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December 16th, 2023

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Headlines

[Proportion of hospice users declines while industry undergoes shift, NHPCO report finds](#)

McKnight's Home Care Daily

December 14, 2023

The proportion of Medicare beneficiaries who died on hospice continued to decline in 2021, according to the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization's 2023 Fact and Figures report. ... Notably, the number of hospice users rose by thousands since 2019, but this growth was unable to outpace the proportion of Medicare beneficiaries who died without receiving any hospice care.

[Greener nurses enter field as workforce demand continues to spike](#)

McKnight's Home Care Daily

December 15, 2023

Job openings in healthcare and social services have risen sharply in the last several years, and healthcare providers are taking on less-experienced registered nurses to handle the pressure. At the beginning of 2018, the average nurse's tenure was more than six years of experience, according to a recent workforce report by the ADP Research Institute. In the five years since, however, high turnover rates and a corresponding abundance of job opportunities deflated a nurse's average tenure to about five years of experience.

['Tougher Every Day'—Nursing Home Operators, CCRCs Weigh in on Future of Skilled Nursing](#)

Skilled Nursing News

December 14, 2023

Operating a skilled nursing facility today is considered a "tough business" with regulations and reimbursement woes making the space "tougher every day." Other operators say they regularly budget a loss for skilled nursing services, and if it weren't for other lines of business, skilled nursing would be unsustainable.



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Hospice Provider News

[**Monroe Clinic & Hospital Foundation Supports Hospice with Financial Gift**](#)

Monroe (WI) Times

December 14, 2023

Monroe, WI—Monroe Clinic & Hospital Foundation, a member of SSM Health, has presented the SSM Health Monroe Hospice Home with a donation of \$120,000. ... This gift is primarily comprised of dollars raised at the annual “Little Golf” & Grill event as well as memorials and other hospice gifts throughout the year.

Clinical News

[**‘You can continue a conversation’—Letters to the dead arrive at this P.O. box in L.A.**](#)

Los Angeles Times

December 14, 2023

Mail gets sent to the dead all the time—ads, renewal notices, unpaid bills. But if you want to send a letter to someone you’ve lost with the chance that they’ll actually receive it, there’s a box at a Los Angeles post office that carries a mysterious power. Postal Service for the Dead, started by artist Janelle Ketcher, provides the living with a way to physically send letters to those who have exited this realm. The letters are stored, and if so desired, shared with the public.

[**How did I honor my mother’s death? By creating a holiday.**](#)

By Margo Rabb

Washington Post

December 14, 2023

... For a long time, I had grappled with how to spend the anniversary [of the death of the author’s mother, Renée]. I had never observed it before—normally, I pretended it wasn’t happening—but a quarter-century seemed too momentous to do nothing. My mother had died when I was still in my teens, nine days after being diagnosed with cancer.



HOSPICE ANALYTICS

TURNING DATA INTO INFORMATION – TO IMPROVE PATIENT CARE

[*Sponsor of Hospice & Palliative Care Today*](#)

[**AdventHealth University, new osteopathic college partner to meet region's need for doctors**](#)

Orlando Business Journal

December 12, 2023

An existing medical college has partnered with one opening soon to keep more doctors in the Orlando region. AdventHealth University—tied to the Altamonte Springs-based nonprofit health system AdventHealth—and the upcoming Orlando College of Osteopathic Medicine will guarantee admission interviews students in AHU's bachelor's degree in health sciences and bachelor's degree in biomedical sciences at the Horizon West medical college. The partnership will allow for students at the osteopathic college to rotate through AdventHealth hospitals in 2026 and several AdventHealth physicians also will serve as faculty at the Orlando College of Osteopathic Medicine.

[**New data sheds light on how many people are taking psilocybin in Oregon**](#)

Portland (OR) Business Journal

December 14, 2023

About 600 people have completed psilocybin sessions since Oregon's program rolled out earlier this year, according to the Healing Advocacy Fund, a nonprofit organization that closely tracks psilocybin legislation and research. At least that many clients have taken psychedelic mushrooms since the first service center opened in May.

[**Kansas Senate president says he's open to discussing medical marijuana—but not recreational**](#)

KCUR-FM (Kansas City, MO)

December 14, 2023

During the upcoming legislative session in Kansas, medical marijuana is expected to be back for debate. Senate President Ty Masterson, a Republican from Andover, fought the bill last year because he said it was too close to fully legalizing marijuana in the Sunflower State. However, Masterson told KCUR's Up To Date on Wednesday that he is open to a discussion.

Regulatory News

[NAHC President Bill Dombi—History Repeating Itself on Hospice Program Integrity](#)

Hospice News

December 14, 2023

Issues of fraud in the hospice industry echo events that previously affected the home health space, and providers can learn from that prior experience. This is according to Bill Dombi, president of the National Association for Home Care and Hospice, who spoke Thursday in a Relias webinar. ... “What I’m seeing is history repeating itself. Back in the 1990s, the microscope ended up focusing on the Medicare Home Health Program.

Public Policy News

[Missouri legislation would allow doctor-assisted suicide for terminal patients](#)

KFVS-TV (Cape Girardeau, MO)

December 13, 2023

Jefferson City, MO—A bill that’s been pre-filed in the Missouri House of Representatives would open the door to medically-assisted suicide for patients who have been diagnosed with terminal diseases. The legislation, nicknamed the ‘Marilyn Teitelbaum Death with Dignity’ Act, was named after a St. Louis-area woman who traveled with family members to Denver as she suffered from amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or ALS, and was seeking to end her life.

