

Key Drivers of Hospice Access and Experience

WSHPCO and OHPCA
Spring Intensive Conference
May 7, 2026

Presented by:
Berg Data Solutions
Marc Berg, Alex Berg, and Sarah Cameron

Data Sources: 2024 Medicare FFS Claims

Data Sources

Medicare Fee For Services Claims – 100% Sample Size for:

- Hospitals
- Home Health Agencies
- Hospice Agencies
- Skilled Nursing Facilities

CMS Quality Data

CMS Patient Satisfaction Data

Social Security Administration Medicare Enrollment and Death Records

Cost Reports

Learning Objectives

Key Drivers of Hospice Access and Experience

By engaging in this workshop, participants will:

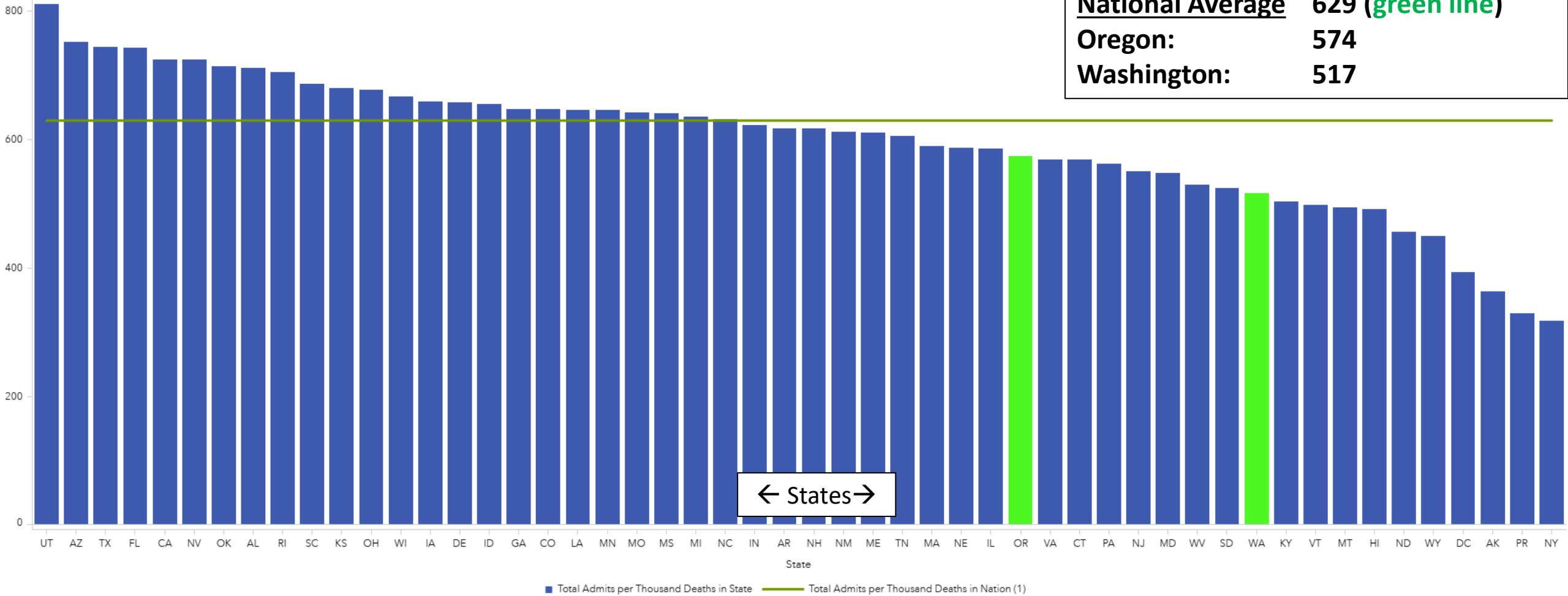
- Understand the **frequency with which residents of Washington and Oregon access hospice services.**
- Understand **how WA and OR compare to National and Case-Mix Adjusted benchmarks for key drivers of hospice access.**
- Establish a **foundation for concrete ways to improve access to hospice care.**

Hospice Utilization

Overall Hospice Admissions / 1,000 Medicare Deaths: 2024

Total Hospice Admissions per 1,000 Beneficiary Deaths

Total Admits per Thousand Deaths in State



National Average	629 (green line)
Oregon:	574
Washington:	517

Overall Hospice Admissions / 1,000 Medicare Deaths: 2020-2024

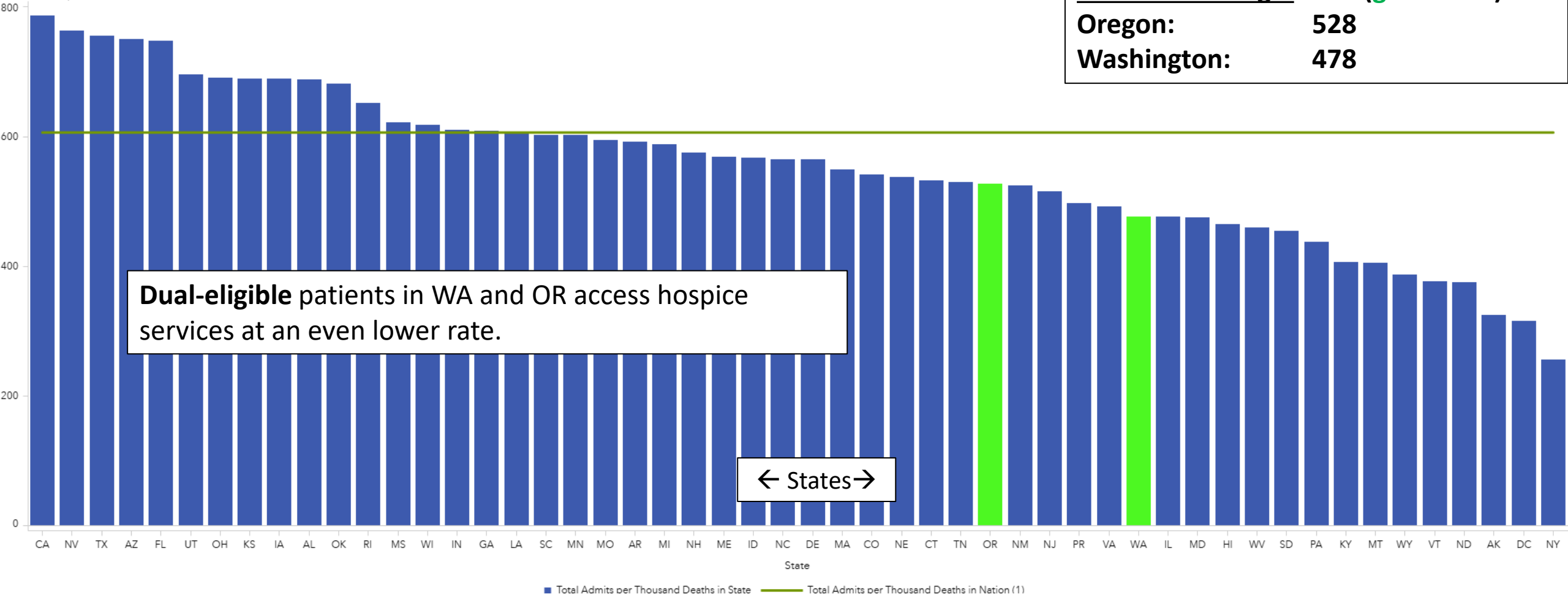
Total Admits per Thousand Deaths in State by State grouped by Year



Dual-Eligible Hospice Admissions / 1,000 Medicare Deaths: 2024

Total Hospice Admissions per 1,000 Beneficiary Deaths

Total Admits per Thousand Deaths in State



National Average:	607 (green line)
Oregon:	528
Washington:	478

Dual-eligible patients in WA and OR access hospice services at an even lower rate.

