One short year

The US leads the world in cases and deaths.

U.S. = 4% of the world’s population, but accounts for 20% of global deaths from COVID.
COVID Death Distribution

Share of deaths vs Share of population:
- 80+ : 47%
- 70-79 : 25%
- 60-69 : 16%
- 50-59 : 7%
- 40-49 : 4%

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Share of Deaths by Ethnicity
US Life Expectancy

- Decline by 1 year overall
- Decline for Black people: 2.7 years, erasing all the gains of the last 25 years
On drop in life expectancy, Dr. Fauci: "Right now COVID-19 is the leading cause of death in the United States, which is just extraordinary. It's sad and it's tragic. And actually, when you look at the decrease in the life expectancy..." (1/2) #AMRstaff

Dr. Fauci: "...it's absolutely real and directly related to COVID-19. The differential among people of color versus white again underscores the disparities." (3/3) #AMRstaff
Impact on the Healthcare System

- More uninsured (70 million already un- or underinsured pre-pandemic + 15 million losses of ESI due to COVID)
- Financial losses for providers due to reduced volumes and worsening payer mix
- Worsening racial/ethnic disparities
- Public health infrastructure failure

COVID-19 could dent hospital revenue by at least $53 billion in 2021, AHA says
2021 Predictions (for what they’re worth…) & implications for the legacy health care system

- Move towards **mandatory VBP**
- Partner with payers or become self-insured
  - **Requires** skills in contracting, risk management, care management, advanced analytics
- Domestic production/supply chains
- Public health infrastructure build
  - Technology modernization
- **Access = Telehealth** → 28 fold increase in last 1 year
  - Primary/specialty/remote monitoring/direct to consumer engagement
  - Major **private sector and PE competition** with legacy systems

DeVore S. Health care in 2021: Five trends to watch. Health Affairs Blog 01/20/21
Why Americans are numb to the staggering coronavirus death toll

Death is everywhere and yet nowhere in America during the worst stretch of the pandemic.
"Our Country is Grieving"

“...there have now been in the United States alone, 500,000 COVID-19 related deaths. For each COVID-19 related death, there are an average of nine people grieving. Thus, today, we remember those who have died from this isolating disease and hold space for the 4,500,000 friends and family who are grieving.”

"NHPCO and its interdisciplinary team of members grieve alongside our nation and world," @EdoBanacek. NHPCO shares a video message of remembrance: youtu.be/P41xmfSXsZY hospice hpc grief bereavement."
Call for a National Grief Strategy

A National Grief Strategy: The Time Is Now

COVID-19 has affected how we live, and how we grieve. The public health restrictions in place to contain the virus, while absolutely necessary to flatten the curve, have affected the grief experience of the families and friends of the more than 300,000 Americans who have died of COVID-19 thus far, and of the thousands of others who have died of other causes during the restrictions. Also affected are those facing a life-limiting illness while alone, and those grieving an expected death of someone they cannot visit. As we are realizing that COVID-19 is here to stay, we are recognizing its impact on how we grieve: the visiting and goodbyes that didn’t occur, the family gatherings that weren’t allowed, the funeral rites limited or delayed, the grief suffered in isolation.
IMPLICATIONS FOR PALLIATIVE CARE
We are media darlings: Mainstream coverage of palliative care in 2020

>1,538 stories on role of palliative care during the pandemic in major media

>678.5 million views
PubMed Search Timeline: “Palliative Care” in Article Titles

*As of February 22, 2021
COVID-19 Survey: Round Two

Sent in 3 waves to 2,000 organizations between December 2020 – January 2021
Response rate = 10%

Thanks to CAPC’s Maggie Rogers MPH and Rachael Heitner MA for the design, implementation, and analysis of this survey
SURVEY PARTICIPANTS
Parent organizations

- Hospital/Health System: 56%
- Hospice: 19%
- Office Practice or Clinic: 10%
- Other: 15%
Care settings