[How medical aid in dying is bringing autonomy to end-of-life decisions](#)

Podcast: 1A

Host: Lauren Hamilton

WAMU-FM (Washington, DC)/NPR

December 12, 2023

As the American population gets older, people begin to plan for what the end of their lives will look like. It’s a conversation we explored on 1A earlier this year as a part of our ongoing coverage of aging in the United States. And during that conversation, you had a lot of questions for us. ... Since the end of Roe, the debate around bodily autonomy has grown increasingly contentious.

Research News

[Hospices’ Unanswered Questions—Filling the Research Gaps](#)

Hospice News

December 14, 2023

Research around hospice care has come a long way. But data gaps exist when it comes to expanding understanding of some aspects of end-of-life care delivery. A range of researchers has amassed a growing base of data on hospice, with some common themes tied to quality outcomes, costs, length of stay and general inpatient care. ... Having more information around successful care delivery models and training processes could impact the ability for hospices to foster growth and improve sustainable clinical capacity.

Mergers & Aquisition News

[HCA violated terms of Mission Health deal, state AG alleges](#)

Modern Healthcare

December 14, 2023

HCA Healthcare allegedly breached the terms of the agreement it made with North Carolina when it purchased Mission Health four years ago, according to a lawsuit the state filed Thursday. North Carolina Attorney General Josh Stein (D) alleges the for-profit, Nashville, Tennessee -based health system has cut staffing at Mission Health facilities, leading to delays in emergency and cancer care and a decline in quality, according to the complaint filed in Buncombe County Superior Court.

Post-Acute Care News

[Baptist Health Baptist Hospital Launches Inspirational Space for Patients and Visitors](#)

South Florida Hospital News

December 14, 2023

Baptist Health Baptist Hospital launched the Inspiration Hall, powered by national leader in hospice and palliative care services, VITAS Healthcare. Located on the first floor near the hospital's imaging center waiting room, the Inspiration Hall is an immersive experience where patients, visitors and hospital team members can submit, read or watch messages of comfort and support that will inspire others in their health journey.

[Panel approves \\$6.3M in pandemic relief for rural Arkansas hospitals, totaling 13 aided facilities](#)

Arkansas Advocate

December 12, 2023

Three more rural Arkansas hospitals are set to receive a total of more than \$6.3 million in federal COVID-19 relief funds after state lawmakers gave preliminary approval Tuesday. The full Arkansas Legislative Council on Friday will vote on whether to disburse the funds from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, aimed at covering costs incurred during the pandemic.

[Falling short—99% of Mississippi nursing homes don't meet new staffing regs](#)

Mississippi Today

December 13, 2023

... In Mississippi, all but two of the 200 skilled nursing facilities—those licensed to provide medical care from registered nurses—would need to increase staffing levels under federal regulations the Biden administration proposed in September, according to data analyzed by Mississippi Today, USA TODAY and Big Local News at Stanford University. That's in line with the national trend: Over the first quarter of 2023—from January to March—less than

1% of skilled nursing facilities in the U.S. met the draft rule's two core standards of provider care.

[Senior living posts negative total return](#)

McKnight's Senior Living

December 15, 2023

The senior living sector posted a total return of -1.15% in the third quarter, according to the National Investment Center for Seniors Housing & Care. That's after posting a positive total return of 0.48% in the second quarter and a positive return of 0.11% in the first quarter.

[Lawmakers bring PACE expansion bill back into play](#)

McKnight's Home Care Daily

December 15, 2023

Two members of Congress reintroduced a bill that would strengthen and expand the Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly. Reps. Debbie Dingell (D-MI) and John Moolenaar (R-MI) introduced the PACE Expanded Act on Dec. 5. The sweeping legislation, if passed, would promote the expansion of existing PACE programs, make it easier to establish new programs, make PACE more affordable for Medicare beneficiaries and create a pilot program for testing the PACE model within new populations.

General News

[Nurses at Prime hospital approve labor deal](#)

Becker's Hospital Review

December 13, 2023

Members of the United Nurses Associations of California/Union of Health Care Professionals have approved a new labor contract with Prime Healthcare's St. Francis Medical Center in Lynwood, Calif. The contract, approved by 81% of voting union members, covers 600 registered nurses at the medical center, according to a Dec. 13 UNAC/UHCP news release.

[More Providence St. Vincent doctors vote to unionize; hospital vows 'good faith' bargaining](#)

KOIN-TV (Portland, OR)

December 14, 2023

Portland, OR—More physicians with Providence St. Vincent Medical Center have voted to unionize. The small group of four palliative physicians is seeking to join a group of 70 Providence St. Vincent hospitalists who voted overwhelmingly to form a union with the Pacific Northwest Hospital Medicine Association back in August. The group said they're seeking a fair contract that provides safe staffing levels, fair compensation and a healthy work environment.

[Maine university adds unique course to help with end-of-life care](#)

WMTW-TV

December 14, 2023

Biddeford, ME—The University of New England Online is adding several new programs, including one designed to help improve end-of-life care in Maine. The End of Life Doula program is an eight-week, fully online course designed to provide students with the skills needed to provide compassionate, informed and supportive care for people and their families dealing with terminal illnesses or are nearing the end of their life.

[Funerals Are More Expensive Than Last Year](#)

Newsweek

December 12, 2023

The cost of nearly everything is rising in the U.S., but economic circumstances are grim enough that even funerals are more expensive. Funeral costs surged 4.8 percent since last year, according to Consumer Price Index data released Tuesday, another indication the impact inflation is having on Americans. ... Since funerals and items like coffins are already expensive, this adds to the burden grieving families carry.

[Family caregiving doesn't always mean poor mental health, study finds](#)

McKnight's Long Term Care News

December 15, 2023

Caregiving may be stressful for some people, but it can have mental health benefits for others, according to a new study. The author said people should not automatically categorize caregiving as a chronic stressor and would like to see more balance in the way it's portrayed.

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