← States →

■ Total Admits per Thousand Deaths in State — Total Admits per Thousand Deaths in Nation (1)

Dual-Eligible Hospice Admissions / 1,000 Medicare Deaths: 2020-2024

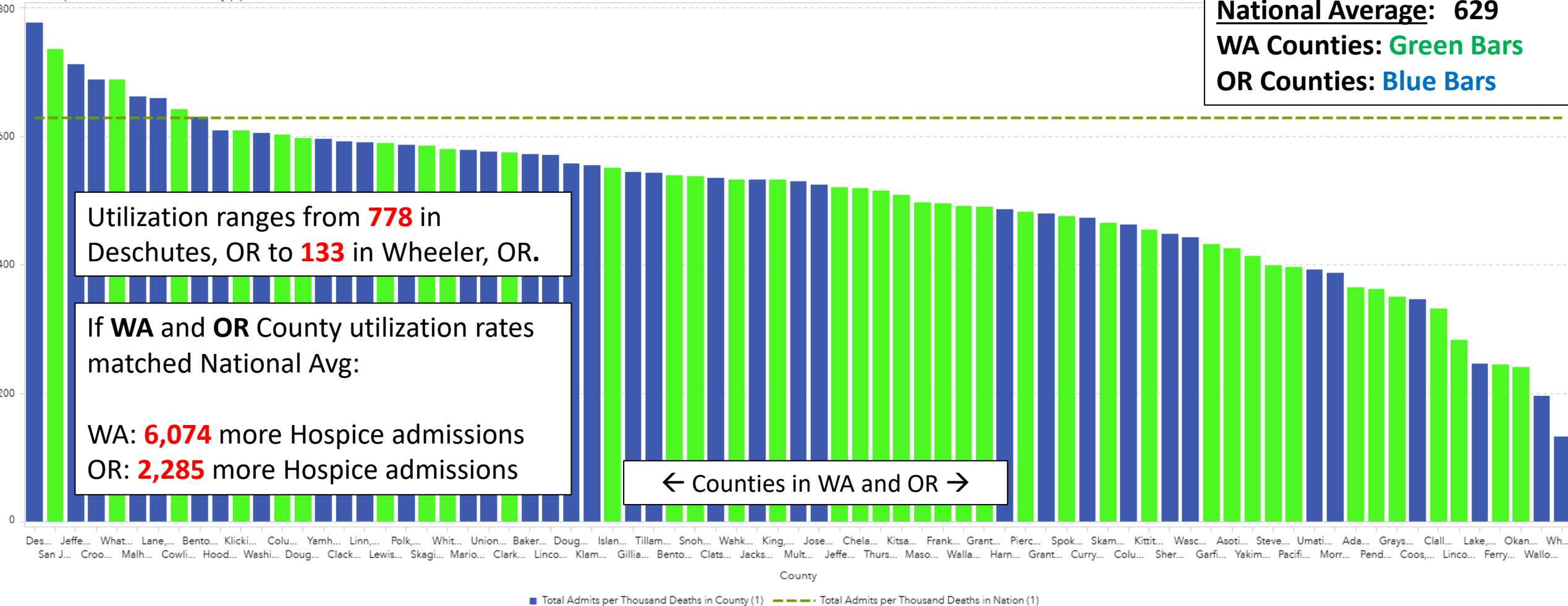
Total Admits per Thousand Deaths in State by State grouped by Year



Hospice Admissions / 1,000 Medicare Deaths: WA and OR 2024

Total Hospice Admissions per 1,000 Beneficiary Deaths

Total Admits per Thousand Deaths in County (1)



Key Hospice Access and Experience Indicators

Timeliness By State: Percent of Patients Discharged from Hospital and Admitted to Hospice Same Day: 2024

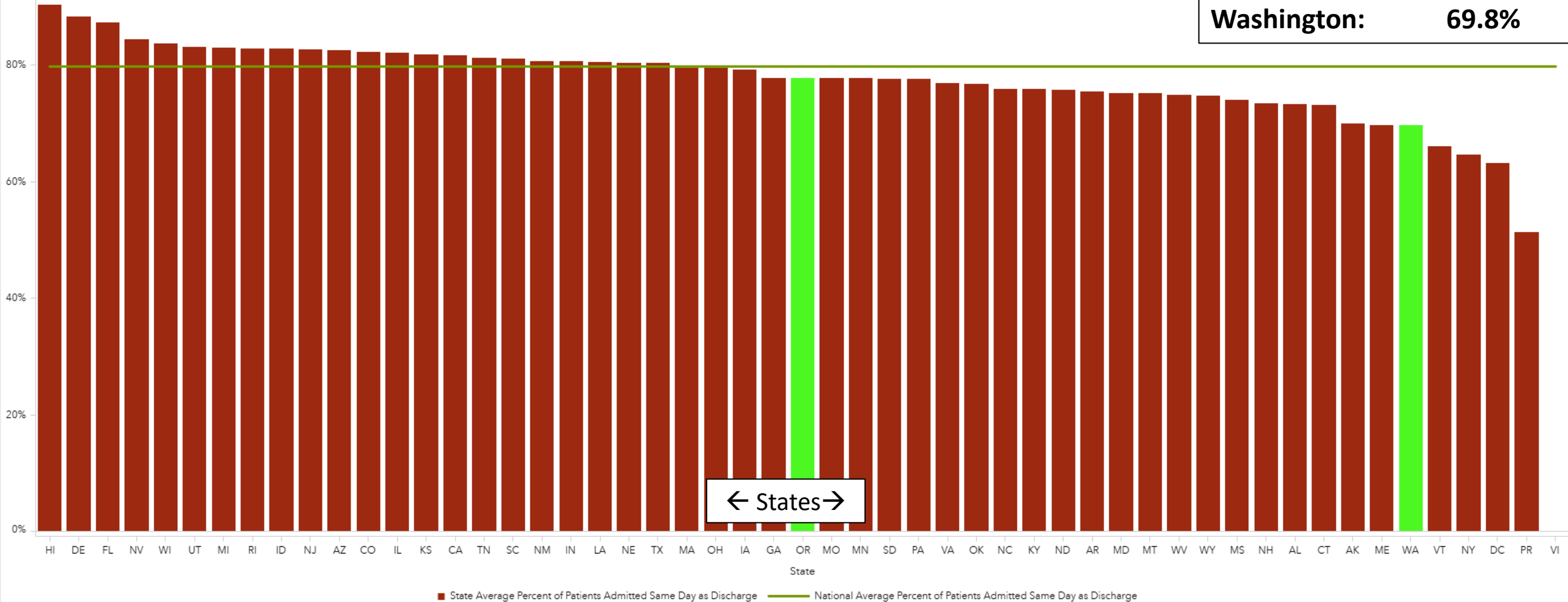
BERG DATA

< Same Day Within 1 Day >

Percent of Hospice Patients Admitted on the Day of IP Discharge by State (turn off state filter above)

