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Vermont End-of-Life (EOL) & Hospice Care Reporting

Vermont Blueprint for Health Advisory Committee
May 16, 2024

Agenda

- Background and methods
- Key findings
- Considerations for future work
- Questions



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Background & Methods

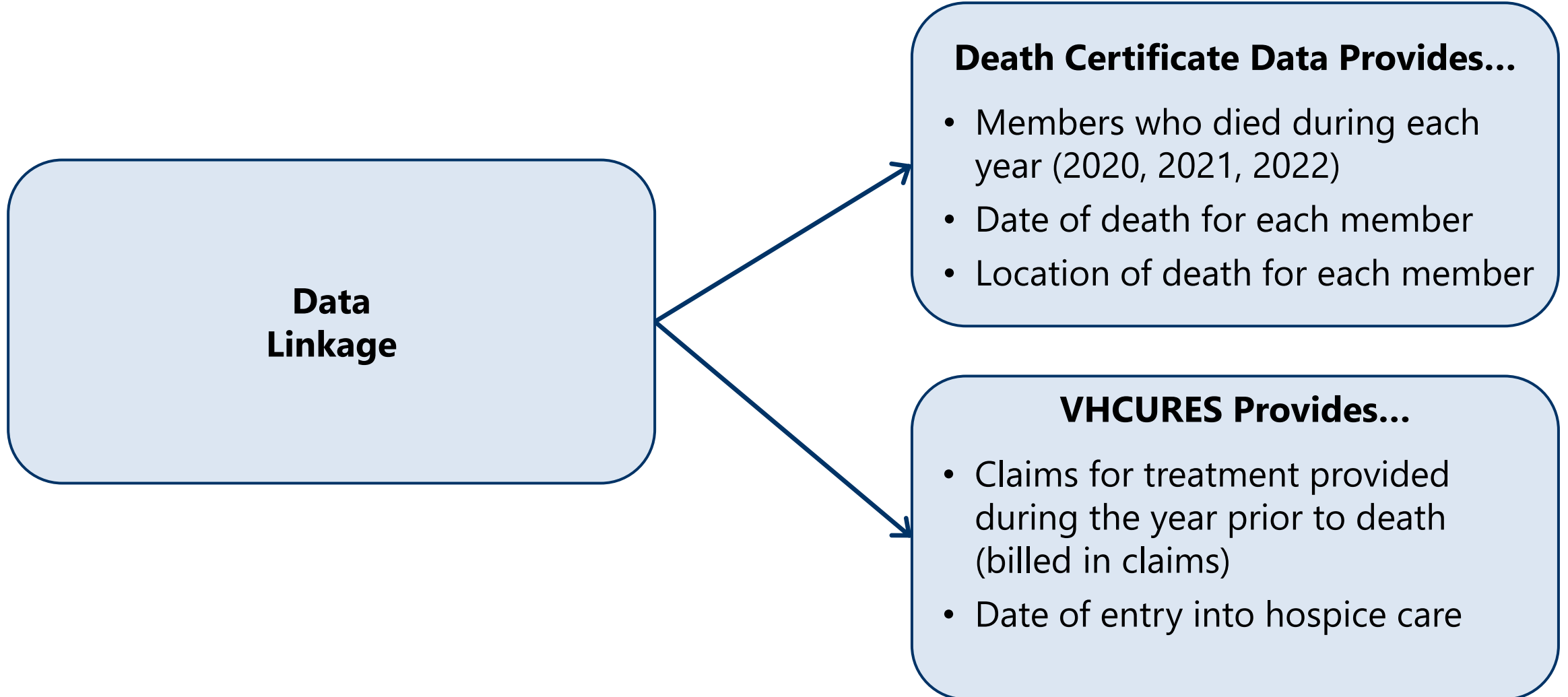
Amy Kinner, MS, and Hiroko Meserve, PhD

Why Focus on End of Life & Hospice?

