

## ABSTRACT

Until the second half of the twentieth century, patients died at home surrounded by family and friends. Since the industrial revolution, breakthroughs in biomedical sciences and socio-anthropological developments opened possibilities for success in the treatment of many previously fatal diseases and increased life expectancy. This evolution sparked the general faith and utopical belief in beating the odds against certain death and the chance of extending life beyond possible. Medically assisted decease occurs mainly in hospitalized context in 61, 4% of deaths, surrounded by technology and clinical procedures but impersonal and often dehumanized.

**Objectives :** The present study on contemporary socio-anthropological features of death and dying in the hospital addresses the following research question: How do one dies today at the hospital? Two endpoints elapse from this question. First endpoint: analyze how one dies today in the hospital. Secondary endpoints: 1) characterize the profile of affected individuals prior to the time of death; 2) survey hospital assistance procedures and medical and nursing attitudes applied to patients in the last days of life.

**Method and Materials:** In order to address the research question and attain investigation purposes, data will be collected from clinical files corresponding to deaths recorded in Centro Hospitalar de Vila Nova de Gaia/ Espinho EPE (CHVNG/E, EPE) between January 1<sup>st</sup> and December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2010. All collected data will be treated according to the quantitative methodology of software program SPSS ® (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) version 19.0.

**Results and Discussion:** The present study aims to characterize death and the process of dying in hospital context and give a positive contribute to medical practice adequacy to contemporary challenges and health policies qualification.