

Appendix 2 (as supplied by the authors): Email survey

First email:

Dear Physicians,

My name is Jeremiah, and I am a research coordinator from ICES working with Drs Lisa Barbera and Jose Pereira on a study to create and validate an algorithm to identify palliative care physicians within health administrative databases. The overall aim is to identify which physicians are providing palliative care using physician billings to the Ministry and to determine the extent of palliative care provided by these physicians. There is evidence that supports the role of early palliative care involvement and as the population ages and the incidence of cancer increases, palliative care physicians will play a crucial role in the provision of palliative care. Currently, very little is known about the palliative care physician workforce in Canada or Ontario. The objective is to use this tool to establish a baseline to assess system change into the future and to inform system development going forward.

We have collaborated with 17 physicians from across the province who have volunteered to provide their CPSO numbers to myself (Jeremiah) to help us develop the framework. We need more physicians (full and part time palliative care physicians and physicians doing both palliative care and also generalists or other work) to help us refine the model. We would like to use your CPSO number, which is publicly available, to describe the billing patterns of palliative care physicians vs. non-palliative physicians. We would also like to assess whether these patterns differ based on compensation models. Your CPSO numbers will be encrypted and **YOU WILL REMAIN ANONYMOUS**. The study will be descriptive in nature and results will be aggregated and presented in a way to ensure physicians are unidentifiable. This study is strictly looking to validate an algorithm and not to single out a particular provider. We follow all of the strict privacy procedures set out by our institute to ensure all personal identifying information is kept confidential.

Please indicate the following and send responses to the email address jeremiah.hwee@ices.on.ca:

Do you agree to participate:

CPSO number:

Job description (ex. Mainly practice palliative care vs. occasionally practice palliative care vs. no palliative care):

Payment method (ex. Fee-For-Service, GP Focused AFP/APP, Other AFP/APP, or Blended/hybrid model):

FTE status (do you work full time or part time; include all the parts of your practice):

If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact me.

Follow up email:

Dear Study Participant,

Thank you very much for your earlier participation in our study “Defining Palliative Care Physicians Using Administrative Data”. We have recently received REB approval for use of ongoing analysis of the data.

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Chair of the Sunnybrook Research Ethics Board at 416-480-4276, and if you have questions about the study, please contact the primary investigator of this study, Lisa Barbera at 416-480-4974 or at lisa.barbera@sunnybrook.ca.

Please send a brief note to Jeremiah Hwee at jeremiah.hwee@ices.on.ca within the next 3 weeks to confirm your willingness for us to proceed with analysis of your data.