

A decade of national data:

Access to palliative care in Australia

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The Palliative Care Outcomes Collaboration is funded by the Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing

PCOC is the platform for standardised clinical assessment and response framework, data collection, national benchmarking and quality improvement in palliative care.

Agenda today:

- Explore national trends in palliative care access



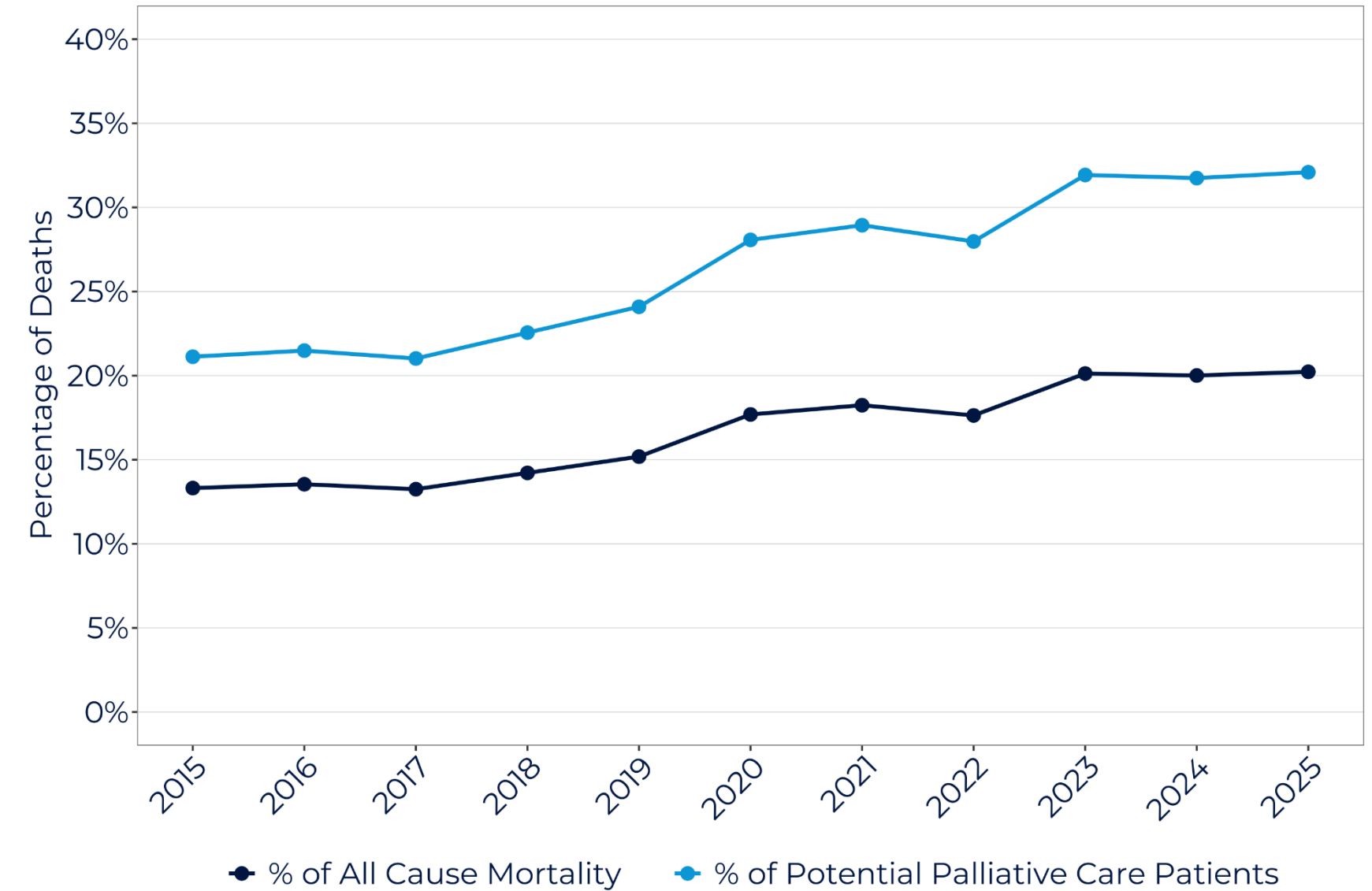
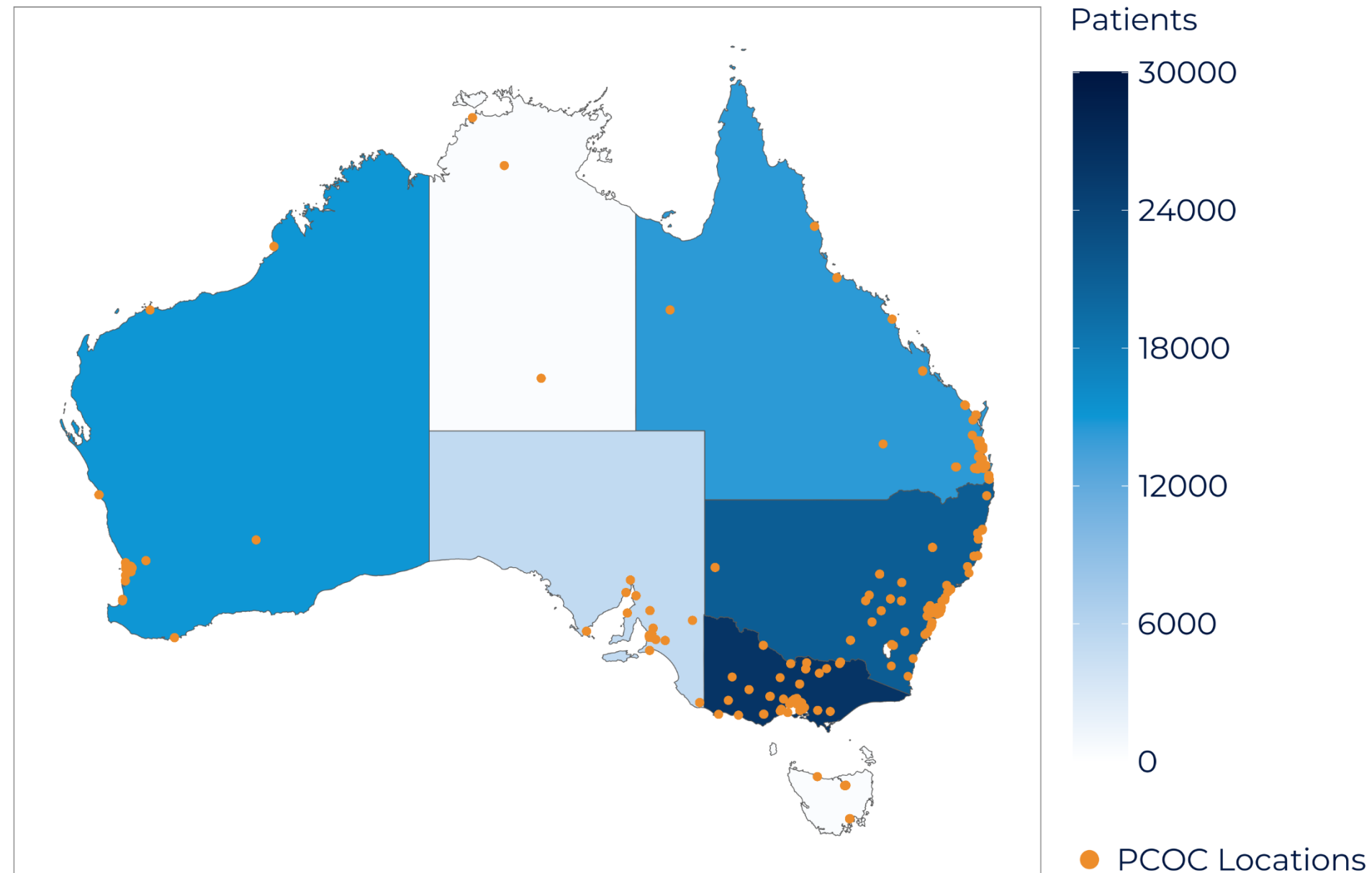
National Overview of Patient Outcomes in Australia 2025

