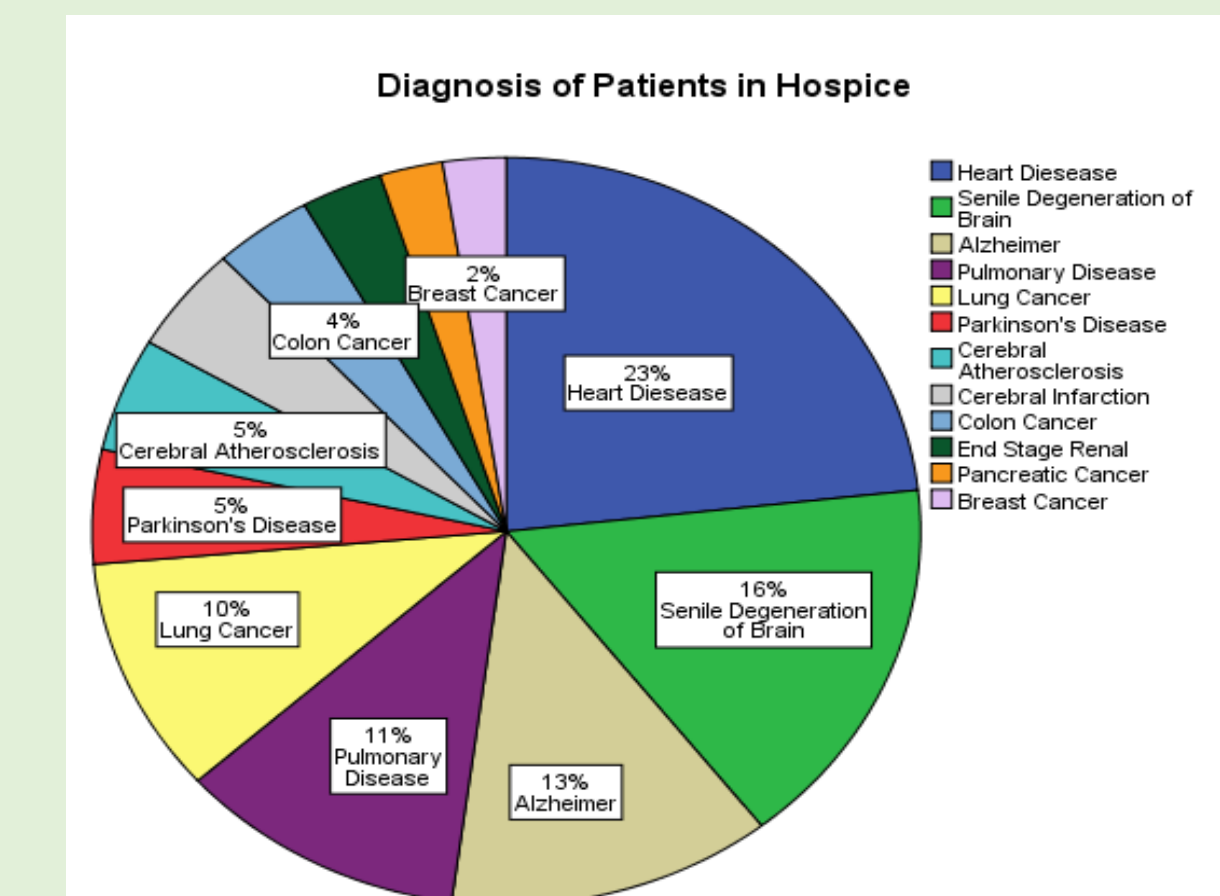
- What are the most frequent diagnosis of patients entering hospice care?
- Which diagnosis have the shortest stay in hospice?
- The longest length of stay?
- What is the average age of death of patients in hospice care?
- Where do patients come from prior to entering hospice care?



## DATA ANALYSIS

- Frequency distributions were performed on each diagnosis.
- Measure of central tendency were used to rank order diagnosis
- Percentages were used to rank order Nominal data

## RESULTS



The largest group of patients (23.2%) had a diagnosis of heart disease.

The diagnosis with the shortest stay by days Pancreatic Cancer (M = 5.7, SD = 4.3).

The diagnosis with the longest stay by days Cerebral Atherosclerosis (M = 13, SD = 8.6).

At the time of death, ages of the participants in the study (N = 284) ranged from 26 to 105. The mean age of the participants was 81.2 (SD =12.5)

91.5% died in less than 6 months. 56% of the entire sample died in less than one month

53% of the hospice patients came from nursing homes; 40% from home; 7% were Cross Over

## Discussion

Hospice patients stay on service for six months or less.

The majority of the hospice patients come from nursing homes.

Knowing the length of stay by days provides social workers with a time range for which to prepare the families for the death of a loved one.

**In conclusion:** Majority of patients come from nursing homes, have heart disease, and those with the shortest stay had pancreatic cancer.

## LIMITATIONS

- Data on length of stay was collected in months and days. Days were used in this analysis.

## REFERENCES

Wachterman M.W, Marcantonio E.R, & Davis R.B.(2011). Association of hospice agency profit status with patient diagnosis, location of care, and length of stay. *JAMA*. Pp. 472-479.

Unroe KT, Sachs GA, Dennis ME, et al. (2015). Hospice use among nursing home and non-nursing home patients. *Journal of General Internal Medicine*, 30(2):193-8