

## Cordt Kassner

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## Headlines

### [Happy New Year!](#)

Welcome to 2024 and the inaugural issue of **Hospice & Palliative Care Today!** *Hospice & Palliative Care Today* is a daily email summarizing numerous topics essential for understanding the current landscape of serious illness and end-of-life care. Building on Mark Cohen's *Hospice News Today* publication, [Dr. Joy Berger \(Editor-in-Chief\)](#) and [Dr. Cordt Kassner \(Publisher\)](#) continue providing relevant and timely information emailed daily. We're also incorporating a few changes, including:

1. **Free newsletters.** Rather than a subscription model, Hospice & Palliative Care Today expenses are underwritten by our [generous sponsors](#). Please subscribe [here](#) and daily emails will arrive at 6:00 AM ET. Multiple subscribers from every entity are encouraged! Historical newsletters are available on our [website](#). If interested in sponsoring, please reply to this email or contact Cordt directly [here](#).
2. **Subscriber options.** Subscribers can select specific content and geographic information. Individual emailed newsletters will also be sorted by content areas most read by the subscriber. We also invite your participation via brief questions and asking for content suggestions / recommendations ([here](#)).
3. **Broad content.** Because subscribers can select specific content areas, our goal is to include broad content of ~25 articles daily spanning hospice, serious illness, post-acute care, technology, ethics, etc. Additionally, Saturday newsletters will focus on research and clinical issues, and Sunday newsletters will recap most read and important stories.
4. **Brief content.** Our goal is to briefly summarize news stories, with links to original articles. We encourage you to read the full original articles on your favorite topics!

Additional updates are planned throughout the year. You might be interested in reading Mark's "Random Parting Thoughts" ([here](#)). We're excited to have you join and participate in this adventure!

### [Peggy Pettit caps remarkable 40-year career with Vitas Healthcare](#)

*Vitas press release, 12/29/23*

MIAMI, FL – VITAS Healthcare is bidding a heartfelt farewell to one of its most esteemed

and dedicated professionals, Peggy Pettit, RN, who retired at the end of December 2023. Pettit's four decades of unwavering commitment to VITAS and the hospice community have left an indelible mark, impacting countless lives and embodying the true spirit of compassionate care.

## Hospice Provider News

### [Ask Amy: Annual charity column shows ways to give](#)

*Denver Post, by Amy Dickinson; 12/26/23*

Dear Readers: As I offer my 20th annual year-end "charity roundup," I'd like to remind readers that while charity truly does begin at home, it need not stay there. Those who can afford to share their material wealth should give abundantly, donating locally to the local library, after-school program, hospice center, arts organizations, historical society and animal shelter. Acts of kindness and compassion are always worth their weight in gold: Shoveling a walk for a neighbor, writing a letter to an elder and volunteering at the local food bank are all ways to express your generosity.



**Accelerate Results**  
**Accelerate Growth**  
**Accelerate Learning**

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### [Hospice of Care receives general support grant](#)

*Houston Herald; 12/27/23*

Hospice Foundation of the Ozarks has awarded \$10,000 to Texas County Memorial Hospital Healthcare Foundation to support TCMH Hospice of Care.

## Palliative Care Provider News

### [AAHPM 2024 Award Winners](#)

*Press Release 12/15/23*

Congratulations to all of the AAHPM award winners. We thank you for your hard work and dedication to the field.

- Lifetime Achievement Award: Janet Bull, MD MBA FAAHPM
- Josefina B. Magno Distinguished Hospice Physician Award: Joseph Shega, MD
- Distinguished Hospice Interdisciplinary Team Member Award: Sandra Discala, PharmD BCPS FAAHPM

- Richard Payne Outstanding Achievement in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Award: Karen Bullock, PhD
- Humanities Award: Myra Bluebond-Langner, PhD
- Award for Excellence in Scientific Research in Palliative Care: Nathan Goldstein, MD FAAHPM
- Award for Excellence in Education and Training: Katie Neuendorf, MD MHPE FAAHPM
- Early Career Investigator Award: Ashwin Kotwal, MD
- The State of the Science in Palliative Care Research Mentoring Award: Marie Bakitas, DNSc CRNP AOCN ACHPN FPCN FAAN

## Clinical News

### **[Steven Garner - What he learned about quilting in prison](#)**

*QuiltFolk Magaine, Issue 28, October 2023*

Louisiana's notorious Angola prison is the largest maximum security state prison in the country. But it's also become known for its hospice program and, to a lesser degree, its prison quilters. Steven Garner was incarcerated at Angola for 31 years and now spends most of his free time building on the quilting skills he learned in prison. He moved to Colorado to be near family, and Quiltfolk visited him at his niece's house, where he does most of his sewing these days. He shared his current projects and his future dreams.

