

# Preparedness survey for Joint Commission's Palliative Care requirement with LVAD implantation as destination therapy

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## INTRODUCTION

As of 2012, 101 centers in the United States have been approved to perform LVAD placement as destination therapy (DT). Goals for LVAD placement as a destination therapy include symptomatic relief of end-stage heart failure, improved functional status and generally an improved quality of life. Given these goals this intervention is by its nature palliative procedure, while also being an invasive procedure associated with a number of serious risks and complications. Policy recommendations by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid along with the Joint Commission Advanced Certification in Disease-Specific Programs required the addition of palliative care representation for all LVAD interdisciplinary teams in 2014.

## OBJECTIVES

The purpose of our survey is to better understand the experience and capacity of palliative care providers working with interdisciplinary LVAD teams

## METHODS

A confidential survey was distributed by peer-peer email distribution among palliative care colleagues that work at Certified LVAD Program Institutions. The survey consists of 21 questions distributed in five sections: responder demographics, hospital demographics, LVAD center basic demographics, palliative care team basic information and interaction with LVAD and palliative care team. For further details about survey please access to <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/7KVKQJS>.

**Table 1:  
Self-Reported Demographics of Survey Participants**

	Number of survey participants = 35	
<b>Participant's discipline at hospital</b>	Palliative Care Physician	18
	Palliative Care Advanced Practice Nurse	10
	Palliative Care Social Worker	2
	Physician (other)	5
<b>Hospital national region</b>	Midwest (IL, IN, IA, KS, MI, MN, NE, ND, OH, SD, WI)	1
	Northeast (CT, ME, MA, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VT)	20
	South (AL, AK, DE, DC, FL, GA, KY, LA, MD, MS, NC, OK, SC, TN, TX, VA, WV)	2
	West (AK, AZ, CA, CO, HI, ID, MT, NV, NM, OR, UT, WA, WY)	7
<b>Hospital community setting</b>	Urban	28
	Suburban	2
	Rural	0
<b>Hospital academic affiliation</b>	Academic Medical Center	24
	Community Hospital, University affiliated	2
	Community Hospital, non-University affiliated	4

## RESULTS

Does your LVAD team currently include Palliative Care as part of interdisciplinary team?

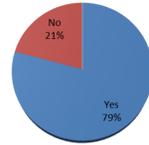


Figure 1

How long has Palliative Care been part of the LVAD team in your Institution?

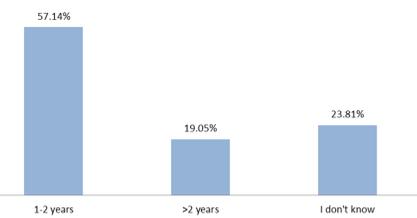


Figure 2

Which of the following roles are included as interdisciplinary members if the palliative care team at your institution?

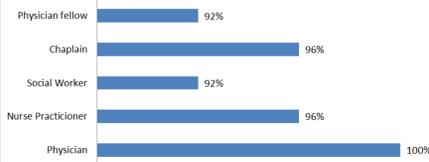


Figure 3

Based on your clinical experience, how has the palliative care service assisted the LVAD program? (mark all that apply) n=26

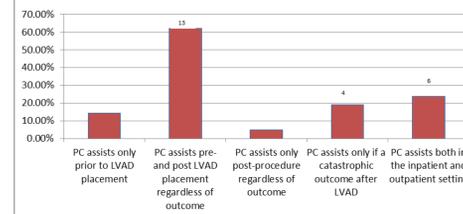


Figure 4

Level of agreement of Palliative Care responders on preparedness for new Joint Commission's Palliative Care requirement with LVAD implantation as destination therapy

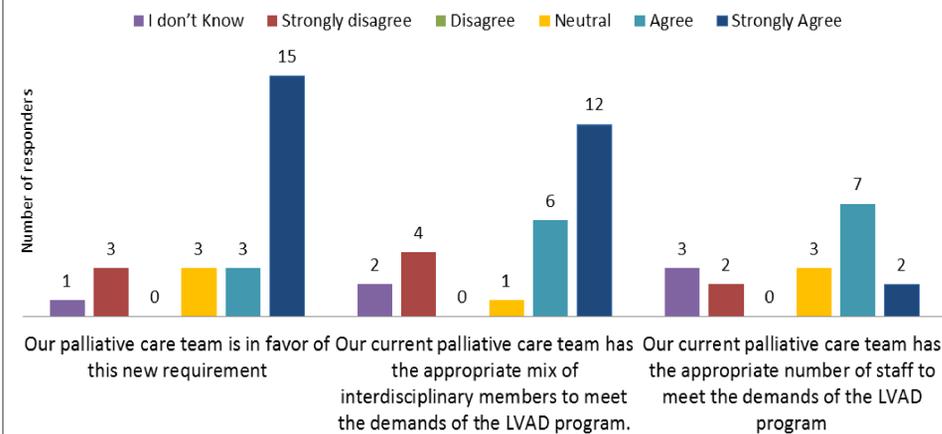


Figure 5

## SELECTED SURVEY COMMENTS

"We have the privilege that all the LVAD patients are seen by palliative care clinicians before LVAD placement for both bridge to therapy (BTT) and DT"

"Palliative care in our institution has integrated (prior to requirement) into LVAD team, we see patients before, during and afterward, whether they are DT or BTT, and are involved in care decisions. We are considered useful and integral to care teams."

"Our experience including palliative care in the care of LVAD patients has generally been positive. We are still working out details of workflow and optimal timing/content of interaction between palliative care team and LVAD patients, but overall have been able to do positive work and have not been overwhelmed by numbers of consults".

## CONCLUSIONS

Initial data suggests that palliative care interdisciplinary providers support this recommendation by CMS and JCO. Additionally, the preliminary data from our responders indicates they feel that there is the appropriate mix and number of IDT members to address these recommendations.

## IMPLICATIONS

This survey suggests Palliative Care teams are being integrated into DT LVAD patient care and they express confidence in meeting the needs created by this recommendation.

## CONTINUED RESEARCH

Please help to continue research by completing this survey <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/7KVKQJS>.

## REFERENCES

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