- **Cost savings** – \$3.5 billion in savings for Medicare due to hospice use at the end of life (3% reduction in cost for patients)
- **Improved quality of life for patients** – Pain control, reduced emotional and physical distress
- **Benefits to families and caregivers** – Reduced stress, improved emotional outcomes

www.nhpco.org/wp-content/uploads/Value_Hospice_in_Medicare.pdf

Methods: Data Linkage



Methods: Key Measures

- Identified first day of hospice entry and stratified by...
 - Entered hospice less than 10 days before end of life (EOL)
 - Entered hospice 10–180 days before EOL
 - Entered hospice 181-365 days before EOL
 - Did not enter hospice during last year
- Identified location of death
 - Hospital
 - Skilled nursing facility (SNF) / long-term care (LTC) facility
 - Other

Methods: Stratifications for Reporting

- Reported by...
 - Year
 - Payer type (i.e., Medicare, Medicaid, Commercial)



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Key Findings

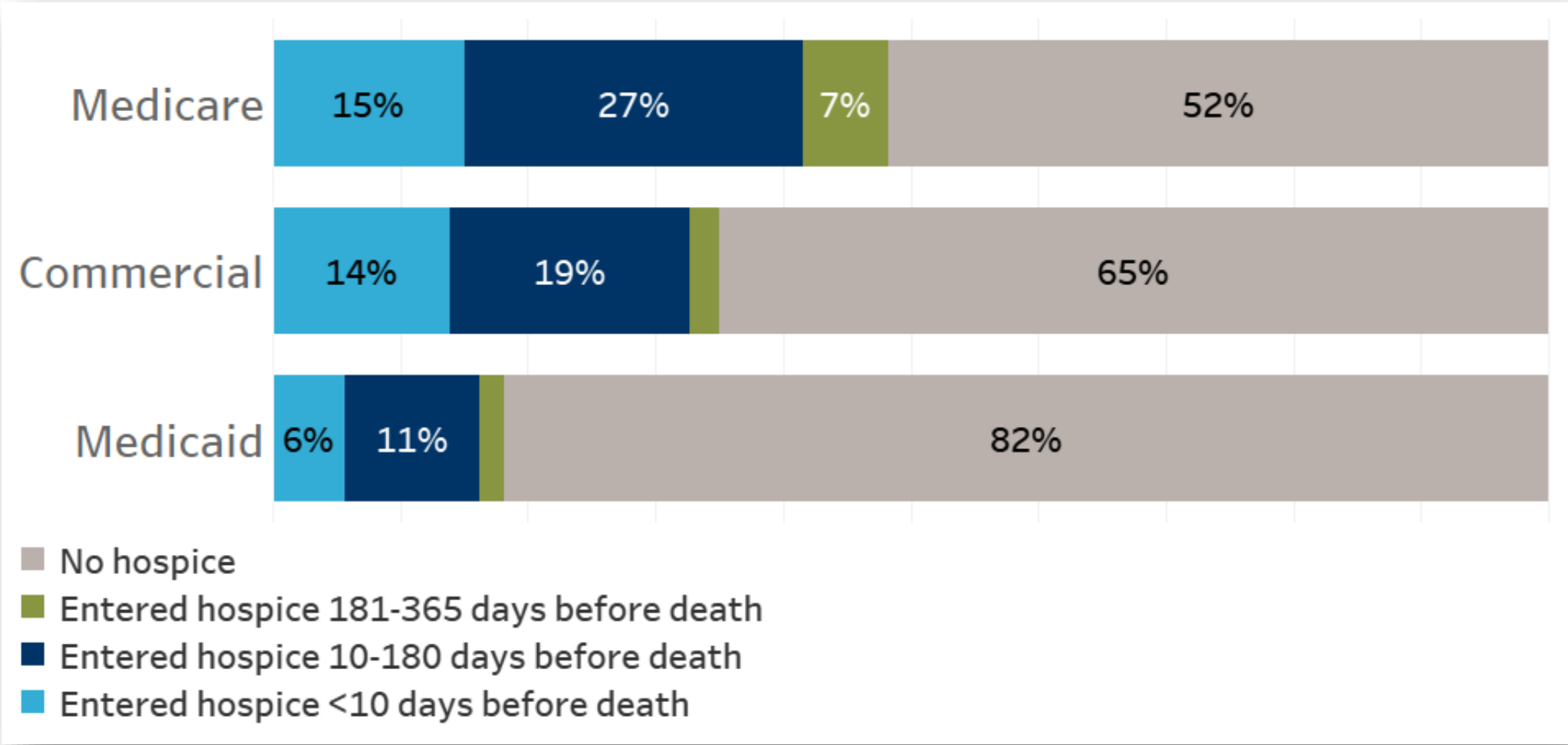
Linkage (2022)