State Average Percent of Patients Admitted Same Day as Discharge

National Average:	80%
Oregon:	77.8%
Washington:	69.8%

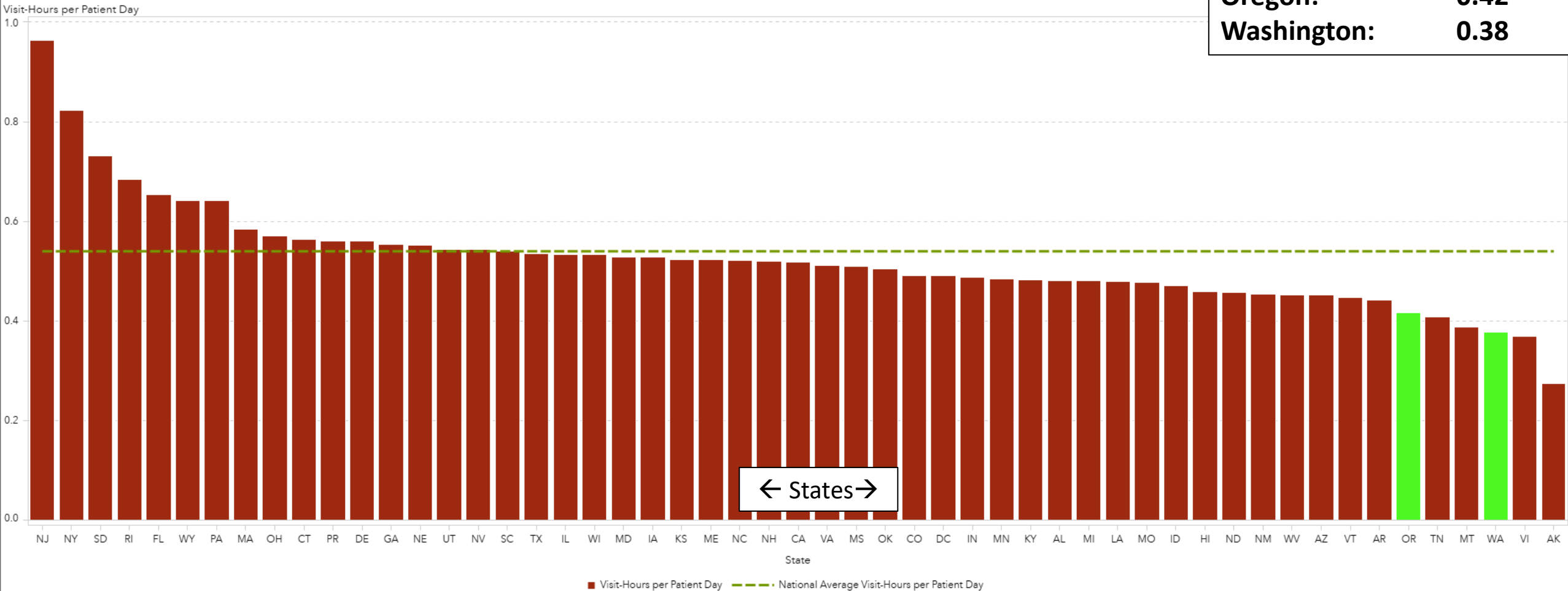


Visit Hours By State Per Patient Day: 2024

BERG DATA

National Average:	0.54
Oregon:	0.42
Washington:	0.38

Visit-Hours per Patient Day by State (turn off state filter above)