May 2026

New report publication

- Over 70,000 people receiving palliative care in 2025
- Increased PCOC coverage
- Unchanged referral sources
- Shifts in case-mix
- Improvements in access & clinical outcomes
- And more

PCOC and Growing Reach Across Australia

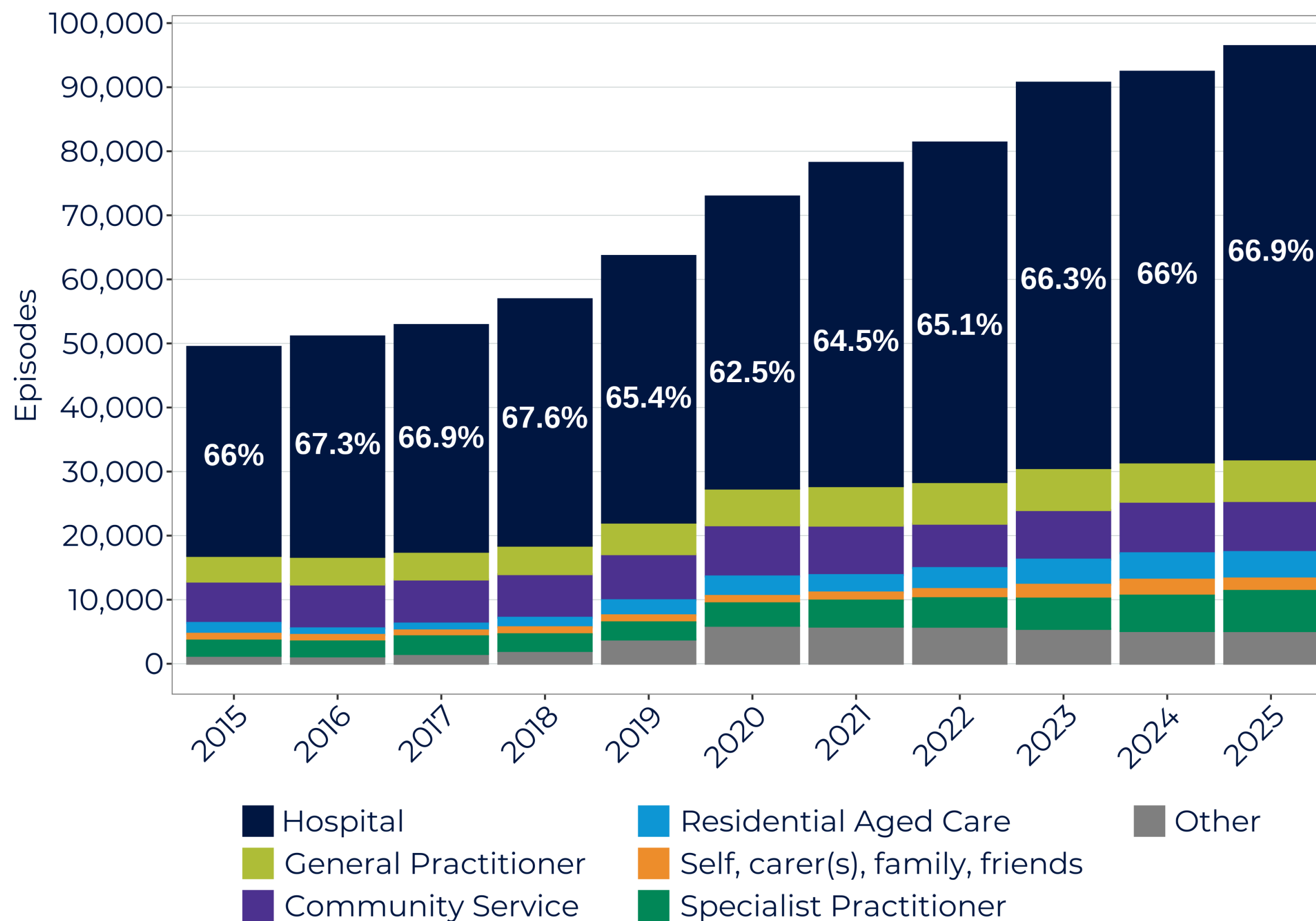


Source: Total Mortalities from Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) using Jan-Nov 2025 provisional data release

Growing national reach: +4.5% per year
(the last 5 years)