- Vermont death certificates included 6,012 deaths in 2022.
 - 5,870 (97.6%) were linked to VHCURES (any year)
 - 5,504 had medical eligibility in 2022 and were part of this study
 - The vast majority were Medicare patients

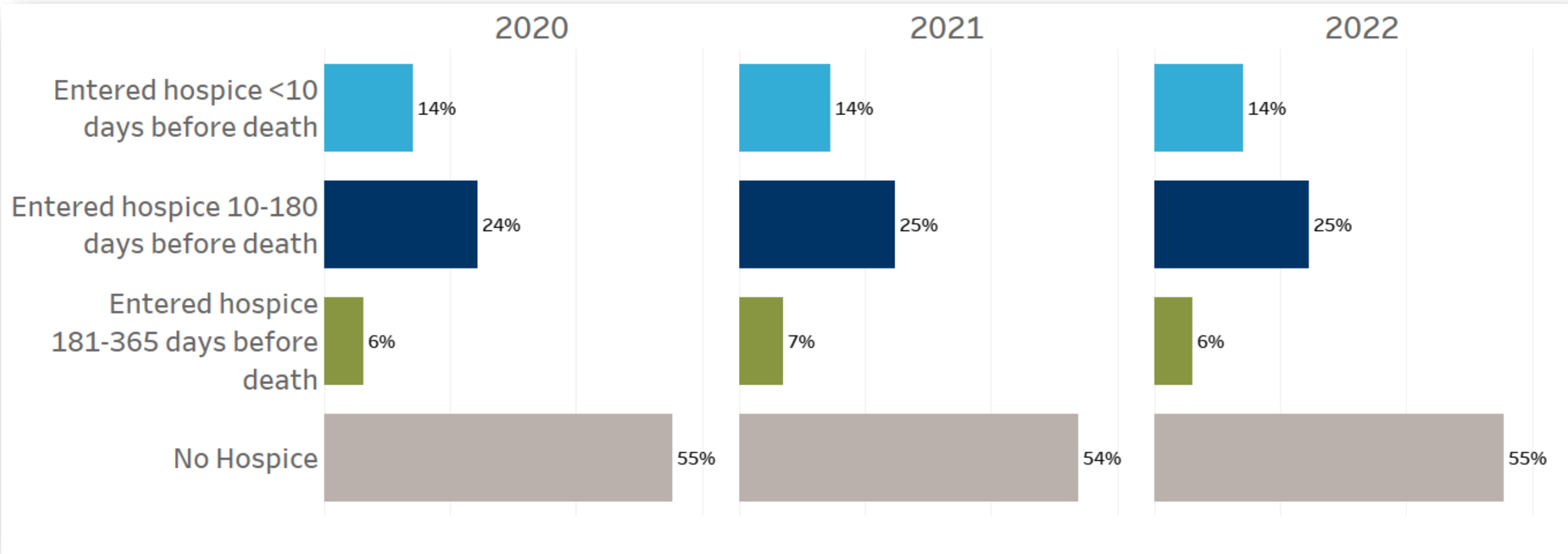
Study Population (2022)

Measure	VHCURES Total	Medicare	Medicaid	Commercial
Members in VHCURES	455,415	141,596	149,152	164,667
Members linked to death certificates (with 2022 eligibility in VHCURES)	5,504	4,627	531	346
Mortality rate per 1,000	12.1	32.7	3.6	2.1