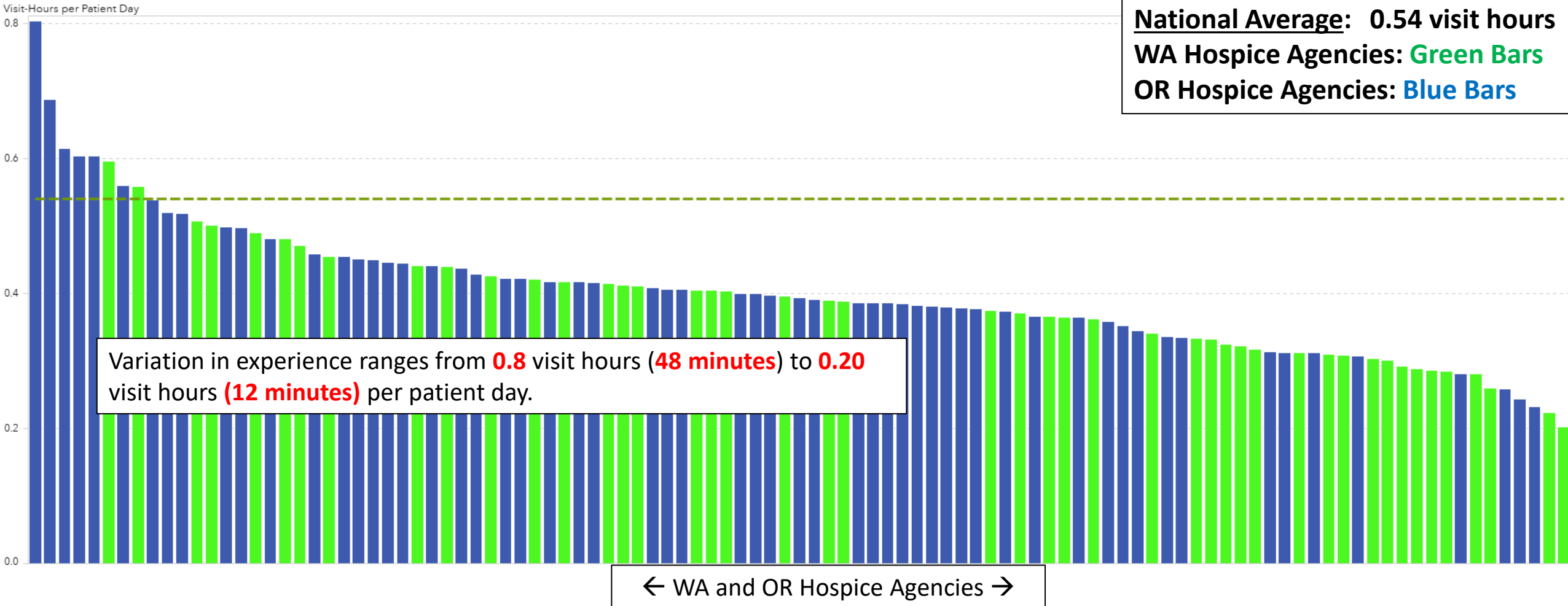


← States →

Visit Hours By Agency Per Patient Day: WA and OR 2024

BERG DATA

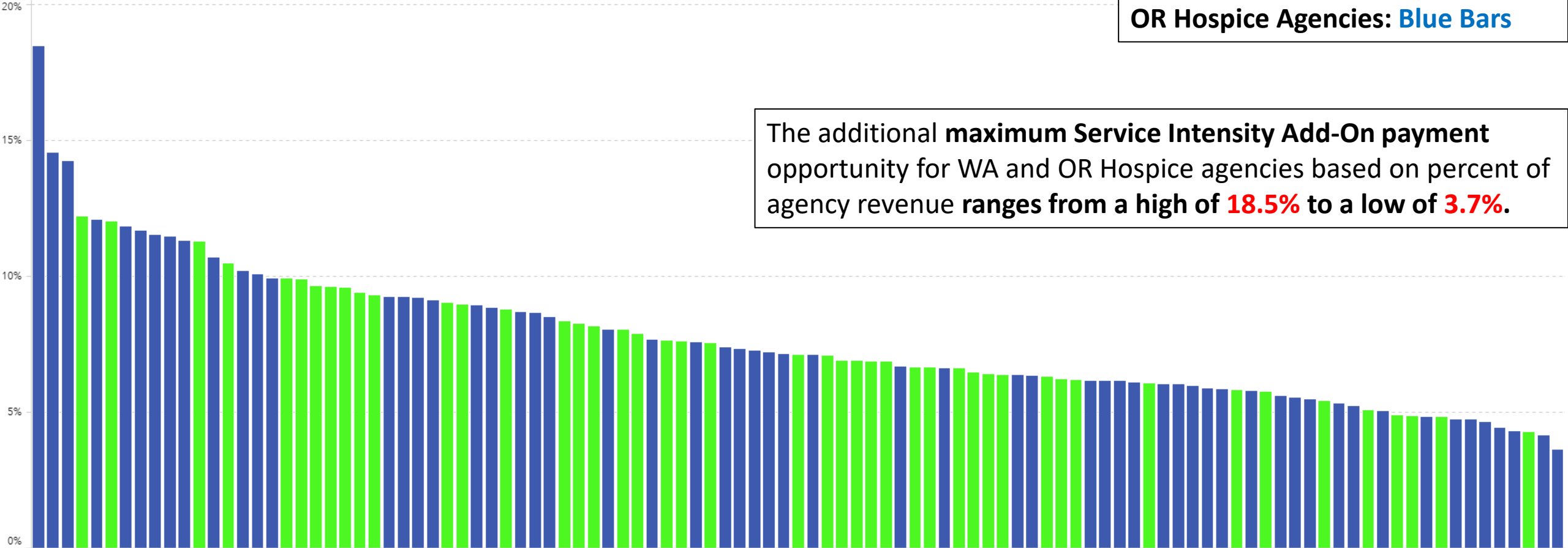
Visit Hours per Patient Day



Service Intensity Add-On Opportunity (%): WA and OR 2024

Potential SIA Payments as a Percent of Total Revenue

Potential SIA Percent Increase in Total Payments



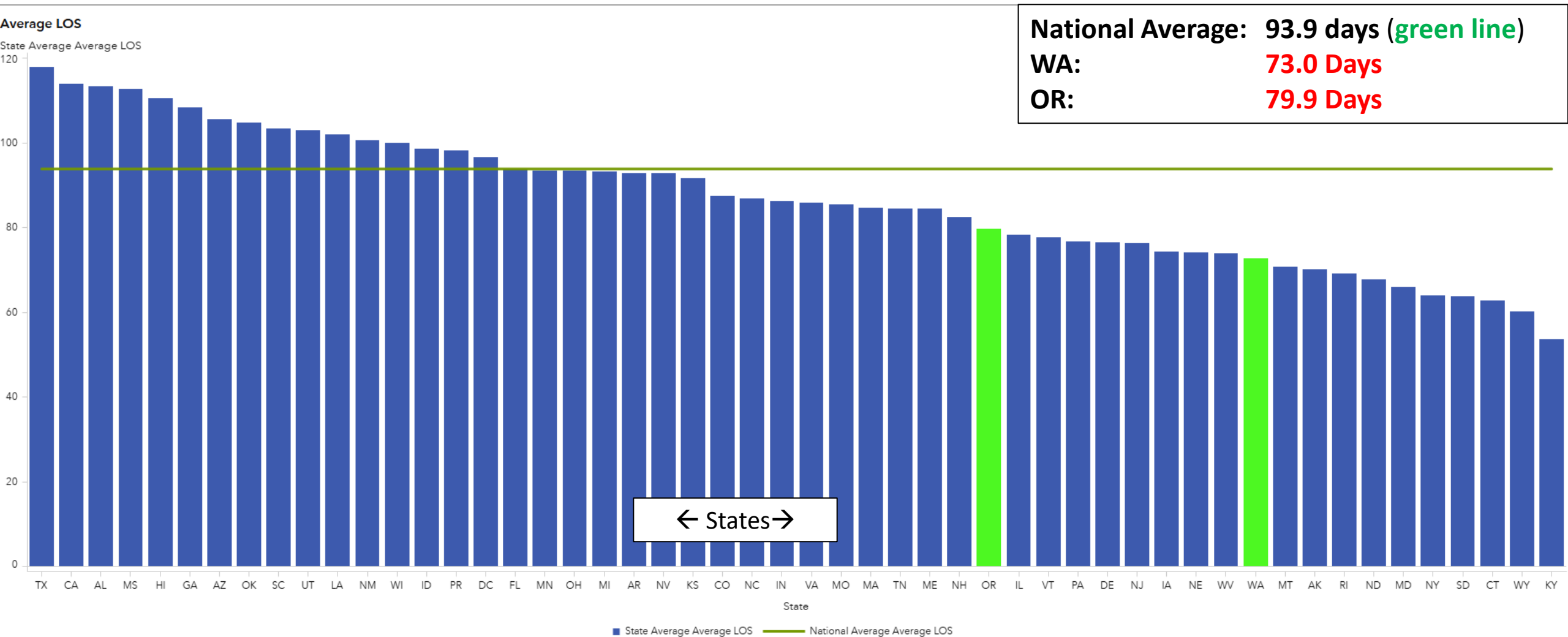
WA Hospice Agencies: **Green Bars**
OR Hospice Agencies: **Blue Bars**

The additional **maximum Service Intensity Add-On payment** opportunity for WA and OR Hospice agencies based on percent of agency revenue **ranges from a high of 18.5% to a low of 3.7%.**

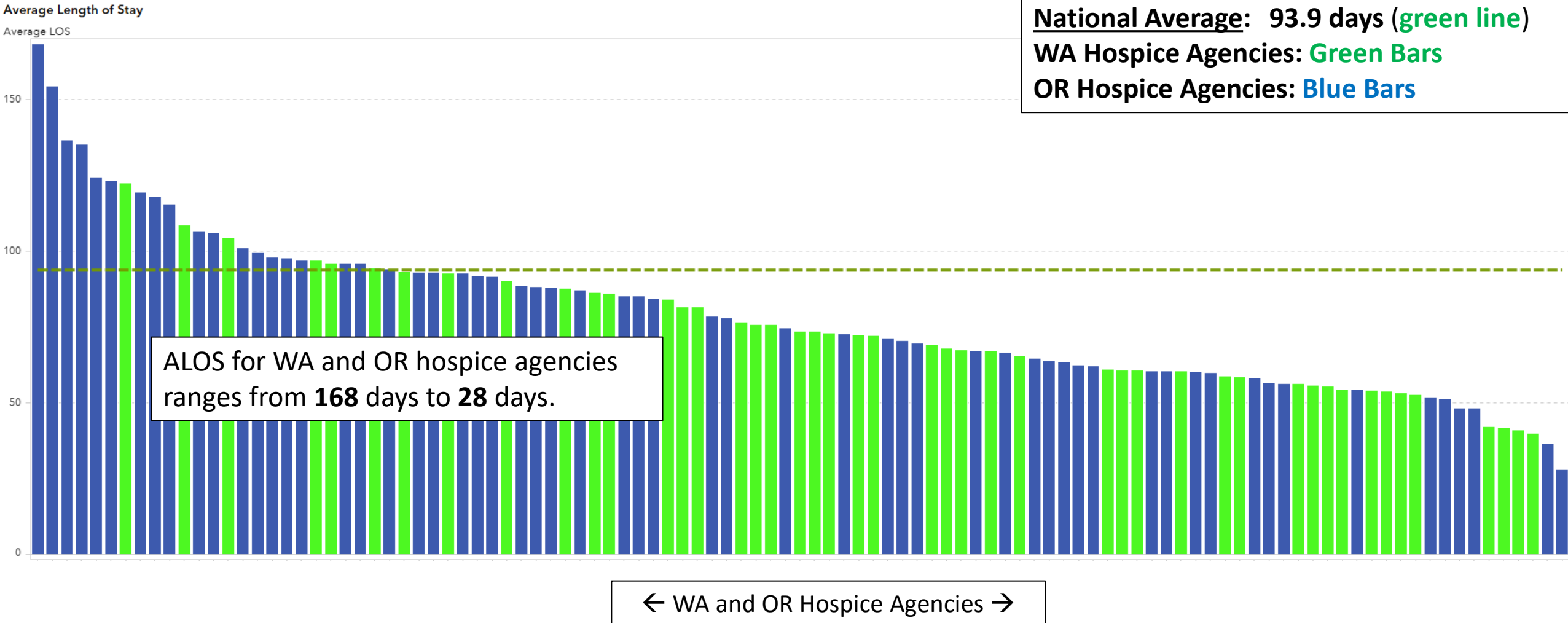
← WA and OR Hospice Agencies →

Hospice Average Length of Stay: By State 2024

BERG DATA



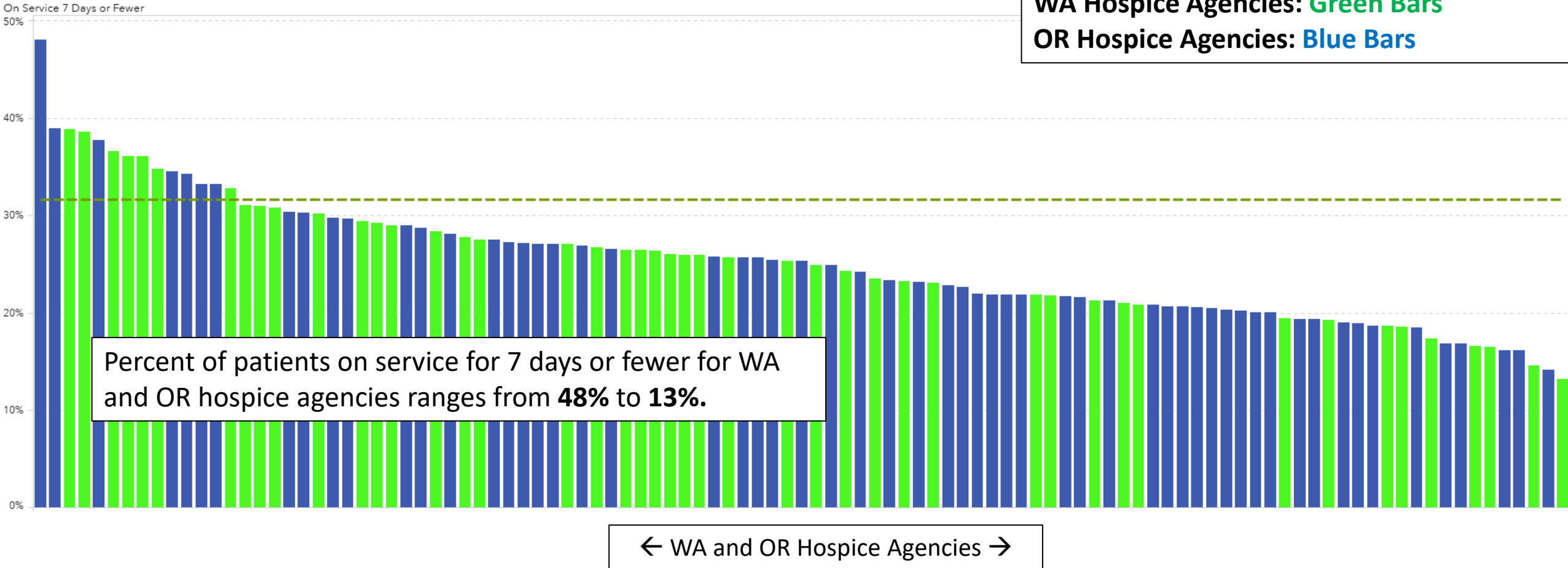
Hospice Average Length of Stay: WA and OR 2024



