The Challenge:
All General Practitioners (GPs) are required to maintain a Palliative Care Register (PCR). The register is a list of patients, within their practice, estimated to be in the last 12 months of life. GPs generally do not have access to the detailed patient information on the register. A team of researchers at Farr Institute CIPHER looked to address this by linking data and providing GP’s with a report showing how their end of life care compares to other practices.

The Research:
GPs generally do not have access to the detailed patient information on their PCR. A team of researchers at Swansea University looked to address this by linking data and providing GP’s with a report showing how their end of life care compares to other practices.

The Results:
Findings showed that of the patients added to the register, 72% had been given a code for cancer, 15% for lung disease, 9% for heart failure and 6% for dementia.

The findings also suggested that the use of the register may lead to fewer deaths in hospital - a desirable outcome for the NHS.

Impact:
Due to the findings of this study, and subsequent reports, several practices changed the way in which they record data to ensure that end of life patients are recorded correctly. The study helped GPs to identify, address and improve their services around end of life care.

“I found the report for my practice very interesting and helpful and we have already made changes to our recording as a result.” GP in Anglesey

Enquiries to Sarah Toomey, Communications Officer, Farr Institute CIPHER, s.toomey@swansea.ac.uk

Data Linkage Used to Improve End of Life Care in Wales

All GPs are required to maintain a Palliative Care Register. The register is a list of patients, within their practice, estimated to be in the last 12 months of life. GPs generally do not have access to the detailed patient information on the register. A team of researchers at Farr Institute CIPHER looked to address this by linking data and providing GP’s with a report showing how their end of life care compares to other practices.