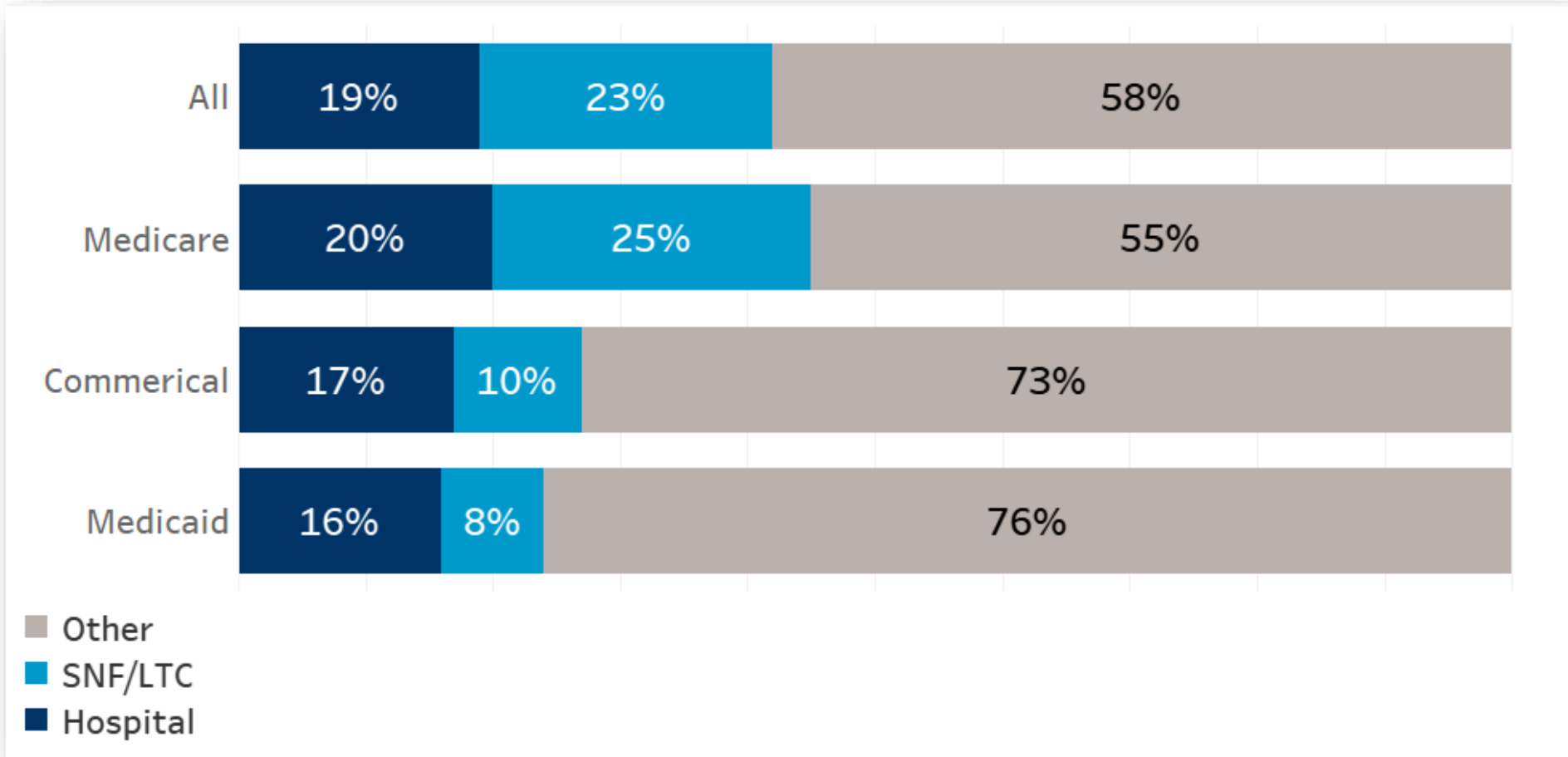
The % of Hospice Use was Highest among Medicare Patients (2022)