Hospice Percent (%) on Service 7 Days or Fewer: WA and OR 2024

BERG DATA

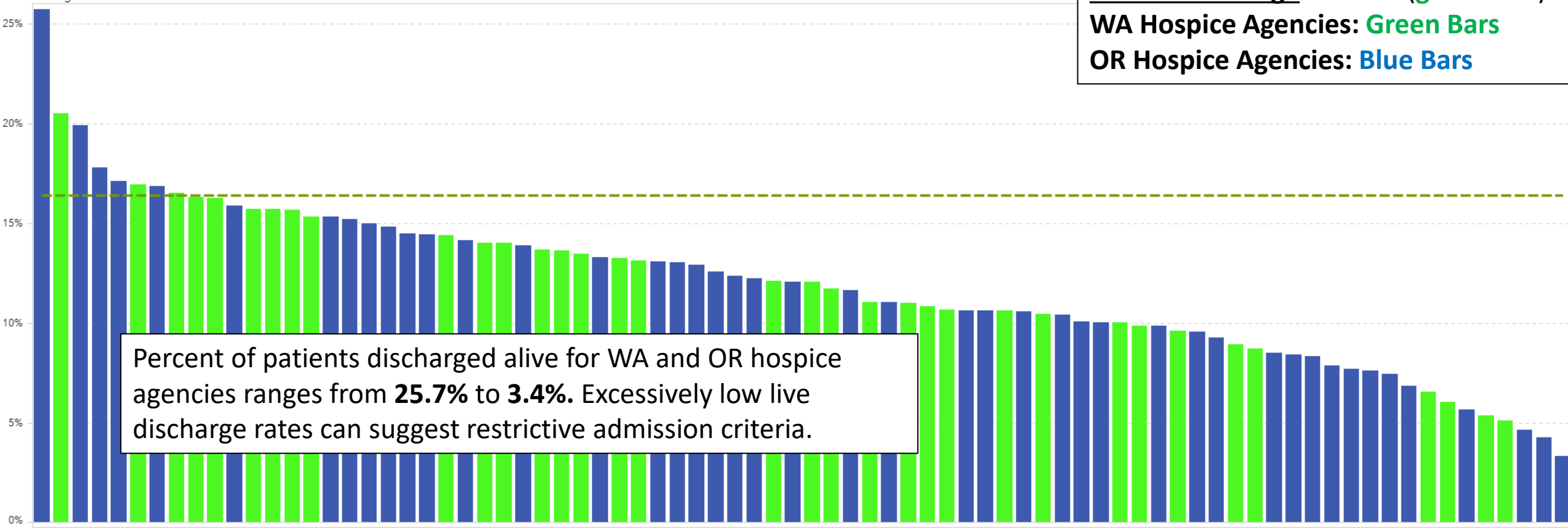
Percent of Patients on Service for 7 Days or Fewer



Hospice Percent (%) Discharged Live: WA and OR 2024

Percent of Patients Discharged Alive

Live Discharge %



National Average: 16.4% (green line)
WA Hospice Agencies: Green Bars
OR Hospice Agencies: Blue Bars

Percent of patients discharged alive for WA and OR hospice agencies ranges from **25.7%** to **3.4%**. Excessively low live discharge rates can suggest restrictive admission criteria.

← WA and OR Hospice Agencies →

Hospital Discharge Patterns

Percent Hospital Patients Coded to HOSPICE Discharge Disposition (Observed vs Expected): WA and OR 2024

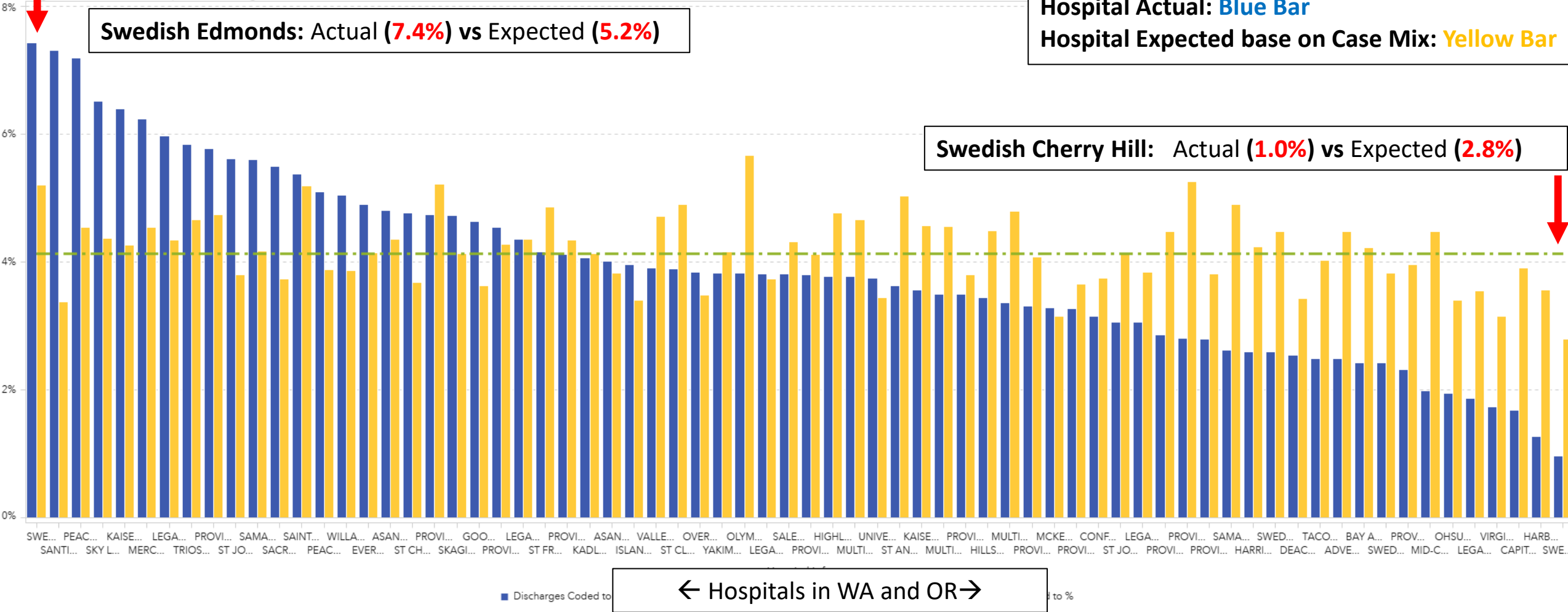
Percentage of Patients coded to Discharge Disposition listed above.

