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## Cancer-Related Therapies at the End of Life in Hospitalized Cancer Patients from Four Swiss Cantons: SAKK 89/09.

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### Abstract

The use of cancer-related therapies in cancer patients hospitalized at the end of life has increased in many countries over time. Given the scarcity of published Swiss data, the objective of this study was to evaluate the influence of hospital type and other factors on the delivery of health care during the last month before death. Claims data were used to assess health care utilization of cancer patients (identified by cancer registry data of four participating Swiss cantons) who deceased between 2006 and 2008. Primary endpoints were delivery of cancer-related therapies during the last 30 days before death. Multivariate logistic regression assessed the explanatory value of hospital type, patient and geographic characteristics. Of 3,809 identified cancer patients in the claims database, 2,086 patients dying from cancer were hospitalized during the last 30 days before death, generating 2,262 inpatient episodes. Anticancer drug therapy was given in 22.2% and radiotherapy in 11.7% of episodes. Besides age and cancer type, the canton of residence and hospital type showed independent, statistically significant associations with intensity of care, which was highest in university hospitals. These results should initiate a discussion among oncologists in Switzerland and may question the compliance with standard of care guidelines for terminal cancer patients. © 2014 S. Karger AG, Basel.

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