

Eli's Hospice Insider

Hospice News: Minority Patients With Heart Failure Lag In Hospice Use

Hospice advocates have long lamented that minority populations use hospice less than white ones. A new study published in the American Heart Journal corroborates that belief, and also includes disheartening statistics about hospice use once nonwhite patients are enrolled.

A study of nearly 220,000 Medicare beneficiaries with heart failure who died between 2000 and 2008 found that "despite increasing rates of hospice use for both white and nonwhite patients, nonwhite patients were 20 percent less likely to enroll in hospice," according to the study's abstract in the June issue. When benes did enroll, nonwhite patients were more likely to have an emergency department visit (42.6 percent vs 33.9 percent), to be hospitalized (46.8 percent vs 38.5 percent), and to have an intensive care unit stay (16.9 percent vs 13.3 percent).

Nonwhite patients were more likely to disenroll from hospice (11.6 percent vs 7.2 percent). But "among patients who remained in hospice until death, nonwhite patients had higher rates of acute care resource use and higher overall costs," says the study from **Duke University** researchers.

Resource: See the study at [www.ahjonline.com/article/S0002-8703\(12\)00171-8/fulltext](http://www.ahjonline.com/article/S0002-8703(12)00171-8/fulltext).