Discharges Coded to % / DRG Expected Discharges Coded to %

National Average 4.1% (green line)
Hospital Actual: Blue Bar
Hospital Expected base on Case Mix: Yellow Bar

Swedish Edmonds: Actual (7.4%) vs Expected (5.2%)

Swedish Cherry Hill: Actual (1.0%) vs Expected (2.8%)



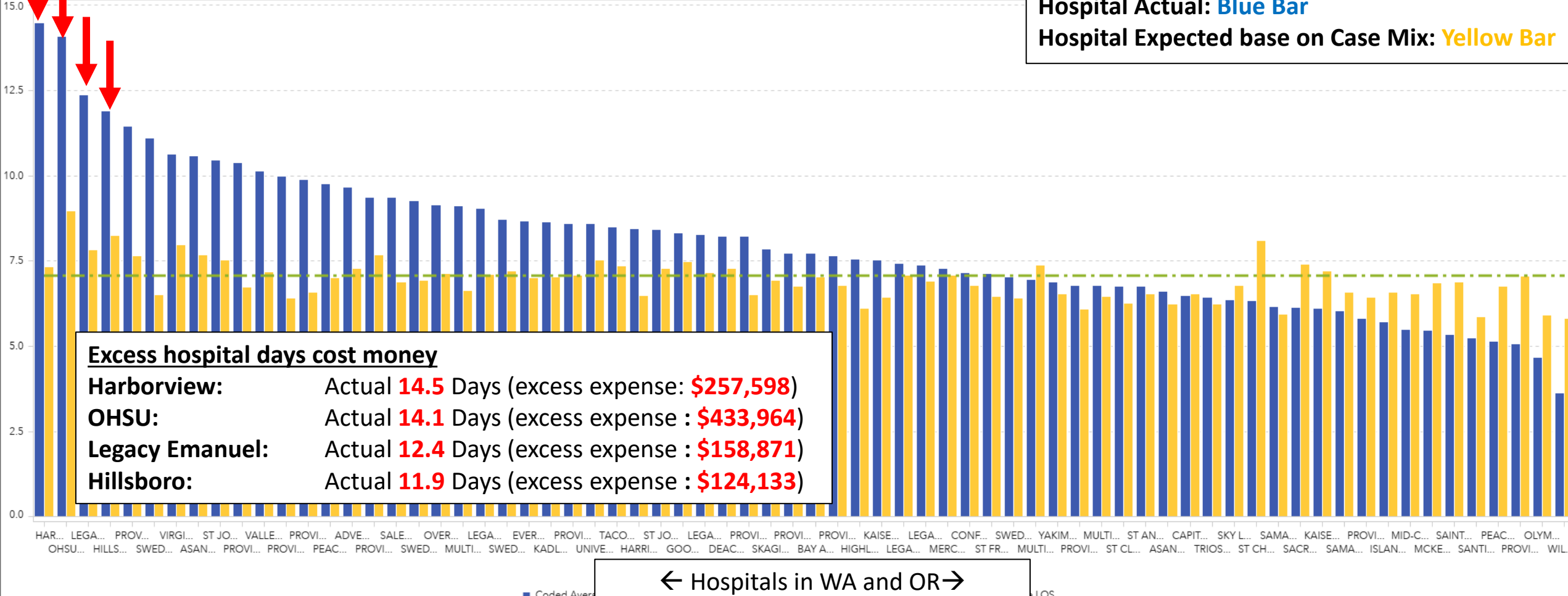
← Hospitals in WA and OR →

IP Length of Stay for Patients Coded to HOSPICE Discharge Disposition (Observed vs Expected): WA and OR 2024

BERG DATA

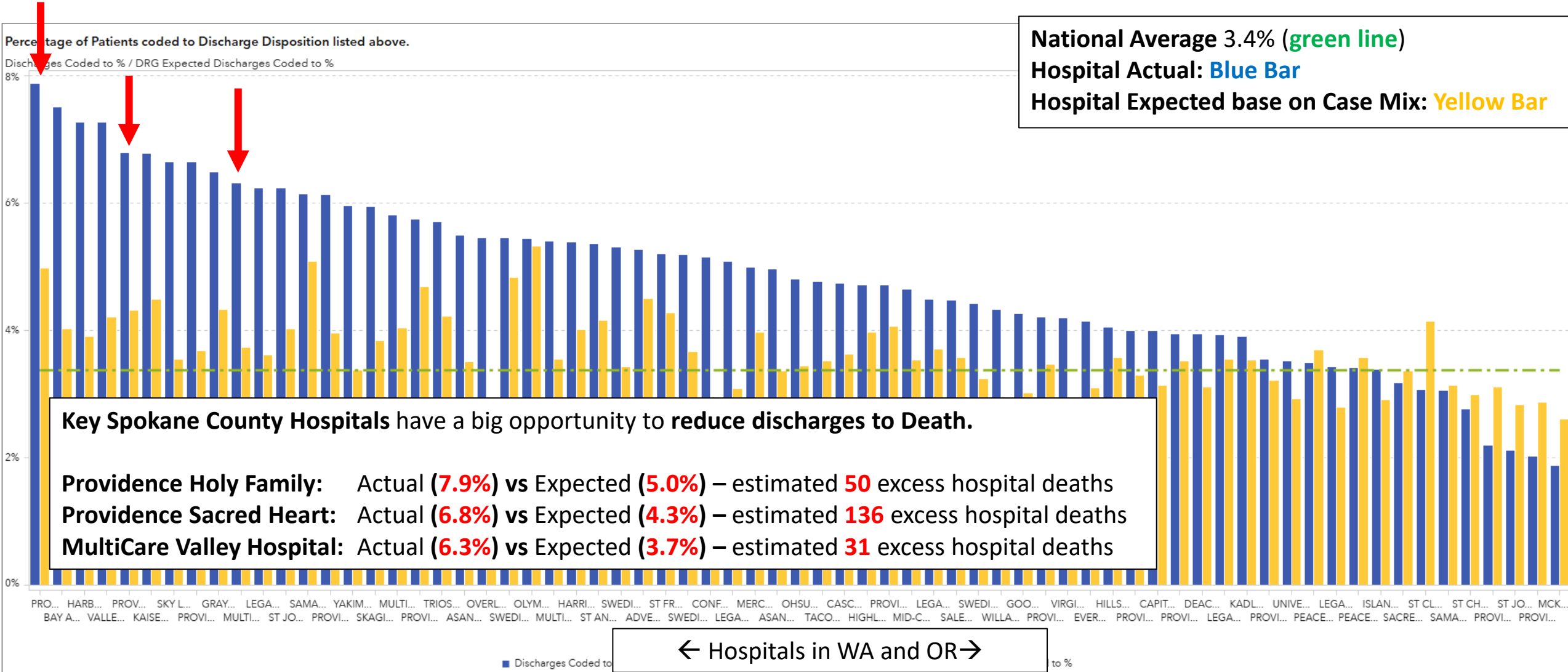
LOS by Discharge Disposition listed above.
Coded Average LOS / DRG Expected Coded Average LOS

National Average 7.1 days (green line)
Hospital Actual: Blue Bar
Hospital Expected base on Case Mix: Yellow Bar



← Hospitals in WA and OR →

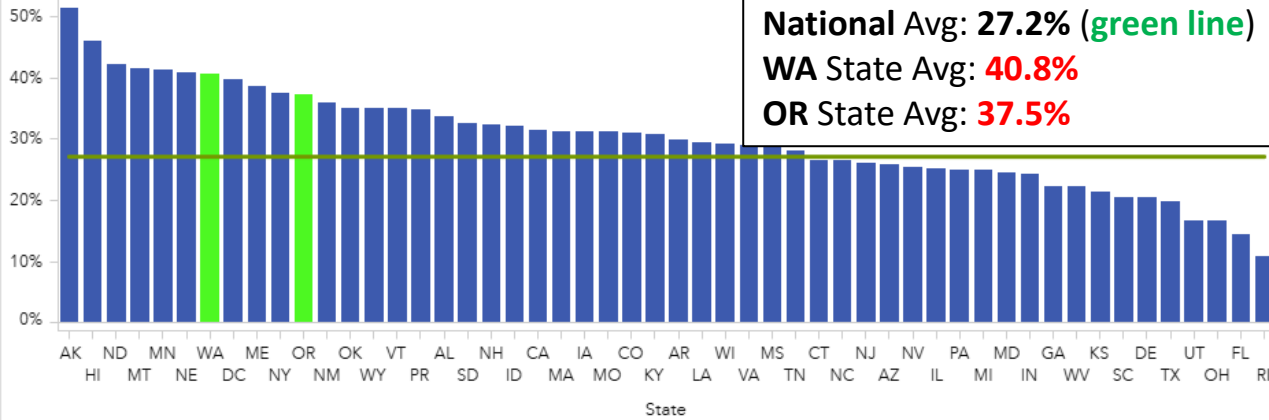
Percent Hospital Patients Coded to DEATH Discharge Disposition (Observed vs Expected): WA and OR 2024



