

Palliative Care In U.S. Hospitals

2026 Snapshot

Palliative care is specialized medical care for people living with serious illness, focused on relieving symptoms, pain, and stress, regardless of diagnosis or stage of illness. A strong body of evidence shows that palliative care significantly improves quality of life while reducing unnecessary health care utilization and spending.

Availability of Specialty Palliative Care in U.S. Hospitals, 2024 Data

Because it produces positive outcomes for patients, caregivers, clinicians, and hospitals, most U.S. hospitals now have palliative care programs.

80.1%

Proportion of hospitals with 50 or more beds reporting specialty palliative care.

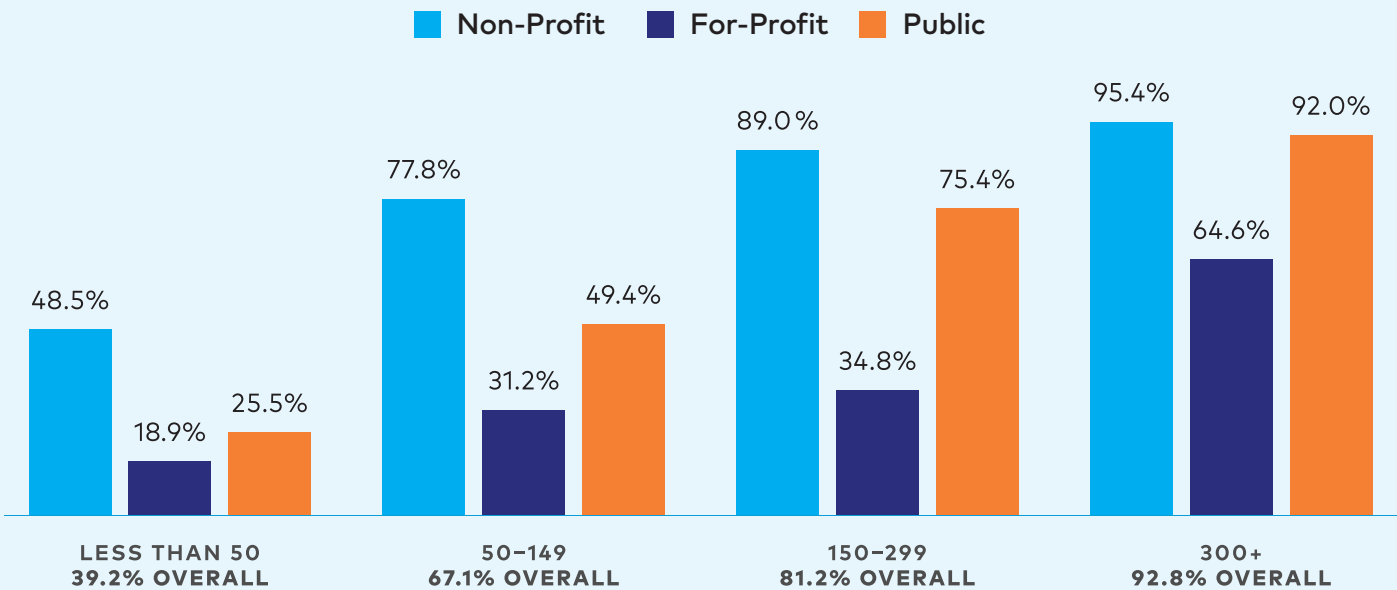
89.3%

Proportion of annual admissions nationwide who receive care at a hospital with a specialty palliative care program.

