

9/15/25 Ask ChatGPT, including uploading a spreadsheet of hospice utilization percentages (national and state) 2015-2024: Summarize key findings of national and state hospice utilization (i.e., the percentage of Medicare deaths on hospice at time of death) over the past 10 years based on the attached spreadsheet.

Responses, including follow-up questions:

Here's a summary of the key findings from the national and state hospice utilization data (percent of Medicare deaths on hospice at time of death, 2015–2024):

Key Takeaways

1. **National hospice utilization continues to grow**, now just over half of Medicare decedents at time of death.
2. **Regional disparities remain stark**—with the Mountain West and parts of the South much higher than the Northeast.
3. **Policy and cultural differences** likely drive the wide state variation, with some states embracing hospice more rapidly than others.
4. **Growth is slowing nationally**, suggesting hospice has matured in penetration, though opportunities remain in underutilizing states.

National Trends

- **2015:** 46.6% of Medicare decedents were on hospice.
- **2024:** 50.6% of Medicare decedents were on hospice.
- **Change (2015–2024):** +4.0 percentage points.
- The national rate grew modestly, with dips and rebounds around 2020–2021, but overall shows a steady upward trend.

State Variation (2024)

- **Highest utilization: Utah (65.6%)** – well above the national average.
- **Lowest utilization: New York (27.3%)** – nearly half the national average.

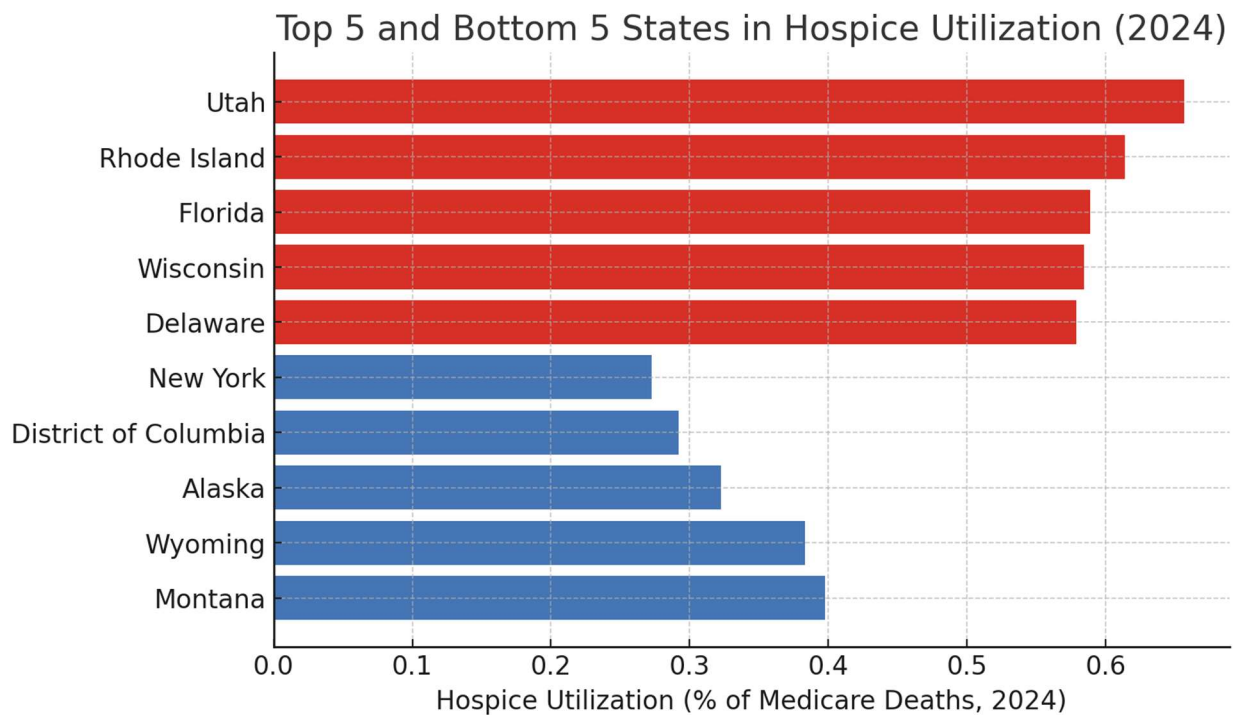
- Most states cluster between 45–60%, but the range is wide, showing significant geographic variation.

State Changes Over 10 Years (2015–2024)

- **Largest increase: Wyoming (+12.5 percentage points)** – from 25.8% in 2015 to 38.3% in 2024.
 - **Largest decrease: New York (–3.1 percentage points)** – from 30.3% in 2015 to 27.3% in 2024.
 - Many states saw increases between 3–8 points, while only a few saw declines.
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Would you like me to also create a **bar chart of the top 5 and bottom 5 states in 2024** for a clearer comparison? [Yes.]