Discharge Disposition after IP Palliative Care Consult: By State 2024

Percent of Palliative Care consults when patient DIED in the hospital

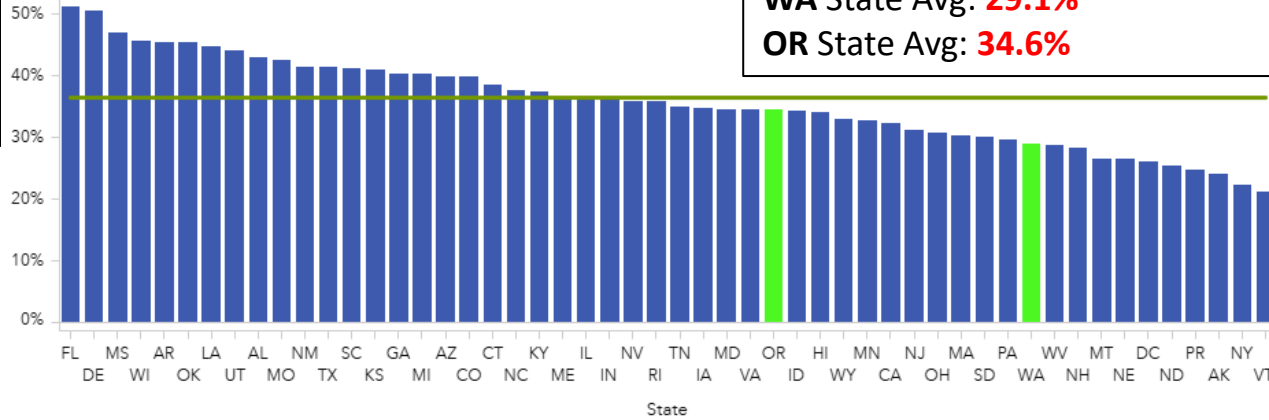
State Average Patients With a Palliative Care Consult Who Discharged



Discharge to Death
National Avg: 27.2% (green line)
WA State Avg: 40.8%
OR State Avg: 37.5%

Percent of Palliative consults when the patient discharged to HOSPICE

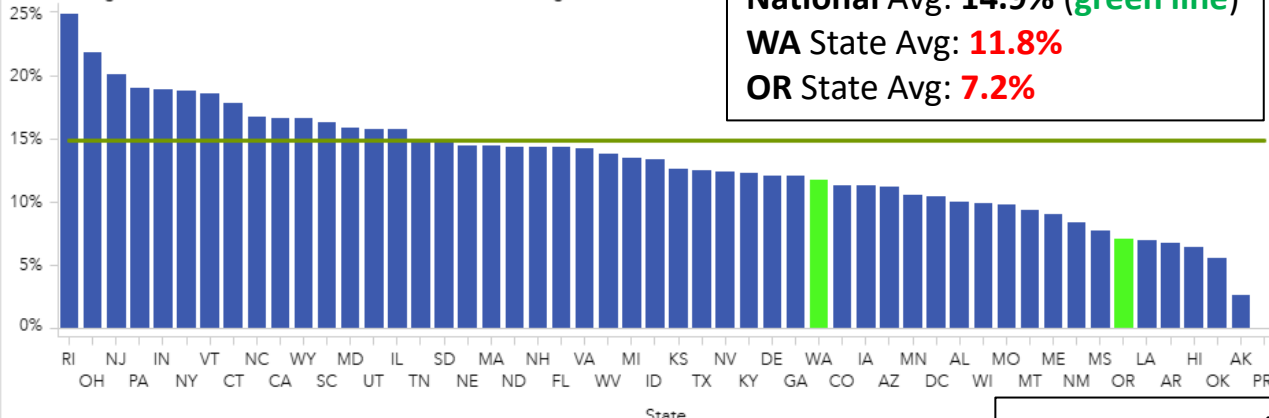
State Average Patients With a Palliative Care Consult Who Discharged



Discharge to Hospice
National Avg: 36.4% (green line)
WA State Avg: 29.1%
OR State Avg: 34.6%

Percent of Palliative consults when the patient discharged to a SNF

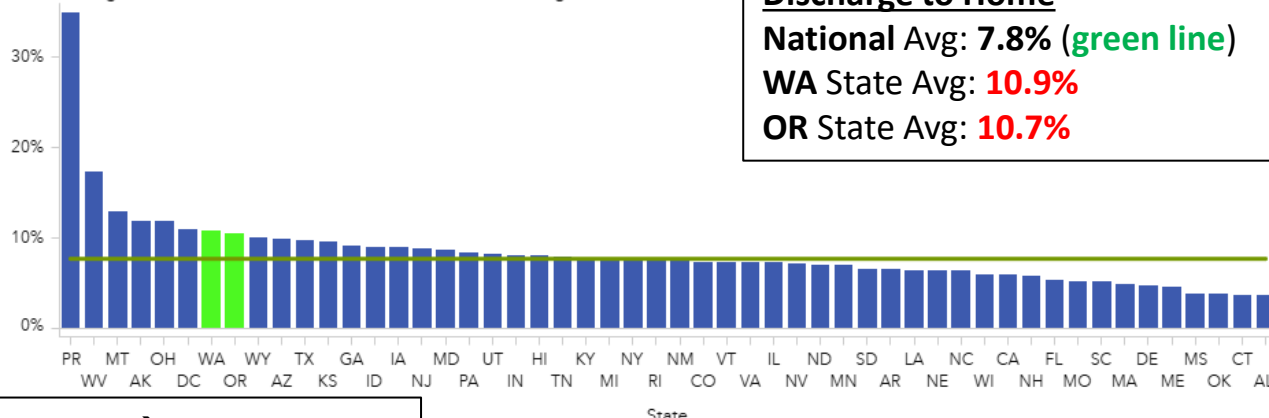
State Average Patients With a Palliative Care Consult Who Discharged



Discharge to SNF
National Avg: 14.9% (green line)
WA State Avg: 11.8%
OR State Avg: 7.2%

Percent of Palliative consults when the patient discharged to HOME

State Average Patients With a Palliative Care Consult Who Discharged



Discharge to Home
National Avg: 7.8% (green line)
WA State Avg: 10.9%
OR State Avg: 10.7%

← States →

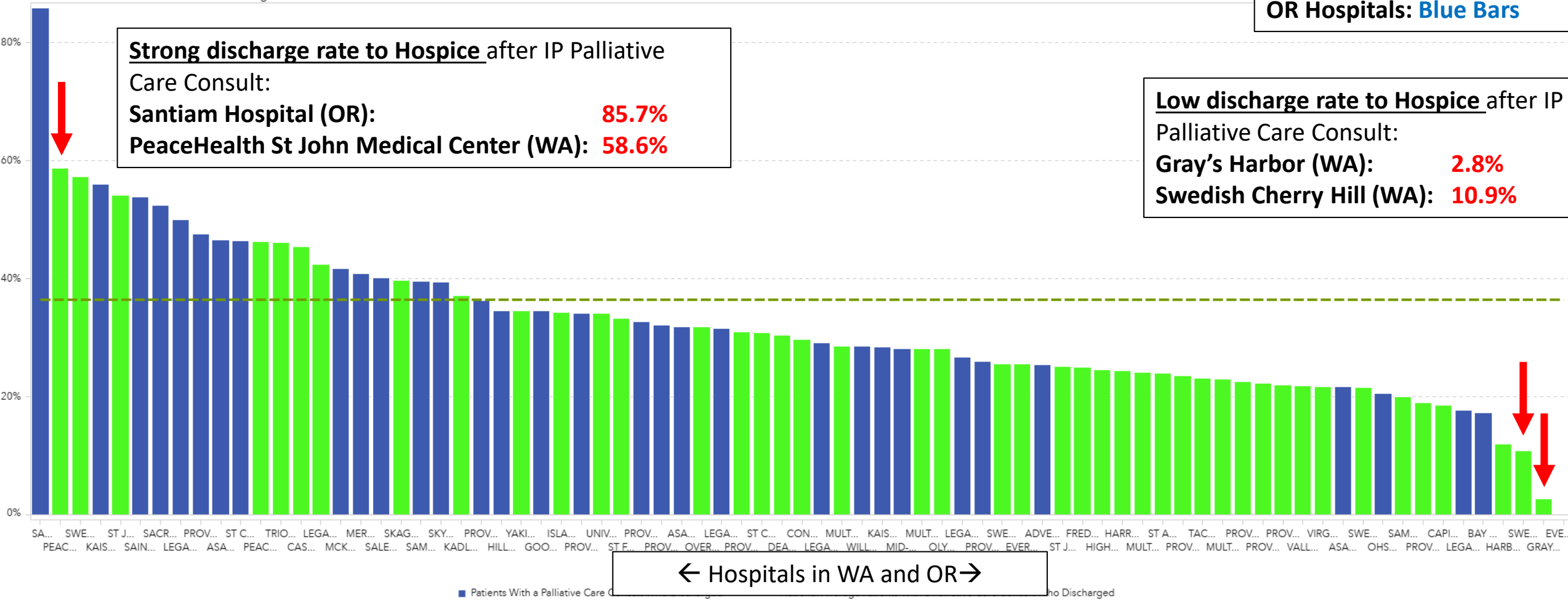
Percent IP Palliative Care Consults that Discharge to Hospice: WA and OR 2024