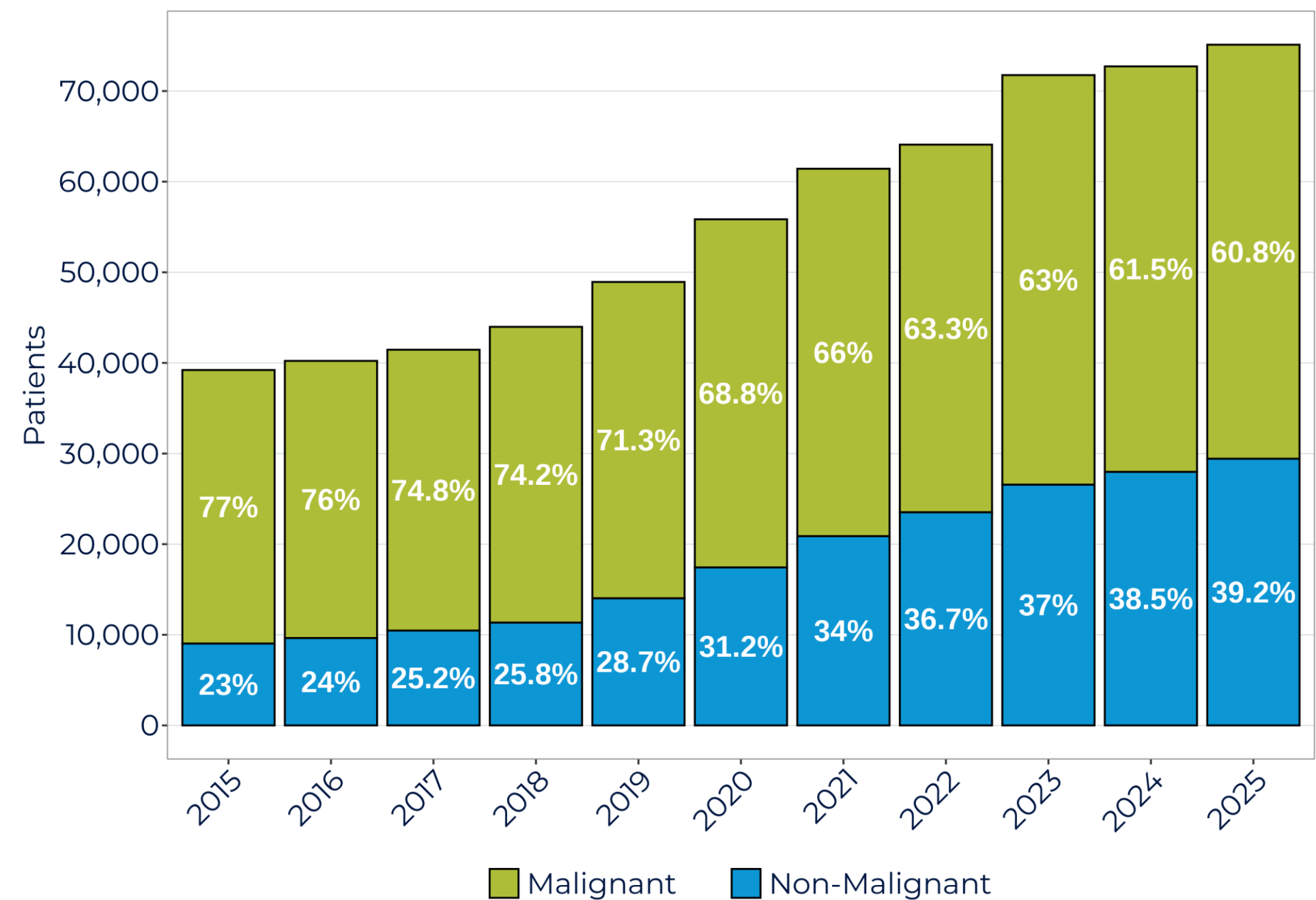
National percentage of all cause mortalities
that are captured in the PCOC dataset has
increased from 13% in 2017 to 20% in 2024

Number and sources of referral over time



Hospitals are the main entry point into palliative care, and it **hasn't changed in the last decade.**