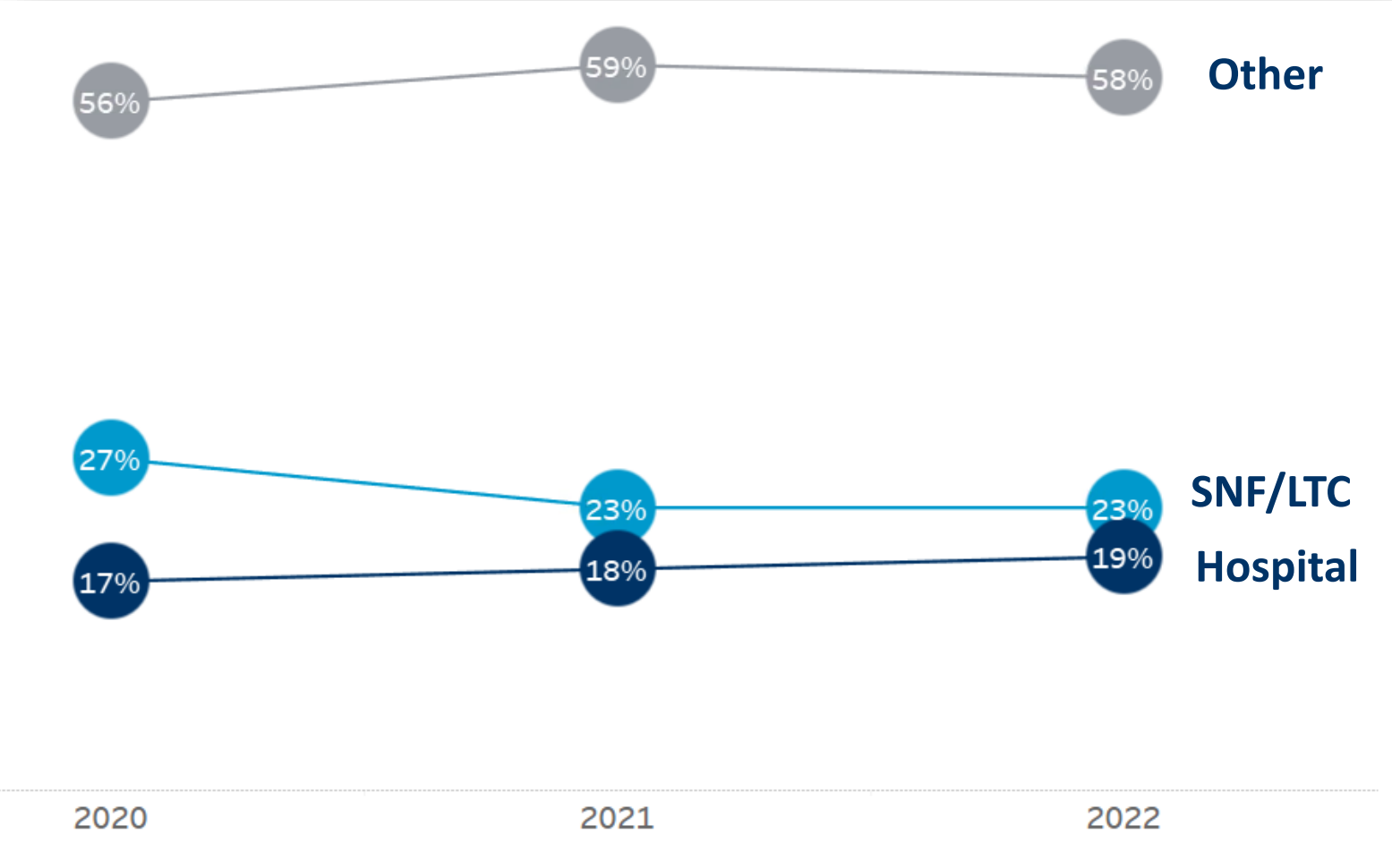
Hospice Use Patterns Have Remained Steady Over Time (2020–2022)



Medicare Patients Are More Likely to Die in Hospitals or SNF/LTC Facilities (2022)



The Percent of Deaths Occurring at SNFs/LTC Facilities Declined between 2020 and 2022





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Considerations for Future Work

Considerations for Future Refinement of End-of-Life Measures

- Condition-specific reporting (e.g., terminal cancer, advanced dementia, high stage CHF, etc.)
- Exclude deaths that would be unlikely to lead to hospice
- Risk-adjusted rates for better comparisons between populations and geography



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Questions?

Thank you.



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