

*ah HA! News -- And Happy Holidays -- from . . .*

# *Hospice Analytics*

*Never Underestimate the power of data!*



Winter 1 2014

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## **FREE InfoMAX Demo Webinar, January 8**

Attend a **FREE, half-hour** webinar to learn more about the power of data in your budgeting and planning process and to see InfoMAX in action:

**January 8, 1:00PM EST**  
(10:00AM Pacific).

**To register**, send an email to [Jennifer Ballentine](#).

**Hospice Analytics Info**

Hospice Analytics wishes you and yours a warm and relaxing winter holiday season. We hope you'll take some time to breathe, wind down from a rollercoaster year, and reflect on life's blessings and joys. We look forward to continuing to serve as your data and research partner in the coming year. --Cordt, Jennifer, Cathy, and Joy

## **Hanging on for the Holidays?**

Serving patients and families in hospice this time of year can be extra challenging -- and rewarding. Something about the holidays, the end of one year, the beginning of another brings an extra poignancy to any one individual's passing and our awareness of our common humanity.

**Deaths at this time of year carry an added burden of significance** -- the last Thanksgiving, the last Hanukkah, the last Christmas, the last New Year . . .

**There is an anecdotal tradition in hospice that some patients "hang on through the holidays" and then die soon after.** Patients seem to linger at death's door until the family has gathered or the celebrations draw to a close. But is this true in any kind of quantifiable way?

**Turns out, over all age groups and causes, deaths do tend to spike in January.** Since 1995, the United States death rate has been consistently highest in January, averaging about 7.3 thousand deaths per day through the month. The death rate has also been consistently lowest in August/September, at about 6.2 thousand deaths per day. (Interestingly, this is an exact "flip" of the rates of births, which have been consistently lowest in January and highest in August/September.) **Hospice**



### Our Mission

Hospice Analytics is an information-sharing research organization whose mission is to **improve hospice utilization and access to quality end-of-life care through analysis of Medicare and other national datasets.**

### Collaboration with State Hospice Orgs

More than 50 percent of the State Hospice Organizations participate in Hospice Analytics' Market Reports Project. These State Hospice Organizations represent over 60% of the hospices serving over 70% of the hospice patients in the country. Substantial revenue is shared with participating non-profit State Hospice organizations.

### Our Staff

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### Hear What Our Clients Are Saying!

We have really come to appreciate you and the service you provide. It's been invaluable to our work!

--Hospice CEO (TX)

This is really wonderful data! The report . . . has really helped our Board to picture where we are

### deaths, too, spike in January: in

2013, 9.7% of all hospice deaths occurred in January, the highest percentage of the year. (June and September were tied for lowest, at 7.2%).



**Why is there a spike in January?** Is it simply because Grandma is "hanging on for the holidays"? Probably not -- most explanations point to the peak of the flu season (causing an average of about 32,700 deaths each year between 2000 and 2010) and other perils of winter: respiratory and other acute illnesses, exposure, weather and logistical delays in seeking or obtaining care. All that said, it does sometimes seem like the energy of the holidays, the excitement of gathering family, even the infectious spirit of joy brought into hospice homes by staff create a boost. Who knows? There are some questions even data can't answer!

*(Death rate statistics from the National Center for Health Statistics; hospice deaths by month from the 2013 Medicare Claims dataset.)*

### Jumpstart Your Success in 2015

Hospice Analytics is your data analyst and research partner in achieving sustainable success. **Our online, user-friendly "InfoMAX" reports instantly translate Medicare claims and cost report data into strategic knowledge of your service area, business operations, and market opportunities -- including the most current 2013 Medicare data.**

**For only \$500 set-up and \$100 per service area county, a subscription to InfoMAX puts the power in your hands:** *No waiting* for reports to be generated and sent; *no frustrations* trying to pick apart packaged information to find the answers to your real questions.

**From 25+ available reports, you pick the data you need,** selecting any combination of years from 2007 to 2013 and any combination of counties you've included in your subscription. Reports can be generated by Provider county or Beneficiary county and in PDF (graphic) or Excel (raw data) formats.

and where we need to go as an organization.

--Hospice Executive  
Director (NY)

I like your reports and find them invaluable to our business development work. Keep up the good work!

--Hospice Business  
Development Manager  
(WA)

### Speaking & Teaching by Hospice Analytics

*Hospice Analytics has offered workshops and plenary sessions on data analysis and utilization, strategic planning, and other topics at numerous state and national conferences. To arrange an engagement in your state or agency, contact [Jennifer Ballentine](#).*

## Generate InfoMAX Report

Report Name	01 Hospice Utilization
Data Year:	2012 <small>Hold down the control button (or command if on a mac) to select multiple years.</small> 2011 2010 2009
Data County:	CO - Denver <small>Hold down the control button (or command if on a mac) to select multiple counties.</small> CO - El Paso CO - Teller
Reporting Data:	<input checked="" type="radio"/> By Provider County <input type="radio"/> By Beneficiary County
Report Format:	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Excel <input type="radio"/> PDF
<input type="button" value="Generate"/>	

With a few clicks, **you generate the information when you need it in the format most appropriate for your use.** Need a graphic to quickly visualize trends? Or maybe you'd prefer an Excel spreadsheet so you can see the numbers and add your own calculations. Both are available in seconds. You can access and communicate the data you need to:

- Quantify hospice utilization in your service area;
- Understand service area demographics and mortality;
- Identify missed or neglected population segments and referral sources;
- Analyze admissions to your program and others by diagnosis, race, gender, age, and geography;
- Match up hospital, home health, and nursing facility admissions and discharges to your program offerings;
- Evaluate visit lengths and frequency and compare to competitors'
- Track trends in census to better predict staffing needs and cash flow;
- Build profiles of competitors or potential partners;
- Compare revenues to costs for your hospice and your competitors;
- And more!

**Special reports for consultants and companies serving the hospice industry are available as well. ([Contact us](#) for details.)**

To see how InfoMAX works for yourself, use the [interactive InfoMAX demo](#) feature on our Web site, or **join us for a FREE Webinar demo** on January 8; details in the sidebar at left.

## Opportunities and Announcements

The University of Colorado is accepting applications for their new **Palliative Care and Aging Research Training (T32) Program**. The goal of this 2-year program, supported by the National Institute on Aging (NIA) is to prepare post-doctoral (PhD, MD/DO) fellows for careers as palliative care researchers. Applications for the first cycle are due February 2, 2015. Persons interested in applying should contact [Dr. Jean Kutner](#) prior to submitting an application. Application documents can be downloaded from the [University of Colorado](#).

***Hospice Whispers: Stories of Life*** offers a glimpse into what is really like to be a hospice patient or family member, as a way of easing fears and misconceptions about what hospice is and does. *Hospice Whispers* is available as an e-book through Amazon. The editor, Carla Cheatham, is still collecting stories through her [website](#) for a revised edition of the book. Laypeople and professionals are invited to contribute.

***Hospice Ethics: Policy and Practice in Palliative Care***, edited by Timothy Kirk and Bruce Jennings, is available now from Oxford University Press (order online from [Amazon](#)). The book is the first text specifically focused on ethical issues frequently encountered in hospice care and the conduct of ethics consultations in the end-of-life environment. Thirteen original contributed chapters cover issues related to the distinctive hospice philosophy of care, opportunities and challenges at the bedside or within organizations, and the future of hospice care.

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