Here’s the comparison chart:



- **Top 5 States (2024):** Utah, Arizona, Florida, Oklahoma, and Colorado — all above 60% utilization. *Interestingly, the chart above is correct but the “Top 5 states (2024)”*

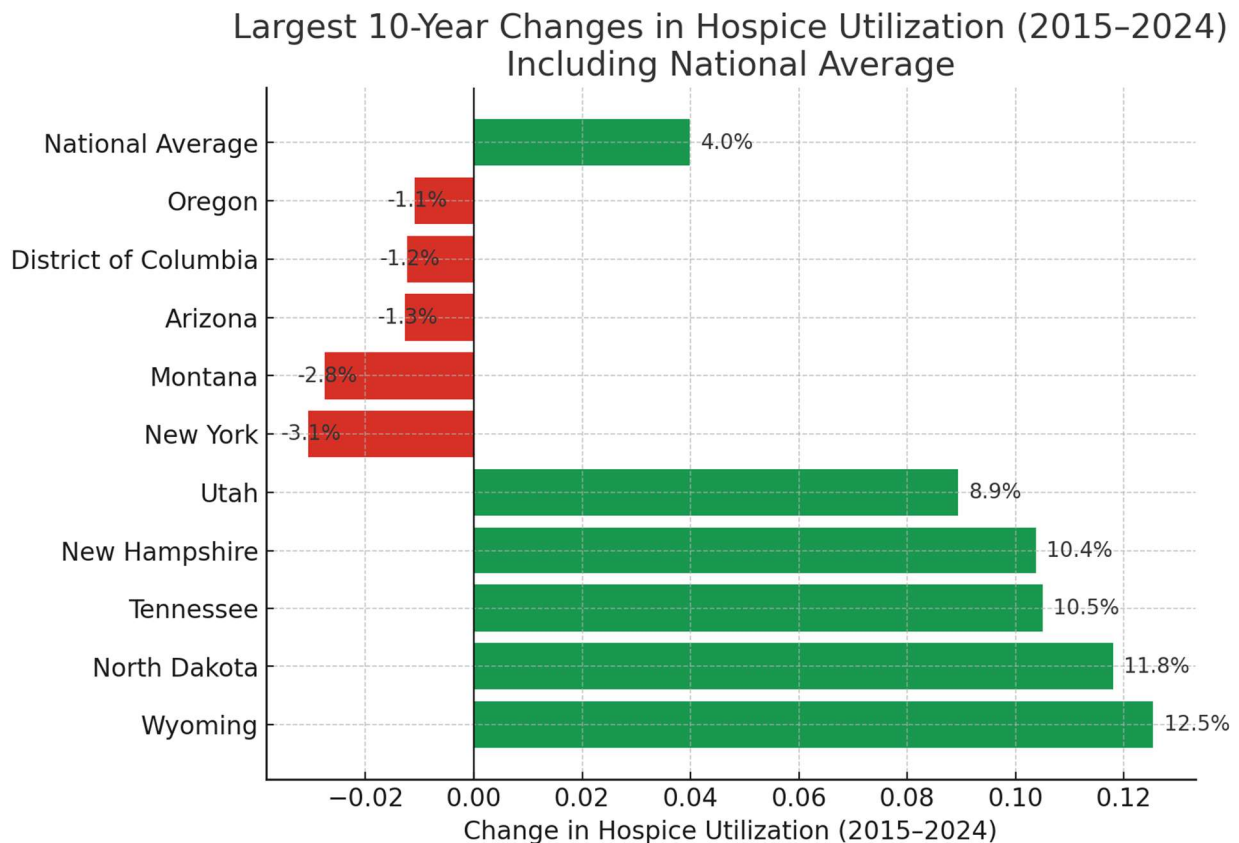
text is **incorrect** – only UT and RI are above 60% and AZ, OK, and CO are not in the top 5 states for 2024 utilization.]

- **Bottom 5 States (2024):** New York, Alaska, Massachusetts, Wyoming, and Oregon — ranging from about 27% to 38%. [As above, the chart above is correct but the “Bottom 5 States (2024)” text is **incorrect** – only NY, AK, and WY are in the bottom 5 states for 2024, MA and OR are ranked higher.]

This makes the national variation very clear: the highest states have more than **double** the utilization of the lowest.

Would you like me to also prepare a **10-year change chart** (biggest increases vs. decreases by state) to show which states are shifting the most over time? [Yes, including national average.]

Here’s the **10-year change chart (2015–2024):**



- **Largest increases:** Wyoming (+12.5 points), followed by states like Alaska and Colorado. *[Again, information in the chart is correct, however, the “largest increases” text is **incorrect**.]*
- **Largest decreases:** New York (–3.1 points) and a few others with small declines.
- **National average:** +4.0 points, showing steady but moderate growth overall.

This highlights that while the U.S. as a whole has grown in hospice utilization, the biggest shifts are happening in smaller, historically underutilizing states, whereas a few large states (like New York) are moving in the opposite direction.