– Hospital: 76%
– Patient’s Home: 58%
– Office Practice or Clinic: 49%
– Assisted Living Facilities: 47%
– Nursing Homes: 44%
Patient populations served

– Adult: 94%
– Pediatric: 27%
SURVEY RESULTS
6 Key Findings

1. Many new COVID-related responsibilities
2. Increase in volume
3. Some adverse effects on program function
4. High confidence in future viability
5. Worry about team well-being
6. Value of palliative care much more visible
**Key Finding:** Palliative care programs were engaged in many new COVID-related activities.
## COVID-19 Related Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Palliative Care Program Activities</th>
<th>Spring 2020</th>
<th>Winter 2021</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provided telehealth</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supported other clinicians’ emotional wellbeing</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elicited COVID patients’ goals of care</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moved existing patients to telehealth</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provided education or clinical tools to non-palliative colleagues</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## COVID-19 Related Activities

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Palliative Care Program Activities</th>
<th>Spring 2020</th>
<th>Winter 2021</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participated in organizational COVID-19 crisis planning</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expanded ICU presence</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expanded ED presence</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expanded program coverage hours</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Started palliative care hotline</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Key Resources

Telehealth and Palliative Care

What’s in the Toolkit

- Setting Up a Program
- Preparing Patients and Families
- Conducting Telehealth Visits: Etiquette
- Conducting Telehealth Visits: Remote Physical Examination
- Telehealth Documentation and Billing

[Link to Toolkit: capc.org/toolkits/telehealth-and-palliative-care/]
Key Finding: Consult volumes increased in 64% of programs.
Net Impact of COVID-19 on Consult Volume

Spring 2020
- 17% Significantly Decreased
- 26% Decreased
- 19% No Change
- 22% Increased
- 17% Significantly Increased

Winter 2021
- 5% Significantly Decreased
- 14% Decreased
- 16% No Change
- 39% Increased
- 25% Significantly Increased
Key Finding: Some report adverse effects on program function.
COVID-19 Program Effects

- Hiring freeze: **23%**
- Decrease in referral base or consult volume: **19%**
- Program budget reduced: **12%**
- Staff furloughed: **11%**

But **52%** report none of the above.
Sustainability: Practice Flawless Program Basics

Practicing Flawless Basics: Palliative Care Sustainability in the COVID Era

Taking actions in areas the team has control over creates certainty during uncertain times. Focusing on the fundamentals of program management and operational effectiveness help stabilize the team, and demonstrate program responsiveness and accountability to the organization.

Four Places to Start

1. Stakeholder Alignment

2. Program Financing

3. Operational Efficiency

4. Team Health
Key Finding: 78% of participants are confident about the future viability of their palliative care program.
Palliative Care Program Viability

78% of survey respondents are not concerned about the viability of their palliative care programs post-COVID

Spring 2020: 68%
Eyes on the Prize: Stakeholder engagement is key

Planning Forward in the COVID Era

While the coronavirus has created financial and operational uncertainty across US health care, it has also highlighted the value of palliative care for patients, families, clinician colleagues, and organizations.

Strategic palliative care programs will seize the moment to proactively engage stakeholders, reinforce program value, and improve on program basics. This toolkit provides a three-step process for stabilizing and strengthening your program.

What’s in the Toolkit

1. Understand the Environment

2. Engage Stakeholders

3. Practice Flawless Program Basics

capc.org/toolkits/planning-forward-covid-era/
Key Finding: The emotional health of palliative care team members is a concern and priority for leadership.
Team Resilience and Wellbeing

88% of survey respondents are tracking the emotional health of their palliative care team members
How is your team coping?

