

# Evaluation of Strategies to Enhance Hospice Patient and Family's Knowledge and Confidence of Commonly Used Medications

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## Background

- Approximately 50% of the patient deaths of those enrolled in hospice care in 2018, died at home.<sup>1</sup>
- Twenty-three percent of informal caregivers (IFC) caring for patients in home hospice agreed it is difficult to decide which analgesic to give, and 21% agreed it is difficult to decide what dose of analgesic medication to administer.<sup>2</sup>
- The Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS) hospice survey is distributed by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) to informal caregivers after the death of a hospice patient to evaluate eight domains of care: communication with family, getting timely help, treating patient with respect, emotional and spiritual support, help for pain and symptoms, training family to care for patient, rating of the hospice, willingness to recommend the hospice.<sup>3</sup>
- Infographics provide complex information to various audiences in an easy to comprehend format with the use of pictures and images.<sup>4</sup>

## Objective

To determine if using a multi-pronged approach to medication education improves informal caregiver confidence in selecting and administering medications to a home hospice patient via a CMS-approved survey

## Methods & Design

The University of Maryland institutional review board approved this prospective study.

### Design

- Anonymous, voluntary seven-question survey to complete after medication education

### Inclusion Criteria

- Received home hospice services
- Received comfort kit at initiation of home hospice
- Lived for at least one week
- Received at least two nurse visits
- Patient/IFC managed medications
- Consented to complete survey

## Educational Materials

- The authors created infographics for each of the medications in the comfort kit describing the indication, dosing, and common and severe side effects.
- There was also an infographic created on common symptoms the patient may experience requiring medications to treat.

## CMS-approved Survey

1. Do you know the purpose of each medication in the comfort kit?
2. Would you recognize a time when you could or should give one of the medications in the comfort kit?
3. Do you know which medication in the comfort kit to give for a specific symptom (such as pain, fever, nausea, etc.)?
4. Do you know how much medication to give?
5. Do you know how to administer the medication?
6. Do you know what side effects to watch for after giving the medication?
7. If a side effect occurs, would you know what to do?