*Editor Note: While this article appeared several weeks ago, we wanted to include it in our i naugural newsletter. The link is to the public portion of this article; to read the entire article it's worth purchasing a copy of the magazine. Also, Steven's website is now available: <https://www.snt31consulting.com/>.*



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### **[High Impact Articles - Core roles and responsibilities of physicians in hospice care: A statement by and for U.S. hospice and palliative care physicians.](#)**

*Journal of Palliative Medicine, by Ira Byock and on behalf of HPM Physicians Concerned About Hospice Care\*.*

Physicians are integral members of hospice interdisciplinary teams (IDTs). This statement delineates the core roles and responsibilities of hospice medical directors (HMDs) and hospice physicians who are designated by the hospice program to fulfill core HMD responsibilities. In addition, we describe the basic elements of hospice programs' structure and function required for hospice physicians to fulfill their roles and responsibilities. Finally, we call attention to hospice program characteristics and circumstances of the work

environment that should raise a hospice physician's concerns that hospice patients and families are at risk of receiving low-quality care.

*Editor Note: While this was posted in December, we wanted to include it in the inaugural edition, too.*

### [Solving for X at the end of life](#)

*Next Avenue, by Thomas Kamber, PhD; 12/29/23*

In interviews with people who were dying, we learned they wanted to mark their final days with meaningful experiences and leave their affairs in order. It's time to reset logistics, last days and legacy.

### [She's a hospice social worker sharing why you shouldn't immediately tell the bank when a loved one passes away](#)

*ChipChick, by Emily Chan; 12/26/23*

Amy Devine (@yourhospicesocialworker) is a hospice social worker, and she's on TikTok explaining why you should not immediately notify the bank when a loved one dies. After the loss of a loved one, you should take the time to grieve. The following few weeks will be filled with plenty of preparations.



TURNING DATA INTO INFORMATION – TO IMPROVE PATIENT CARE

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### [They stayed in nursing after COVID. But these Wisconsin nurses will never be the same.](#)

*Oshkosh Northwestern, by Natalie Eilbert; 12/28/23*

FOND DU LAC – Hannah Pecora moves through the fifth floor of SSM Health St. Agnes Hospital in Fond du Lac with the confidence that comes with serving as a registered nurse since 2009. ... Pecora was there when the first shock of COVID hit the staff, along with a stream of new medical guidelines. ... Then Pecora watched a patient younger than her die. This one left her reeling.

### [Nurses 'bridge the gap' between patients, doctors to talk end-of-life care](#)

*Cure, by Alex Biese; 12/22/23*

For patients with cancer and their caregivers, nurses can play an integral role when it comes to communicating wishes for end-of-life care, as one expert explained to CURE®. "Nurses bridge the gap, I feel, oftentimes, between the medical community and patients

and caregivers, because ... especially with the patients with cancer, they may be getting infusions, or different kinds of treatments, so there's a fair amount of time when nurses are in and out of the room or they're attending to the patients, etc., where physicians obviously wouldn't necessarily be there," said Sara Douglas, a Gertrude Perkins Oliva professor in oncology nursing at Case Western Reserve University's Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing in Cleveland.

### [Pediatric palliative care: Jaisyn Reese's story](#)

*Portage Life, By Center for Hospice Care; 12/22/23*

Indiana: Jaisyn Reese, a pediatric patient, is another example of how CHC's interdisciplinary team helps patients and their loved ones.

### [Rethinking immunotherapy for cancer: When is the best time to stop?](#)

*Wall Street Journal, by Brianna Abbott and Jared S. Hopkins; 12/26/23*

Halting treatments earlier could spare patients side effects and costs, but researchers face obstacles.

