

# Palliative and end-of-life care in Scotland

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## Background

Palliative care is an important aspect of the health agenda in Scotland. Public Health Scotland (PHS) continues to support the **Scottish Government's Strategic Framework for Action on Palliative and End of Life Care** ([www.gov.scot/publications/strategic-framework-action-palliative-end-life-care](http://www.gov.scot/publications/strategic-framework-action-palliative-end-life-care)). One of its commitments is to 'support improvements in the collection, analysis, interpretation and dissemination of data and evidence relating to needs, provision, activity, indicators and outcomes in respect of palliative and end-of-life care'.

## Aim

To demonstrate evidence around the quality of end-of-life care in Scotland.

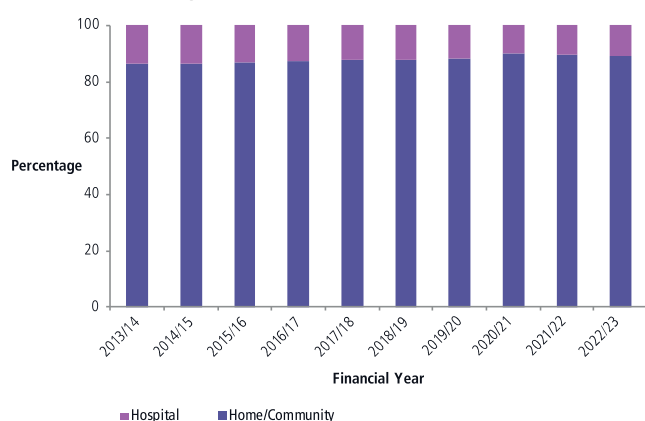
## Objectives

- Present data on end-of-life care, specifically reporting on the trends on the percentage of time in the last six months of life spent at home or in a community setting across NHS boards.
- Report trends relating to location of death across health and social care partnerships.

## Latest annual statistics

- In 2022/23, there were 61,461 deaths in Scotland. Of those deaths, individuals spent 89.1% of their last six months of life either at home or in a community setting, with the remaining 10.9% spent in hospital.
- In 2022/23, individuals spent an average of 163 days at home or in a community setting and 20 days in hospital in the six months prior to their death. This was an increase of one day from 2021/22.
- On average, individuals spent an extra five days within the last six months of life at home or in a community setting in 2022/23 compared to 2013/14.
- The trend of the percentage of time spent at home or in the community setting in 2022/23 (89.1%) was slightly lower than in 2020/21 (90.2%) and 2021/22 (89.7%) but remains higher than before the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Figure 1: Percentage of the last six months of life spent at home or in a community setting and in hospital, 2013/14 to 2022/23\***



\*Notes: Figures for 2022/23 are provisional. Figures in 2020/21 and 2021/22 are likely to have been affected by the measures in place at different stages of the COVID-19 pandemic.

## NHS board of residence

- Residents of NHS Shetland spent the highest percentage of time in their last six months of life at home or in a community setting with an average of 93.5%, and 6.5% spent in a hospital setting.
- Residents of NHS Borders spent the lowest percentage of time in their last six months of life at home or in a community setting with 87.7%, and 12.3% spent in a hospital setting.

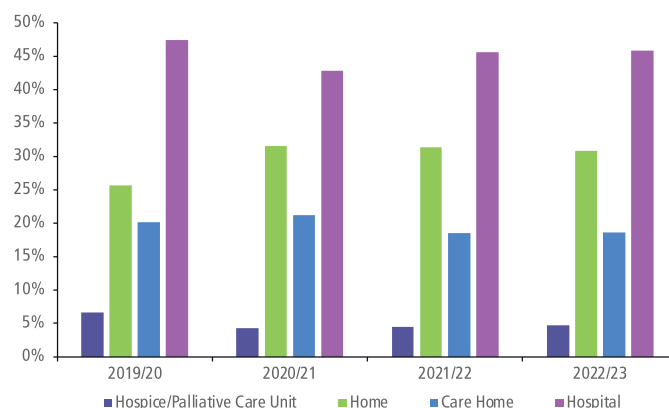
## Deprivation

- There is little variation in the percentage of time spent at home or in a community setting in the last six months of life across the different deprivation categories.
- Deprivation estimates range from 88.7% (deprivation category 2) to 89.4% (deprivation category 4).
- All deprivation categories show a similar trend over time, with a small increase in the percentage of time in the last six months of life spent at home or in the community.

## Location of death

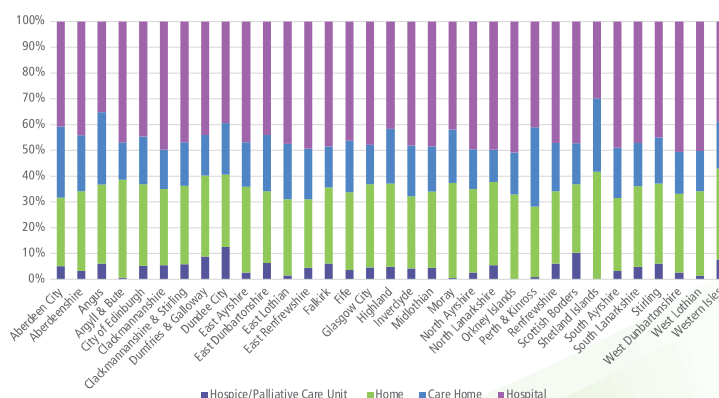
- In 2022/23, 48% of deaths occurred in a hospital setting, with 52% of deaths occurring in other settings including home, care home, community or other locations.
- Trends in location of death show similar proportions across all settings from 2019/20 to 2022/23.
- The distribution of location of death by health and social care partnerships is shown in Figure 3.

**Figure 2: Location of death in Scotland, 2019/20 to 2022/23\***



\*Note: Figures for 2022/23 are provisional.

**Figure 3: Location of death, by health and social care partnership, 2022/23\***



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