

# Differences in Characteristics of Children with Cancer who Receive Standard versus Concurrent Hospice Care

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## Abstract

**Background:** The provision of Section 2302 of the 2010 Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) allowed pediatric patients who are enrolled in Medicaid to receive hospice care concurrently with curative treatment (i.e., concurrent hospice care). Because it is a relatively new model of care and very little is known about the characteristics of children with cancer who receive it, the purpose of the current study was to compare demographic, health, and community characteristics of children who received standard hospice care versus concurrent hospice care. **Procedure:** This study was a retrospective, comparison study with national Medicaid files provided by the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). The sample included 1,685 pediatric patients under the age of 20 who were diagnosed with cancer, were enrolled in hospice between 2011 and 2013, and received standard hospice care (n = 1,008) or concurrent hospice care (n = 655). **Results:** Children of non-Caucasian race with multiple complex chronic conditions, mental/behavioral health problems technology dependence, and brain and orbital tumors, were more likely to be enrolled in concurrent care than in standard hospice care. The proportion of children enrolled in concurrent care versus standard hospice care was larger in rural areas, low-income communities, and in the Southern states. **Conclusions:** The enhanced uptake of concurrent care by traditionally underserved populations is promising. Concurrent hospice care, which allows for continued medical treatment and hospice care, could enhance access to hospice within these populations by offering a more blended model of care.

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**Abbreviations**

N	Total sample size
n	Sub-sample size
$\chi^2$	Chi square
P	P-value
Leukemia/lymphoma	leukemia or lymphoma (ICD-9 codes: 200-202 and 204-8)
Brain and orbital tumors	brain and orbital tumors (ICD-9 codes: 190-192);
Solid extracranial tumors	Solid extracranial tumors include: cancers of the oropharynx (ICD-9 codes: 140-149); gastrointe
Rurality	Rurality according to rural-urban distinction of the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy
Low-income communities	Communities where median household income level was less than \$50,000 were classified as “low

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