1st October 2019. Patients were subsequently asked about driving, where appropriate, and the junior medical team provided education on the national drug driving guidance.

**Results** All 18 patients:

- Had prescriptions of medications listed in the drug driving guidance
- There was no knowledge or documentation of whether a patient was a vehicle driver

5 patients admitted for end of life care were therefore excluded from further analysis. When the 13 patients were asked:

- 10 patients were not vehicle drivers
- 3 patients were vehicle drivers

The drug driving guidance was discussed within the department’s service improvement meeting. An addendum on the clerking proforma was made to include whether the patient was a vehicle driver or not. If a patient was a vehicle driver it was highlighted on the joint MDT handover list, and if prescribed medication listed in the drug driving guidance, they were counselled on this. This was also communicated on the discharge summary for ongoing continuity of care.

**Conclusion** This project enabled joint collaborative work between doctors and the pharmacy team. It also highlighted the importance of not making assumptions about palliative care patients not driving a vehicle. Discussing the drug driving guidance with the medical team ensured that a patient was aware of the government guidance and ensuring public safety. A re-audit is planned in 2020 to ensure that this change in practice remains embedded.
under-represented in clinical services. An open-access service in the North of England provides a breadth of support to people affected by palliative diagnoses, without requiring clinical referral, with dedicated support to address some of these inequalities. We report on an evaluation of this service.

**Method** This study was conducted as a secondary data analysis of an annual service evaluation. Characteristic data of service users was collected through an anonymous cross-sectional survey. One-hundred and fifteen responses were acquired via convenience sampling over the period of one week. Data was compared against the characteristics of local specialist palliative care services, local census data and historical MDS data through descriptive and inferential techniques (chi-squared test).

**Findings** The open-access service was found to have a significantly higher proportion of non-cancer patients (75%) compared with clinical services (27%) and MDS data (24%), highlighting that this is a potentially valuable approach to improving access for this under-represented group (p<0.05). Conversely, attendees were more likely to be female (<0.001), under 75 (<0.001), live in the local area (<0.001) and have religious beliefs (<0.01), highlighting areas for further development.

**Conclusion** This service evaluation has highlighted a potential approach for improving access to specialist support for people with non-malignant disease and members of minority ethnic groups; formal research evaluation is recommended. Outstanding challenges include broadening access for men, older people, non-religious people and the wider area.

---

**114 APPROACHING THE END OF LIFE: ARE REFERRALS TO HOSPITAL SPECIALIST PALLIATIVE CARE TEAM ARRIVING TOO LATE?**

Elaine G Boland, Kate Hardcastle, Margaret Simkiss, Liz Lawson, Fliss EM Murtagh. Hull University Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust, Wolfson Palliative Care Research Centre, Hull York Medical School

**Introduction** Late referrals to specialist palliative care teams (SPCT) limit the ability of and time for SPCTs to improve symptoms and reduce distress for patients and their families. We aimed to identify all patients referred to the hospital SPCT who died before being seen during 2018 to:

1. **Assess** if uncontrolled symptoms were present
2. **Ensure** SPCT responded rapidly
3. **Identify** ways to support wards with timely referrals and reduce late referrals.

**Methods** Design: Audit with case-notes review

**Part 1:** we identified all hospital patients referred to SPCT who died before being seen, and assessed the hospitals/wards/patient characteristics to identify patterns. We reviewed referral time and our response times/telephone advice.

**Part 2:** Detailed case-notes review of 15% (randomly selected) patients who died before being seen by the SPCT to assess recognition of dying, see if these dying patients had specialist palliative care needs and if symptoms/distress were controlled or not.

**Results** Part 1: In 2018, the SPCT reviewed 1520 patients across the acute trust. 87 (5.6%) patients died before being seen by the SPCT. Of those, 19 patients (21%) were referred and died outside SPCT working hours. Referrals came from 25 different wards. 42 (37%) patients died within 6 hours of referral. Telephone advice was given to healthcare professionals for 37 patients (42%). Most patients were over 65 years old; the common causes of death were pneumonia and cancer.

Part 2: 15 case-notes had a detailed review. Median length of stay was 9 days (range 2–40days). Most patients were documented as dying only in the last 2 days. 5 patients had no SPC needs whilst 10 patients had uncontrolled symptoms.

**Conclusion** Promoting earlier recognition of dying and a more integrated approach of palliative care alongside active interventions could optimise symptom management and reduce distress towards end of life for patients dying in hospitals.