

# Characteristics of palliative care in a rural region

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**BACKGROUND**

- The palliative care unit Landshut is part of the *Network for Oncology and Palliative Care Medicine Landshut* which has been accredited by the ESMO (Designated Centre of Integrated Oncology and Palliative Care) in 2010 and the DGHO in 2011.
- The network's aim is to improve the palliative care service according to the special needs of the rural cancer population.
- In December 2010, a continuous data acquisition was started to better characterize the patient population admitted to the palliative care unit (Hospital Landshut-Achdorf) in a rural region of Lower Bavaria.

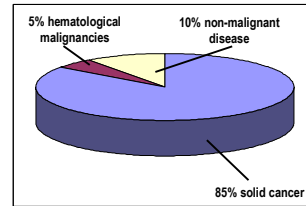


**INVESTIGATIONS**

- Continuous data acquisition for all admitted patients with first admission since 12/2010 using a standardized data sheet filled by nursing staff and units doctor
- Cross sectional analysis 12/2010-07/2011

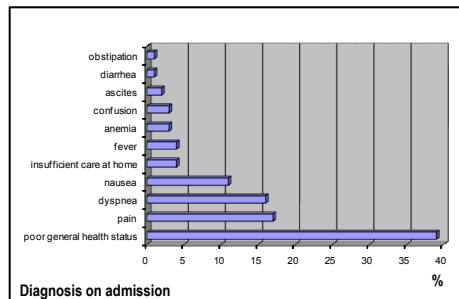
**RESULTS**

• Number of patients (12/2010-07/2011)	256
• Sex	f: 49%, m: 51%
• Age	27-99 years / 70±13
• Karnofsky Score day 0	0-80% / 43±18
• Duration of admission (discharged patients only)	1-39 days / 11±8
• Distance home - palliative care unit (linear distance)	3-340 km / 17±25
• Patients from outside town boundaries	77%

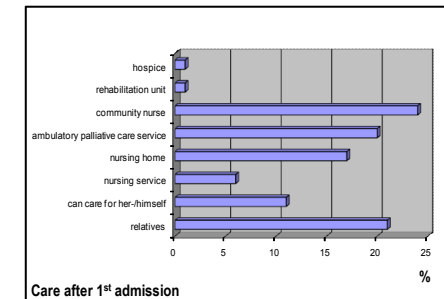
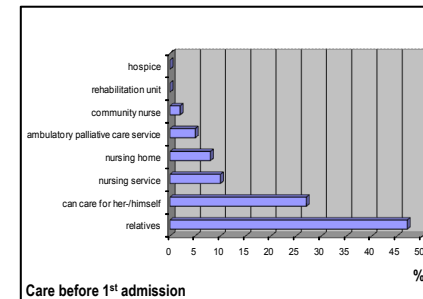


	Before 1 <sup>st</sup> admission:
• Opioids	51%
• Portacath	52%
• Gastrostomy tube	4%
• Parenteral nutrition	10%

• Deceased during first admission	54%
• Time between admission and death on unit	0-31 days / 7±6
• Deceased on day 0 or 1 on unit	29 (11%)
• Patients readmitted within observational period	49%
• Time between first and second admission	1-150 days / 35±33



	Diagnosis on admission	Insufficient care at home	Pain	Dyspnea	Nausea
Patients' subjective visual score (1-10, mean)	pain	2	6	2	4
	nausea	0	2	1	5
	dyspnea	2	2	6	3
	poor general health status	6	5	6	7
	depression	2	2	3	2
	anxiety	4	2	3	2



**CONCLUSIONS**

- Data focusing on palliative care in rural areas in Germany is lacking.
- This is a first attempt to characterize the patient population on a palliative care unit with a mainly rural catchment area.
- Routine data acquisition for use in health services research can also be established outside academic centers.
- We propose the foundation of a scientific european working force group on „rural cancer and palliative care“