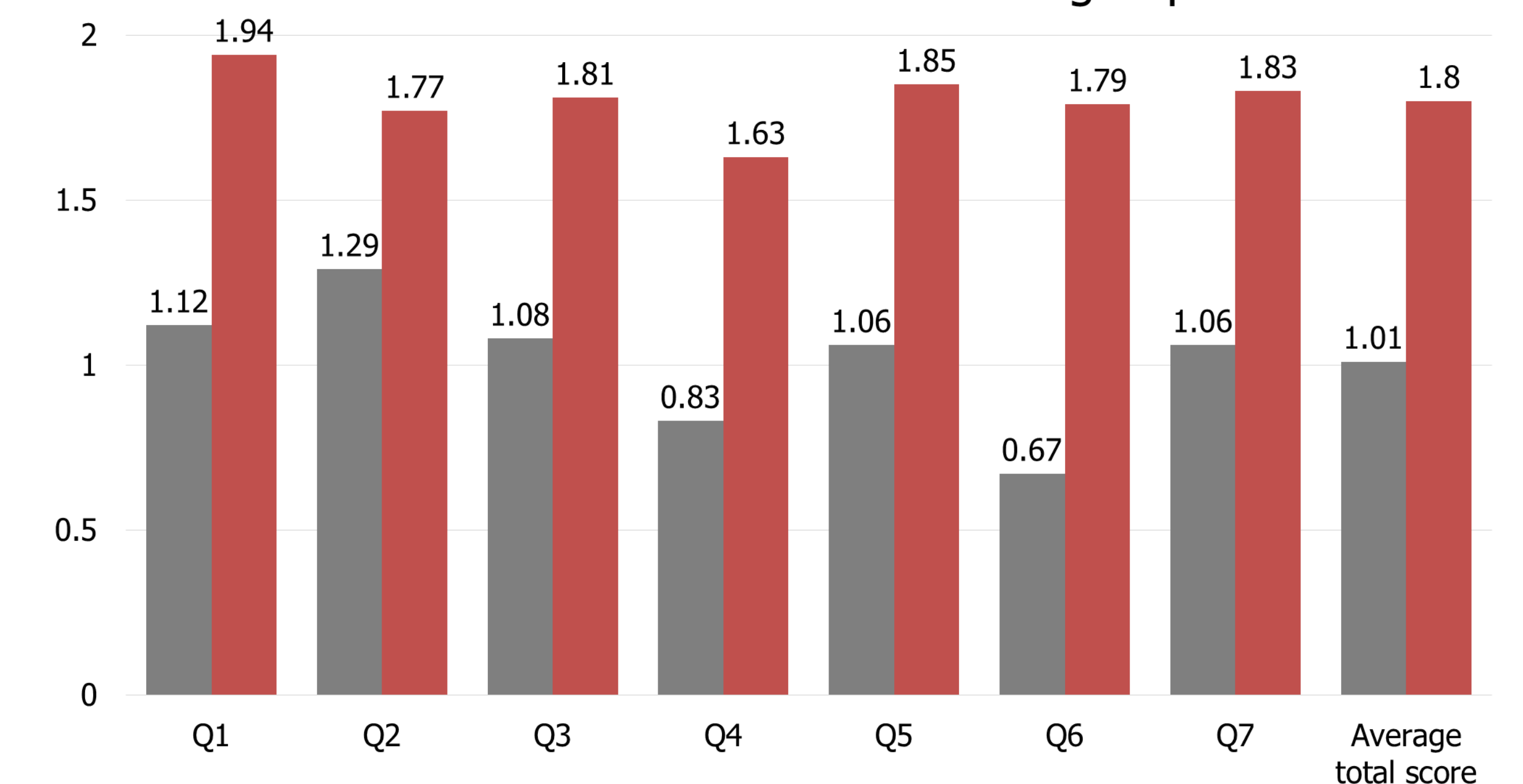
## Results

Table 1: Survey responses by incidence

	Response	Control (n=52)	Intervention (n=48)	p-value
Q1	No or maybe	25(48.1)	3(6.3)	<0.0001
	Yes	27(51.9)	45(93.7)	
Q2	No or maybe	23(44.2)	10(20.8)	0.002
	Yes	29(55.8)	38(79.2)	
Q3	No or maybe	27(51.9)	8(16.7)	<0.0001
	Yes	25(48.1)	40(83.3)	
Q4	No or maybe	33(63.5)	13(27.1)	<0.0001
	Yes	19(36.5)	35(72.9)	
Q5	No or maybe	29(55.8)	6(12.5)	<0.0001
	Yes	23(44.2)	42(87.5)	
Q6	No or maybe	39(75.0)	8(16.7)	<0.0001
	Yes	13(25)	40(83.3)	
Q7	No or maybe	29(55.8)	8(16.7)	<0.0001
	Yes	23(44.2)	40(83.3)	

## Results cont.

Figure 1: Comparison of responses mean scores between control and intervention groups



## Discussion

- Utilizing infographics to provide education on complex information displayed significantly improved knowledge, skills and attitudes of the informal caregivers for home hospice patients compared with the control group.
- The authors are hopeful the results from this study will reflect on the CAHPS scores for the hospice agency.
- Limitations in the study: small sample size, not equally sized groups, multistep process requiring nurse involvement
- This study emphasizes the need for additional education for IFC to feel confident administering high-risk medications to home hospice patients.

## References

1. NHPCO Facts and Figures 2020 Edition. National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization. 2020 Aug 20.
2. J Pain Symptom Manage. 2004;27(2):114-124.
3. CAHPS® Hospice Survey | CMS. Accessed April 11, 2021.
4. Chin Med J (Engl). 2018;131(20):2514-2517.