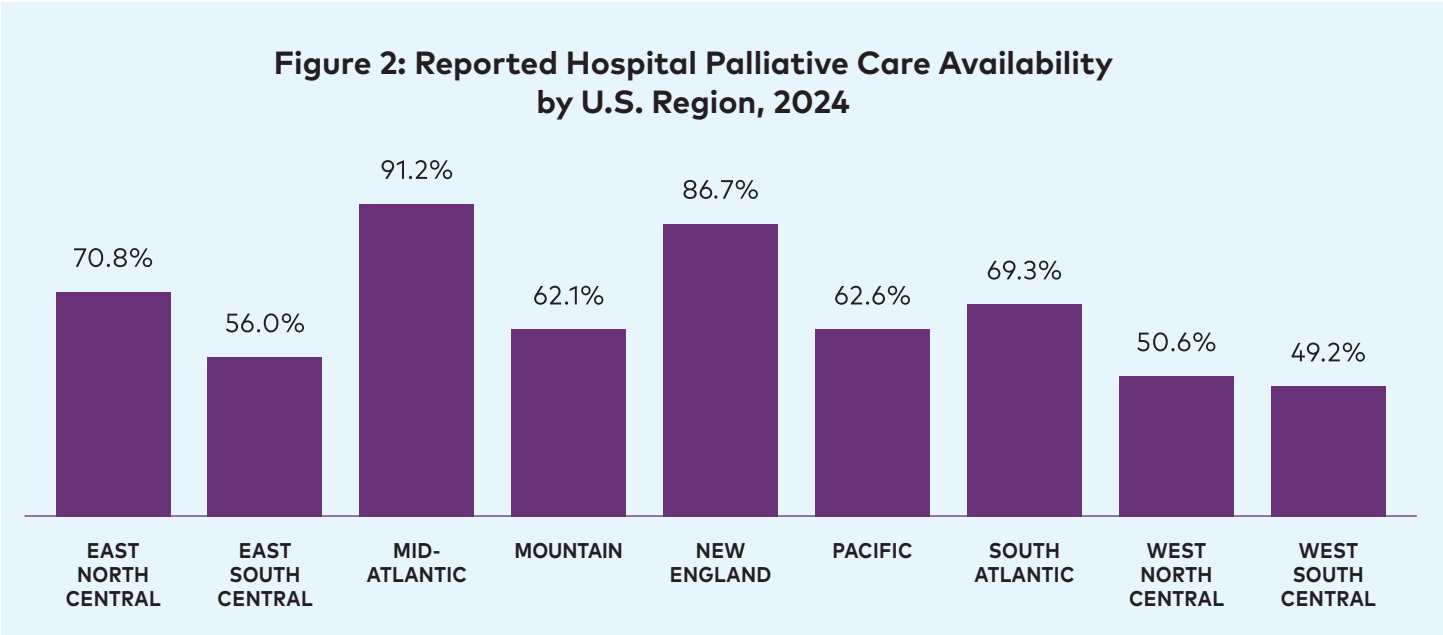
Gaps in Access

Despite rapid growth in the number of U.S. palliative care programs, gaps in access remain, particularly by hospital bed size and tax status.

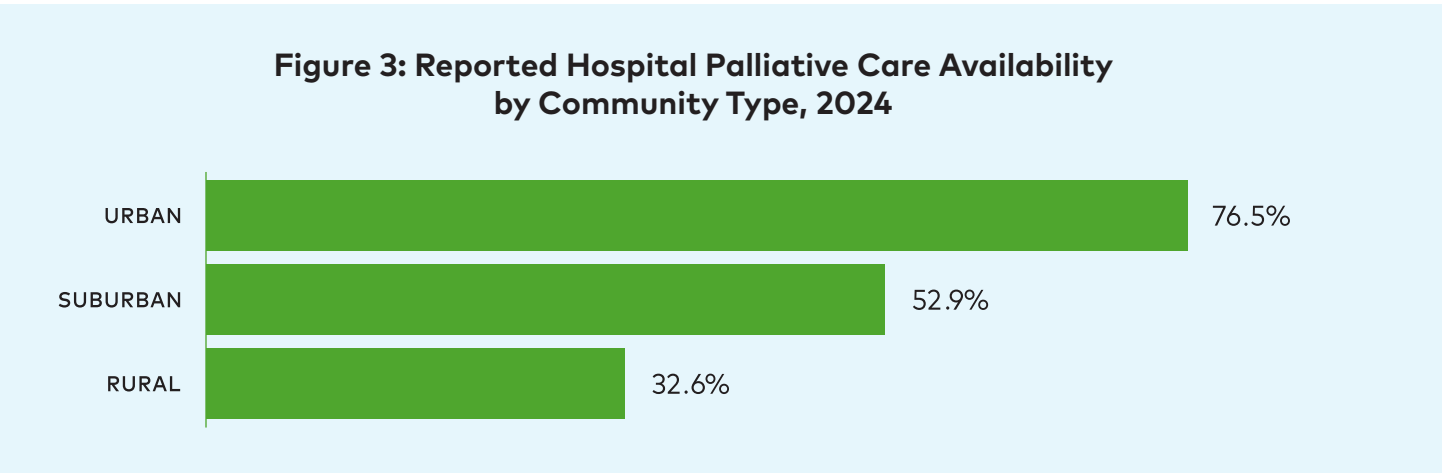
Figure 1: Reported Palliative Care Availability by Hospital Bed Size and Ownership Type, 2024



Palliative care availability also varies significantly by geographic region. Learn more about state-by-state variability in the **CAPC Serious Illness Scorecard**.



The reported availability of palliative care also varies across urban, suburban, and rural hospitals.



For more information on best practices in starting, growing, and delivering inpatient palliative care, access the Hospital Palliative Care Program Design Toolkit and much more at **capc.org**.