

Analysis of Emergency Calls from Palliative Care Patients in Prague, Czech Republic

Center for Palliative Care
Prague
Czech Republic

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BACKGROUND

Emergency medical services (EMS) are frequently responding to calls involving patients in advanced stages of incurable diseases. The Emergency Medical Dispatch Centre of the Prague EMS (Czech Republic) has a classification algorithm used for all emergency calls. In 2019 a new classification was introduced, and it includes: "Deterioration of health conditions – Deterioration of vital signs in a patient in palliative care, but without failure of vital signs". The deterioration of any aspect of vital signs and chronic medical problems is understood by this classification (e.g., deterioration of consciousness, breathing or pain).

AIM

This poster presents the incidence of emergency calls of Prague EMS to a patient with identified palliative care needs.

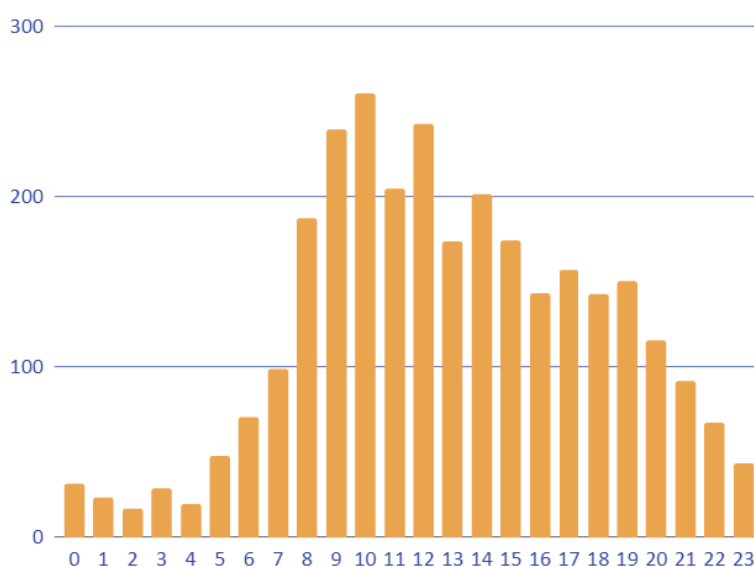
METHODS

This is a retrospective analysis of emergency calls of the internal dispatcher software. All calls with classification "Deterioration of health conditions" in palliative care patients in the year 2020 were included. We were looking for frequency of calls within time of a day, day of a week and month of a year. One sample T-Test was used to find the difference between the variables.

RESULTS

There were 115081 emergency events in total (for a population of approx. 1.3 million inhabitants), of which 2920 met the inclusion criteria (2.53 %), which means approx. 8 emergency calls to a patient with identified palliative care status a day during the year 2020. Significant differences were found in time of day ($p < 0.01$) and day of a week ($p = 0.01$). The calls start to rise from 8am with peak at 10am and begin to decline at 7pm. Less calls are incoming during the weekend. No difference was found in months of a year, but interestingly the significant difference was found in the months of year of all EMS calls but not in the calls from palliative care patients – thus we saw that the deterioration that leads to EMS call from palliative care patients is similar during the year and it also follow the trend seen in all EMS cases.

Frequency of emergency calls to palliative care patients – hour of the day –



CONCLUSION

Those data might help understand better the situation and motivations of callers in end-of-life medical emergencies. Also, these preliminary findings suggest revision of some anecdotal evidence: for example, presumption that EMS is frequently called at out-of-hours period.

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