

Memorandum (October 25, 2011)

TO: Angie Truesdale, NHPCO

FROM: Lianna Weissblum, Amanda Forys

SUBJECT: 2009 Average Routine Visits per Day by Length of Stay

The National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO) asked The Moran Company to compare the average visits per day for hospice patients receiving routine home care in nursing facilities to hospice patients receiving the same level of hospice care who are residing in other locations. Figure 1 provides an overview of the average number of visits per day by site of care. Due to high variation in average visits per day, we created two separate charts, one for short lengths of stay (1-20 days, Figure 2) and another for longer lengths of stay (greater than 20 days, Figure 3) to show the difference across short and longer stay patients.

As Figure 1 suggests, the average number of visits per day is similar between hospice patients residing in nursing facilities and other hospice patients. As we examine patients with a length of stay of 1-20 days, visits per day are slightly higher for non-nursing facility patients (Figure 2). For patients with a length of stay of greater than 20 days, the average number of visits per day is more sporadic; nursing facility patients have slightly higher average visits per day compared to other patients for lengths of stay greater than 45 days.

Methodology

We identified hospice admissions in the 2009 100% Medicare Hospice Standard Analytic Files (SAFs). Admissions were identified as occurring in the nursing facility if any claim for each admission included Q codes Q5003 or Q5004. Routine visits were defined as visits occurring on days paid at the routine home care rate. Admissions without at least one routine visit were excluded from the analysis, as well as any patients with a length of stay of 0 or more than 365 days in the claims data. Additionally, we excluded cases in which a patient averaged 7 or more routine home care visits per day these data are unlikely and may be a coding error (0.75% of all admissions). If a patient transferred, we counted their length of stay separately for each provider number.

