

# Providing hospice care in a rural area: the foundation of a hospice in Lower Bavaria

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## Background:

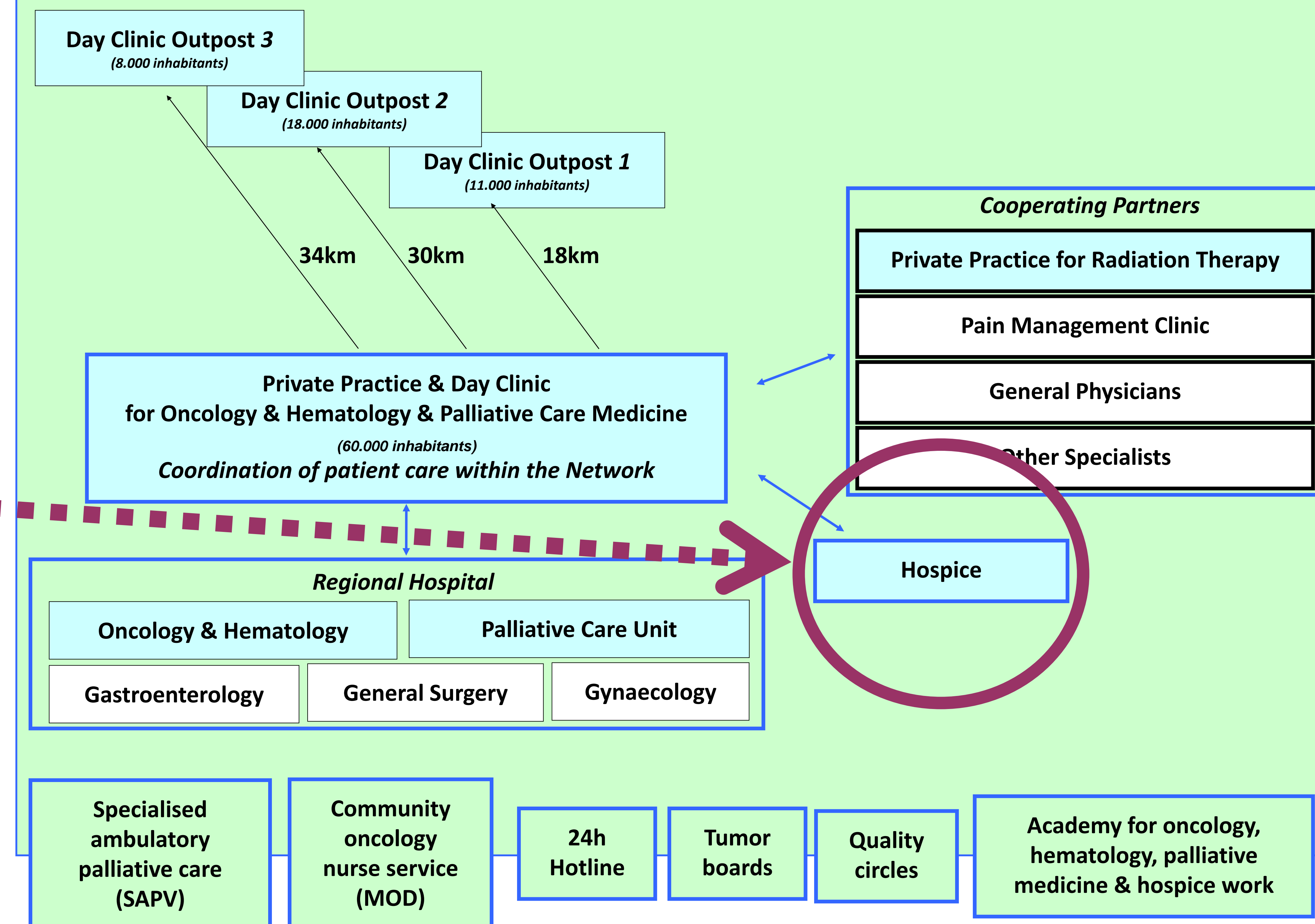
- Hospice care is an essential part of modern comprehensive cancer care.
- Palliative cancer care in rural regions is characterised by a low number of specialised institutions and services, by long-distance drives and insufficient public transport for the patients.
- Up to 2012 the nearest hospice was located in a distance of 90 km.
- In January 2012 the first hospice in the region was founded in Vilsbiburg (11000 inhabitants) in rural Lower Bavaria, providing hospice care near to patients' home.
- The hospice staffs comprise 16 nurses, 32 hospice volunteers, and a therapy dog.
- Art and aroma therapy are offered.
- Daily hospice ward rounds are provided by the local general practitioners and a specialist for palliative medicine.



- We report the patient data for the first 12 months (01/2012-12/2012) after hospice opening.
- During this period 101 patients were admitted.
- The mean age of patients was 77 years (39-90 years).
- 85% of the patients suffered from a solid cancer, 9% from a hematologic malignancy and 6% had a non-malignant disease.
- The mean time between admission and death was 26 days (2-120 days).
- The hospice Vilsbiburg is part of the DGHO and ESMO accredited Designated Centre of Integrated Oncology and Palliative Care Landshut (Onkologisches und Palliativmedizinisches Netzwerk Landshut).

Disclosure of potential conflicts of interest: no conflicts of interest

## The Landshut Network for Oncology and Palliative Care Medicine



- The Network has been accredited by the ESMO (Designated Centre of Integrated Oncology and Palliative Care) in 2010 and the DGHO in 2011. The network received the "Bayerischer Gesundheitspreis" 2011.
- The network is situated in the rural region (220.000 inhabitants) of Lower Bavaria, Germany.
- The network aims to improve cancer care and palliative care service with regard to the special needs of the rural cancer population.
- Core of the network is a close co-operation between a private practice for oncology & hematology and a regional hospital. All diagnostics and therapies are organised centrally.
- Counselling for all social aspects of illness are offered
- Support for patient's relatives are offered (e.g. support group for children whose parents have cancer)

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