Percent of Palliative consults when the patient discharged to HOSPICE
Patients With a Palliative Care Consult Who Discharged

WA Hospitals: Green Bars
OR Hospitals: Blue Bars

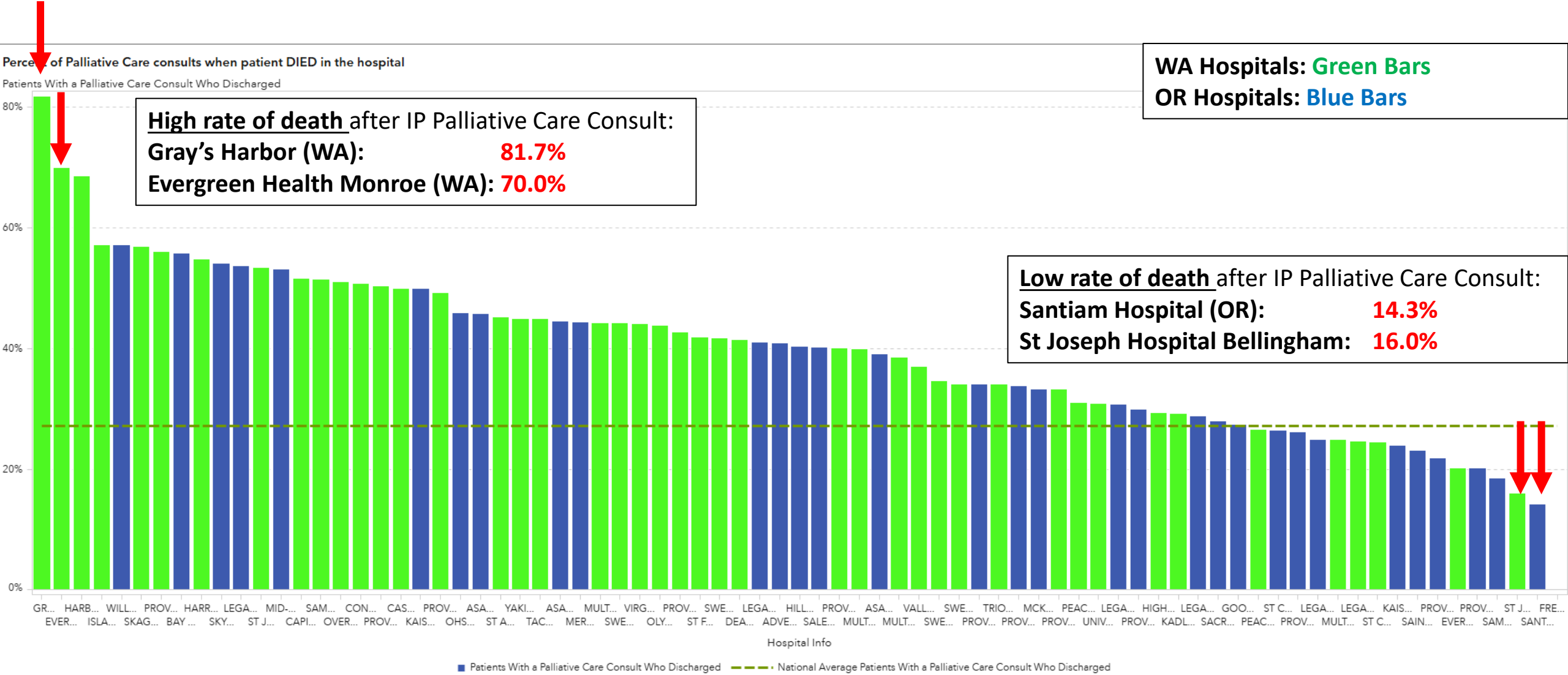
Strong discharge rate to Hospice after IP Palliative Care Consult:
Santiam Hospital (OR): 85.7%
PeaceHealth St John Medical Center (WA): 58.6%

Low discharge rate to Hospice after IP Palliative Care Consult:
Gray's Harbor (WA): 2.8%
Swedish Cherry Hill (WA): 10.9%



← Hospitals in WA and OR →

Percent IP Palliative Care Consults that Discharge to Death: WA and OR 2024



Sample Tool for Community / Hospital Education

What Drives Hospice Access

Hospice Utilization is driven by **clinical practice** – not demographics

Correlations identify relationships between variables. A high correlation would mean that if one variable changes, you can predict the change of a second variable. Correlations can be both positive (move in the same direction) or negative (move in the opposite direction).

Not primary drivers

- Age, race, gender, payer mix, or other population measures
- Readmission rates or hospital length of stay

Primary drivers

- Hospital discharges to hospice
- Early inpatient palliative care engagement
- Inclusion of non-cancer patients in hospice agency admissions

Most people prefer care at home through end of life, yet many die in the hospital without accessing hospice.



Goal: *improve metrics associated with the key drivers of hospice utilization and by extension the end-of-life experience for community residents.*

Local Report Card Results

Performance varies widely across Hospitals and Hospice Providers

Metric	Stanislaus County		Merced County	
	2022	2024	2022	2024
County Hospice Utilization	C	C+	D	C-

Individual hospices agencies were graded based on:

- Percent of non-cancer patients admitted

Individual hospitals were graded based on:

- Percent of patients discharged to hospice
- Percent of patients who died in the hospital
- Palliative Care consults that resulted in a discharge to hospice

One of the strongest predictors of hospice use is whether hospitals identify eligible patients and discharge them to hospice rather than allowing death to occur in the hospital.

Hospitals Grades

Metric	Emanuel		Mercy		Memorial Modesto		Doctors	
	2022	2024	2022	2024	2022	2024	2022	2024
IP palliative care consults resulting in a discharge to hospice.	A	B+	C	B	B	C+	B	C
Overall percent of patients discharged to hospice.	C	B	C	C	C	D	C	D+
Identification of hospice eligible patients and the number that are discharged to hospice (ratio).	C	B-	D	C	C	D+	C	D
Percentage of patients that die in the hospital (and never find their way to hospice).	C	D+	C	C	B	C+	F	F
Overall Grade	B-	B-	C-	C	B-	C-	C-	D

Improving End-of-Life Care Together

Hospice access requires community engagement.

Hospitals

- Normalize and encourage earlier goals-of-care conversations
- Strengthen inpatient palliative care pathways
- Track discharge-to-hospice as a quality metric

Hospice providers

- Expand outreach for non-cancer patients
- Partner with hospital to strengthen earlier access strategies

Shared responsibility

- Treat hospice access as a quality and equity opportunity

Hospitals save lives every day. Ensuring people also have access to a good death is part of caring well for the community.

Key Takeaways

Topic	
Admission Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is your admission criteria / philosophy? Are you following the COPs or unintentionally creating barriers to access?
Time with Patients	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How do you track clinician productivity and what are your expectations for clinician time in the home?
Hospital Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How is your organization supporting timely admission for patients discharging from the hospital?• How can your organization enhance the IP Palliative Care bridge to post-acute care?• How can your organization improve the hospital's observed / expected mortality rate?

Contact Information

Sarah Cameron

sarah@bergdatasolutions.com
949-400-2536

Marc Berg

marc@bergdatasolutions.com
360-518-3226

Alex Berg

alex@bergdatasolutions.com
360-907-5535

Contact us to learn more about how your agency is performing relative to the topic discussed today.

www.BergDataSolutions.com