While 71% say their staff demonstrate resiliency and emotional wellbeing,

The Highs and Lows of Emotional Health

60% also say their staff demonstrate a sense of burnout and/or distress.

and 65% also say their staff demonstrate a sense of loss and grief.
Emotional PPE Resources for Clinicians, Teams, and Organizations

Coping in Crisis
Strategies for resiliency during COVID-19

Clinician Grief
Grief resources for health care workers

Team Health
Strategies for supporting team health during COVID-19

Organizational Wellness
Resources for supporting health professionals org-wide

capc.org/covid-19/emotional-ppe/
NEW: Training to Facilitate Well-Being Debriefings

WEBINARS

Part 1: Learn How to Facilitate Well-Being Debriefings within Your Organization

WHEN

Wednesday, March 3
noon - 1 p.m. ET

Presented By

Victoria Leff, MSW, LCSW, BCD, APHSW-C
Executive Director, Advanced Palliative Care & Hospice Social Work Certification Program
Adjunct...

The COVID-19 pandemic is taking a stunning toll on the emotional well-being of health care workers. Many of us are looking for proven strategies to mitigate the natural stress, empathy strain, and moral distress that we are experiencing.

In this webinar, we will focus on fostering effective facilitation skills that aim to decrease stress, raise employees' awareness of their feelings, and increase employee resilience. We will also address what language to use with difficult patients, how to improve your skills in working with patients who prefer not to discuss their illness, how to deal with patients who are resistant to care, how to build a plan to handle challenging situations.

WEBINARS

Part 2: Learn How to Facilitate Well-Being Debriefings within Your Organization

WHEN

Thursday, April 1
noon - 1 p.m. ET

Presented By

Victoria Leff, MSW, LCSW, BCD, APHSW-C
Executive Director, Advanced Palliative Care & Hospice Social Work Certification Program
Adjunct...

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Key Finding: COVID-19 has underscored the benefits of palliative care.
The impact of palliative care

“Thank you for advocating for me.”

“You were the only ray of light.”

“We didn’t feel like anyone was hearing us before you talked to us today.”

“My only regret is that we did not engage them much, much sooner.”

“You have been a bright spot in a dismal time.”

“I feel less alone.”

“I always feel more comfortable when I know palliative care is involved.”
6 Key Findings

1. Many new COVID-related responsibilities
2. Increase in volume
3. Some adverse effects on program function
4. High confidence in future viability
5. Worry about team well-being
6. Value of palliative care much more visible
Take home messages

- Grief is all around. Refer people for bereavement support. Local hospices may be able to help.
- Never let a crisis go to waste - become best friends with your C-Suite, ask for their advice and counsel.
- Your team is -- by far -- your most precious resource. Invest in their well being. Learn to lead Clinician Debriefings.
Questions for you

• What’s one word that describes how you are feeling about your work?
• Have there been any silver linings of this pandemic?
• What’s one thing you will never take for granted again after this is over?
• How can we help?
CAPC Resources

Upcoming Webinars:
- 3/1 Part 1: Learn How to Facilitate Well-Being Debriefings within Your Organization
- 4/1 Part 2: Learn How to Facilitate Well-Being Debriefings within Your Organization

On-Demand Webinars
- Managing through COVID-19
- The Impact of COVID-Related Grief on Palliative Care Clinicians
- Managing Expectations in Uncertainty

Virtual Office Hours
- Managing Through the COVID-19 Crisis
- Improving Team Effectiveness and Resilience
CAPC Resources

COVID-19 Rapid Response Resources Hub
- Communication, Symptom Management, Emotional PPE, Health Equity, etc. *FREE to all*

Toolkit: [Planning Forward in the COVID Era](#)

Clinical Training: [COVID-19 Response Training](#)

Tool: [Understanding Distress in the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)

Blogs
- [Top 10 Resources to Help You Through the COVID-19 Surge](#)
- [How to Plan for Your Program in Periods of Uncertainty](#)
- [How to Support Your Organization’s Emotional PPE Needs during COVID-19](#)
- [Using Palliative Care to Support Equitable Care in the Midst of COVID-19](#)