

Financial Flow Sheet for Cost of Hospice Hosting a Fellow

Overall Cost Estimates: \$5,000-\$250,000 per year

Technique: Small convenience sample of hospice medical directors representing multiple different geographic settings and economic models. Some hospice programs supported a hospice rotation(s) for the fellow, and other programs completely funded a fellow position and faculty support staff along with hospice rotations.

Detailed Costs: Physician time allocation accounts for most of the total estimated cost and variability between fellowship programs. Hospice medical directors noted a significantly larger time commitment in the initial design of the fellowship although much of this effort was often provided by the partnering academic palliative care fellowship. Certain costs were difficult to ascertain like malpractice coverage which was often provided by the academic center or added to an existing hospice group policy with unclear costs. Other costs like work space and desktop computers were not factored in as they were considered a fixed cost independent of the fellowship. Medical directors also noted the challenge of determining how much of the clinical supervision time truly added additional costs to the hospice organization versus simply lengthening the individual precepting attending physician's day.

Item	Cost	Comment
Physician preceptor	5-40 hours per week when fellow(s) present	Direct clinical supervision, didactic sessions, journal clubs
Administrative physician time	20-200 hours per year	Completing evaluations/PEC and CCC committees/fellow QI projects/ updating ACGME materials
Physician time cost	\$80-150/hour	Varies widely based on market
Non-physician time	3-15 hours per week	Administrative functions, didactics from non-physicians, time spent demonstrating and explaining the role of other disciplines
Non-physician time cost	\$20-50/hour	Varies significantly from director level administrators and nurse practitioners to lower pay-level coordinators
CME	\$0-2,800 per fellow per year	Some sites included hospice sponsored trips to AAHPM and limited CME coverage/book fund
Phone/laptop/IT support	\$0-2,000 per fellow per year	Most of this cost was covered by the hospice
Malpractice	Minimal but difficult to determine	Typically provided by the academic center or added to a preexisting policy with suspected low impact on overall policy cost
Mileage/parking	\$0-0.55/mile, no parking reimbursement	Typically provided only when fellows went out to rural sites

Benefits: It was much more challenging for medical directors to assign specific dollar values to benefits. One medical director had previously examined his organization's data and assigned a clinical productivity benefit of roughly \$25,000 per fellow per year while other medical directors found significantly less direct clinical productivity benefit. All medical directors noted tremendous value both with enhancing relationships and hospice awareness with referral sources and in assisting the hospice organization with recruiting high quality hospice physicians. An additional benefit noted was the impact on advancing knowledge and skills on the precepting physicians as they are challenged to stay current by the fellows and may receive CME credit for their role in teaching.