## Technology / Innovations News

### [Denied by AI: How Medicare Advantage plans use algorithms to cut off care for seniors in need](#)

*STAT, by Casey Ross and Bob Herman; 12/28/23*

An algorithm, not a doctor, predicted a rapid recovery for Frances Walter, an 85-year-old Wisconsin woman with a shattered left shoulder and an allergy to pain medicine. In 16.6 days, it estimated, she would be ready to leave her nursing home. On the 17th day, her Medicare Advantage insurer, Security Health Plan, followed the algorithm and cut off payment for her care, concluding she was ready to return to the apartment where she lived alone. Meanwhile, medical notes in June 2019 showed Walter's pain was maxing out the scales and that she could not dress herself, go to the bathroom, or even push a walker without help...

### [Health system CEOs' tech wishlist](#)

Becker's Health IT, by Laura Dyrda, 12/19/23

1. Seamless care coordination applications.
2. Drivers of elite patient experience.
3. Automation everywhere.
4. Precision medicine capabilities.
5. AI-driven technology to support the workforce.
6. Health equity and population health boosters.

## General News

## [Terminally-ill dogs find love through hospice foster program](#)

*Fox7 Austin, by John Krinjak; 12/26/23*

AUSTIN, Texas - Some Austin-based volunteers are making sure terminally ill dogs get the love they deserve. Austin Pets Alive! recently launched a hospice foster program, and it was all inspired by a very special pooch named Opie.

## [The curious joy of being wrong – intellectual humility means being open to new information](#)

*Kansas Reflector, by Daryl Van Tongeren; 12/30/23*

Four main aspects of intellectual humility include being:

1. Open-minded, avoiding dogmatism and being willing to revise your beliefs.
2. Curious, seeking new ideas, ways to expand and grow, and changing your mind to align with strong evidence.
3. Realistic, owning and admitting your flaws and limitations, seeing the world as it is rather than as you wish it to be.
4. Teachable, responding nondefensively and changing your behavior to align with new knowledge.

*Editor Note: Interesting article to reflect on in the new year - thanks Kansas state news desk!*

## **Books**

### [Chris Comeaux announces the release of first leadership book.](#)

*News Release, 11/30/23*

Hendersonville, NC—Chris Comeaux, President/CEO of Teleios Collaborative Network announces the release of his timely book, *The Anatomy of Leadership*, on November 30, 2023. The Anatomy of Leadership provides a framework for leadership while providing tools and strategies for leaders to develop their skills. *The Anatomy of Leadership* is published by Teleios Communications and is available on Amazon and in print.

*Editor Note: While this press release occurred a couple weeks ago, we wanted to include it in our inaugural newsletter.*

## **Non-print News**

### [Guiding an improved dementia experience \(GUIDE\) Model](#)

*GerPal podcast with Malaz Boustani and Diane Ty; 12/21/23*

... The financial case for comprehensive dementia care is changing thanks to a new Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation (CMMI) alternative payment model (APM) called Guiding an Improved Dementia Experience (GUIDE) Model. This model will give

participating programs a per-member-per-month payment to offer care management, care coordination, and other services such as caregiver training, disease education, and respite.

## Other News

### [Other Business Headlines of Interest, 12/29/23](#)

- [Adus HomeCare \(ADUS: \\$92.85; -1.65%\)](#).
- [Amedisys \(AMED: \\$95.06; +0.02%\)](#).
- [Encompass \(EHC: \\$66.72; -0.77%\)](#).
- [Enhabit \(EHAB: \\$10.35; -2.45%\)](#).
- [Ensign Group \(ENSG: \\$112.21; -1.33%\)](#).
- [HCA Healthcare \(HCA: \\$270.68; +0.07%\)](#).
- [Humana \(HUM: \\$457.81; +0.48%\)](#).
- [Pennant Group \(PNTG: \\$13.92; -2.25%\)](#).
- [Vitas / Chemed Corp \(CHE: \\$584.75; +0.07%\)](#).

## Today's Encouragement

[How do we change our current climate from one of contempt to one of kindness? Part of the answer involves big and little acts of kindness. Today, pick a little act of kindness and do it.](#)

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**NOTE:** Some links may take readers to articles that either require registration or are behind a paywall.

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