Number and % of patient primary diagnosis over time

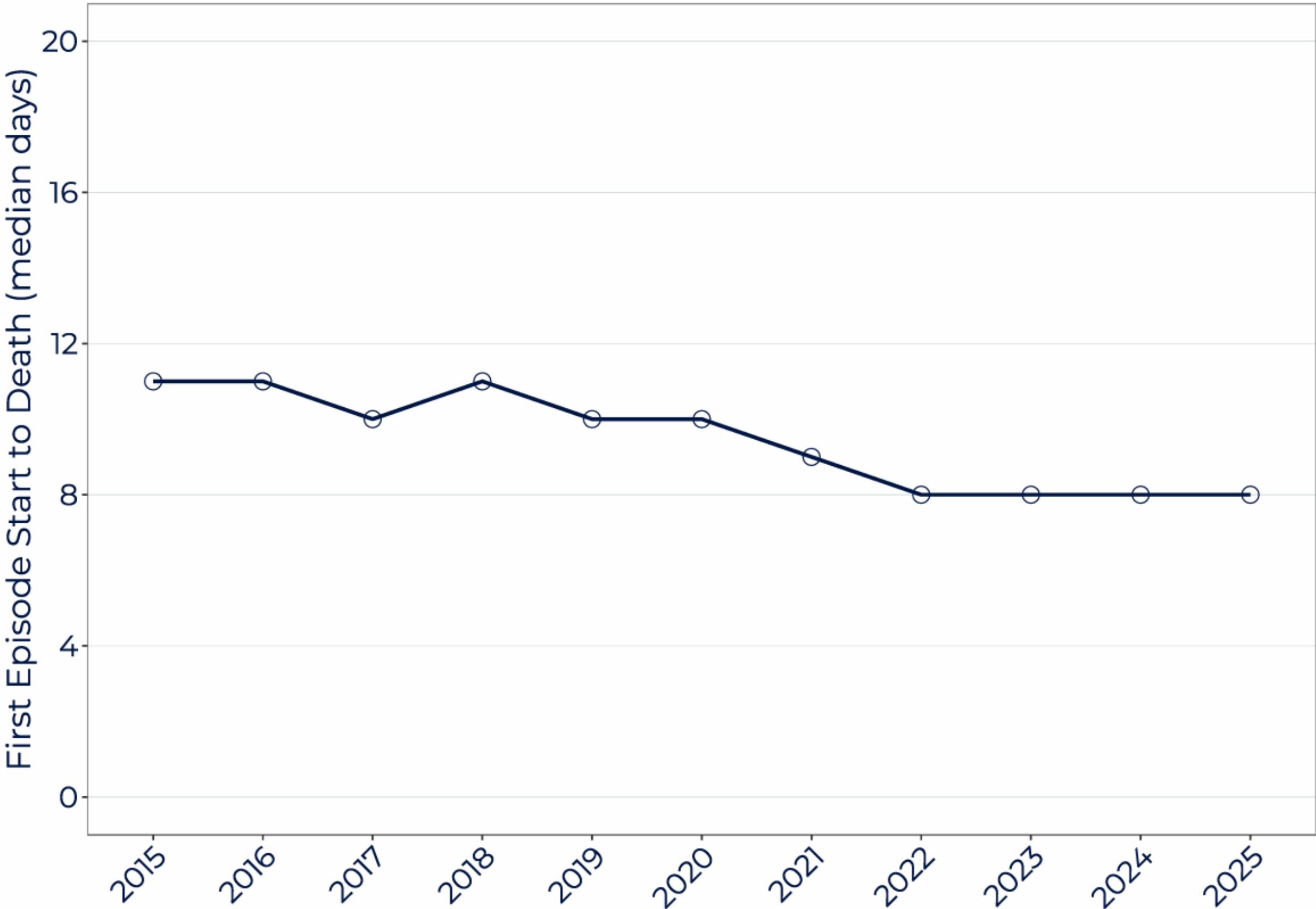


Dementia
#1 cause of death in
Australia

Represented in
PCOC (1.9% in 2014,
and **6.5%** in 2025).

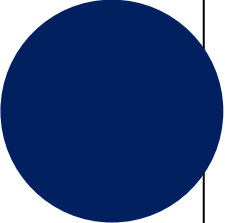
Duration of Palliative Care - from First Episode to Death

Median number of days between first referral and death

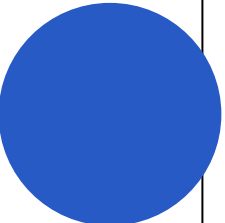


8 days
Median

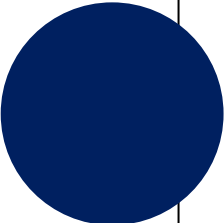
16% patients had
duration of
less than 1 day



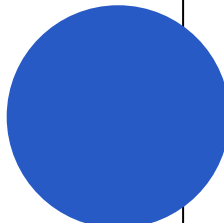
Improve referral pathways from primary or community-based care



Shift in case-mix means the need for adaptable models of care



Gains in access have not been accompanied by improvements in timing of entry into care, which may limit the overall benefit of palliative care.



Consistent improvement in clinical outcomes following access

Visit us at PCOC booth!

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PCOC acknowledges that this work represents people who have died an expected death and recognises the significance this holds for each person their families and loved ones. PCOC further recognises the dedication of palliative care clinicians and their commitment to reporting on and improving patient outcomes