Figure 1. Average Routine Home Care Visits per Day, by Site of Service, 2009

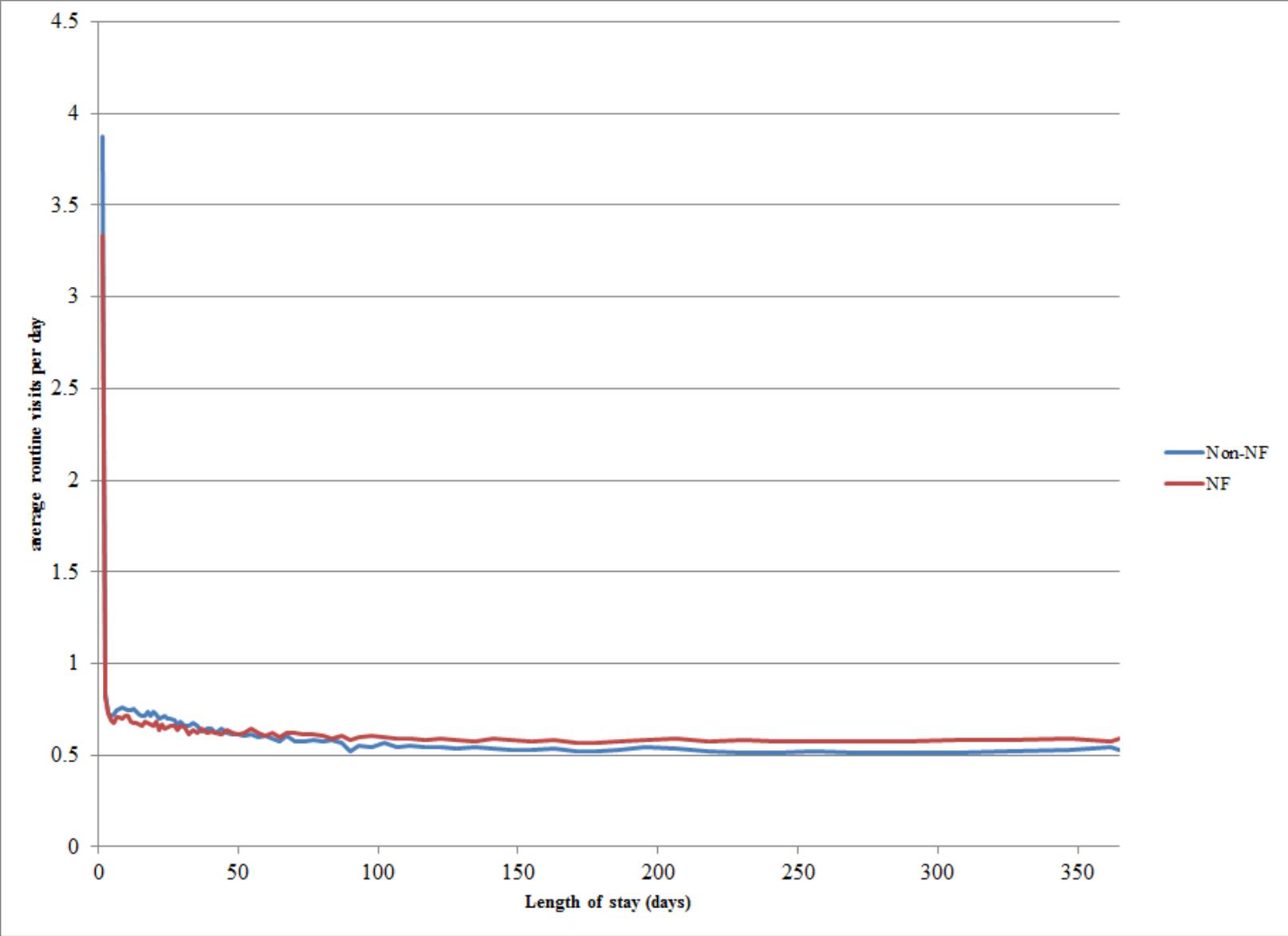


Figure 2. Average Routine Home Care Visits per Day for Short Stay Hospice Patients (1-20 Days), by Site of Service, 2009

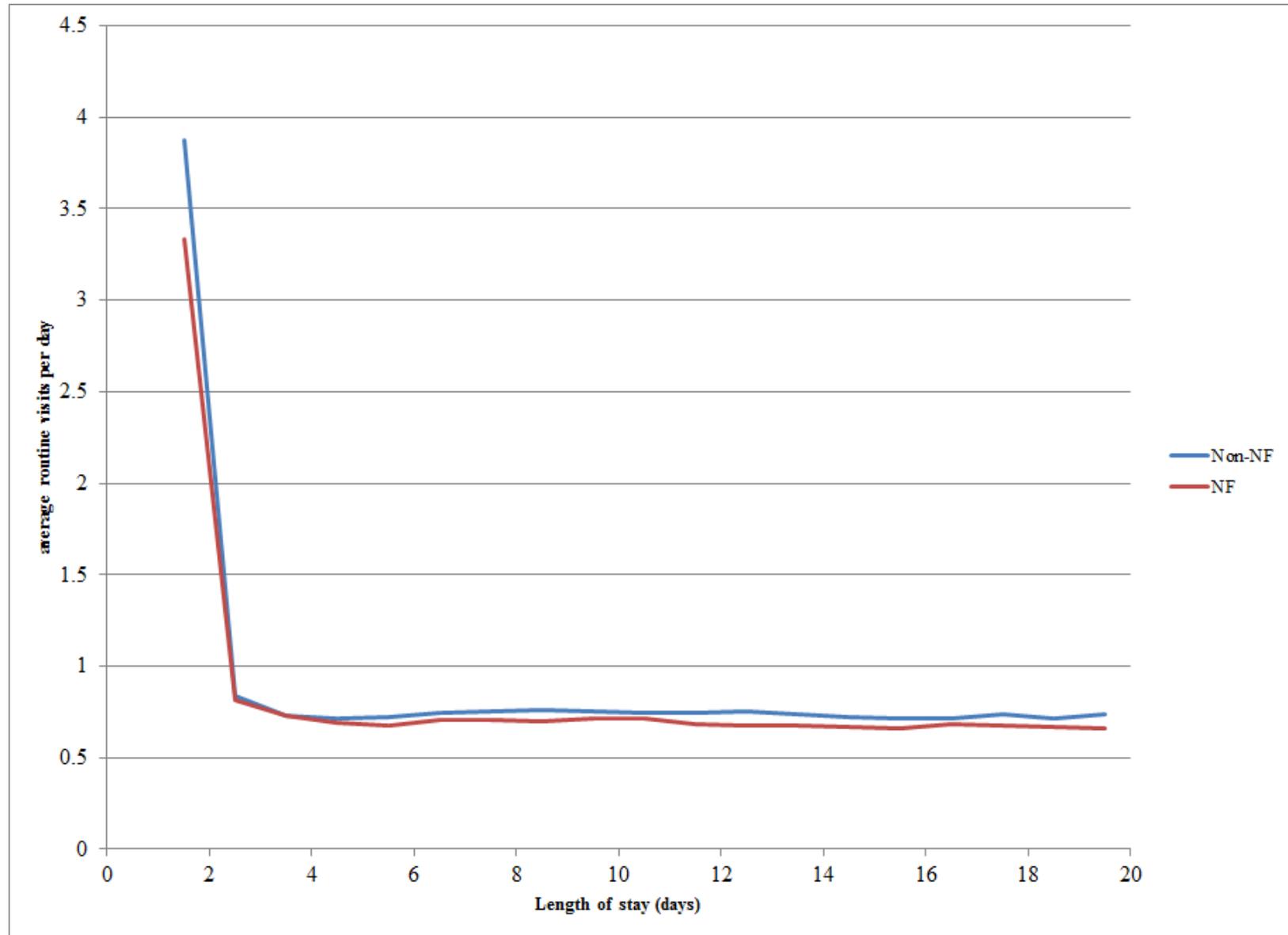


Figure 3. Average Routine Home Care Visits per Day for Longer Stay Hospice Patients (>20 Days), by Site of Service, 2009

