Hospice Care and Policy Changes

Since the first hospice program opened in the 1970’s, hospice enrollment has continually grown, reaching 1.6 million patients in 2014. Current Medicare guidelines, however, often create barriers for prospective patients whose conditions require more than routine home care to maintain a reasonable quality of life. The first article from the Department of Health and Human Services outlines the current enrollment and payment requirements for hospice programs. The second article addresses some of the barriers, especially those for patients with hematologic malignancies, that keep patients away from hospice programs as well as some policy solutions to these barriers.