

## Cordt Kassner

---

**From:** Hospice & Palliative Care Today Newsletter  
<subscriptions@hospicepalliativecaretoday.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 2, 2024 4:00 AM  
**To:** Cordt Kassner  
**Subject:** Your Hospice & Palliative Care Today Newsletter for 01/02/24

### OUR SPONSORS



[Teleios Collaborative Network](#)  
[Community Health Accreditation Partner](#)  
[Hospice Analytics](#)

January 2nd, 2024

## Contents

1. [Hospice of Michigan receives \\$11,750 grant](#)
2. ['This is not rocket science': A doctor's mission to overcome children's fear of needles](#)
3. [Offering 'emotional first aid' to people in shock over a sudden death](#)
4. [Death doulas a growing trend in end-of-life care](#)
5. [Why fears about Biden's marijuana moves are overblown](#)
6. [A timeline of what's happened since Colorado's first legal recreational marijuana sales began](#)
7. [What do people dream about before they die? Doctors mention this one common detail](#)
8. [Social determinants of health predict outcomes in hematologic cancers](#)
9. [Evaluation of Phase II of the Medicare Advantage Value-Based Insurance Design Model Test: First three years of implementation \(2020-2022\)](#)
10. [30 moves from The Joint Commission in 2023](#)
11. [The 10 biggest Medicare Advantage stories in 2023](#)
12. [Executives detail UnitedHealthcare, Optum Health's growth plans](#)
13. [Best Buy Health plans bigger healthcare presence in 2024](#)
14. [From -10.6% to 11.1%: 34 systems ranked by operating margins](#)
15. [How can hospitals prepare for 2024's cyberthreats?](#)

16. [Chatty AI robot companions help seniors fight loneliness: 'She makes them smile and brings joy'](#)
17. [Tech that will change your life in 2024](#)
18. [I didn't know anything about aging in place-here are some important lessons I learned about caregiving](#)
19. [2023 saw several health care deals that changed the landscape](#)
20. [CHP Angel Foundation grants wishes to terminally ill adults](#)
21. [Doctors are pushing Hollywood for more realistic depictions of death and dying on TV](#)
22. [Today's Encouragement](#)

## Hospice Provider News

### [Hospice of Michigan receives \\$11,750 grant](#)

*The Oakland Press, by Kathy Blake; 12/31/23*

Hospice of Michigan was recently awarded a \$11,750 grant for pediatric hospice services. Oakland Hills Country Club donated \$4,000, and Orchard Lake Country Club donated \$7,750 towards the grant through Eagles for Children, a fund of the Local Impact Alliance, in support of Jo Elyn Nyman Anchors Programs for Children, according to a press release.

## Palliative Care Provider News

### ['This is not rocket science': A doctor's mission to overcome children's fear of needles](#)

*KQED, by April Dembosky; 12/27/23*

Any new parent has been through it: The distress of seeing your child scream at the doctor's office. The torture of having to hold them down as the clinician sticks them with one vaccine after another. ... "We are taught to see pain as an unfortunate but inevitable side effect of good treatment," said Dr. Diane Meier, a palliative care specialist at Mount Sinai in New York. "We learn to repress that feeling of distress at the pain we are causing because otherwise we can't do our jobs." During her medical training, Meier had to hold kids down for procedures, a task she hated. It drove her away from pediatrics. She went into geriatrics instead and later helped lead the modern movement to promote palliative care in medicine.

## Clinical News

### [Offering 'emotional first aid' to people in shock over a sudden death](#)

*Las Vegas Review-Journal; 12/30/23*

When first responders in Clark County encounter relatives, friends, co-workers and bystanders upset about a sudden death, they contact volunteers of the Trauma Intervention Program of Southern Nevada to come to the scene.



## Accelerate Results Accelerate Growth Accelerate Learning

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

### [\*\*Death doulas a growing trend in end-of-life care\*\*](#)

*Times-Union, by Wendy Liberatore; 12/31/23*

SARATOGA SPRINGS — As a young woman lay dying, one of her last acts was to write several cards to each of her small children. Each held a special message to be opened on a special day – graduation, wedding, the birth of their first child. But the young mother might not have been able to do this without the inspiration of a death or end-of-life doula – a person who helps their terminal clients reach their final goals, as a way to die peacefully.

### [\*\*Why fears about Biden’s marijuana moves are overblown\*\*](#)

*Politico.com, by Mona Zhang; 1/1/24*

President Joe Biden’s administration is poised to make the biggest shift in federal drug policy in decades by loosening marijuana restrictions, but the move is sparking blowback from an unlikely constituency: legalization advocates.

### [\*\*A timeline of what’s happened since Colorado’s first legal recreational marijuana sales began\*\*](#)

*The Denver Post, by John Aguilar and Tiney Ricciardi; 12/31/23*

Jan. 1, 2024, marks 10 years since the state pioneered cannabis sales and regulation. It’s been 10 years since Colorado launched the first legal recreational marijuana market in the world and became a pioneer in drug reform. But when it came to the nascent industry, the first sales on Jan. 1, 2014, were more a starting block than a finish line. In the decade since legalization, Colorado has refined laws, catalyzed new ones and served as a litmus test for the rest of the country as states followed its lead. Today, cannabis is recreationally available for sale in 24 states — where more than half of Americans live.



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

## [What do people dream about before they die? Doctors mention this one common detail](#)

*24/7 News Agency, 12/25/23*

A study from 2020 confirms that patients who experienced such symptoms became stronger and mentally stronger. There was peace coming from them. The family and relatives of the dying person claimed that being aware of this information helped them go through the mourning process more smoothly. Christopher Kerr, a cardiologist and director of the Hospice and Palliative Care Center in Buffalo, as well as the author of the book "Death is Just a Dream", is one of the first people who decided to explore the topic of dreams occurring just before death.

## [Social determinants of health predict outcomes in hematologic cancers](#)

*HematologyAdvisor, by Jonathan Goodman, MPhil; 12/27/23*

A systematic review published in Blood Advances suggested that several social determinants of health (SDHs) may affect survival disparities among patients with hematological conditions. Notably, insurance status, household income, education attained, and marital status all appear to affect survival likelihood in this patient population.

## **Regulatory News**

### [Evaluation of Phase II of the Medicare Advantage Value-Based Insurance Design Model Test: First three years of implementation \(2020-2022\)](#)

*CMS Report; 12/29/23*

Year Two Evaluation Report - Key Takeaways: The Medicare Advantage (MA) Value-Based Insurance Design (VBID) model test enables MA insurers to offer one or more innovative benefit design options in eligible MA plans. The model aims to encourage the use of high-value care and promote healthy behavior, with goals of enhancing care quality, improving beneficiary health, and reducing spending. Most VBID benefits can be targeted based on beneficiaries' chronic conditions or socioeconomic status (SES). A separate Hospice Benefit component is also included in the model.



TURNING DATA INTO INFORMATION – TO IMPROVE PATIENT CARE

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

### [\*\*30 moves from The Joint Commission in 2023\*\*](#)

*Becker's Clinical Leadership, by Erica Carbajal; 12/29/23*

In 2023, The Joint Commission has overhauled accreditation standards, elevated health equity to a national patient safety goal, launched a new certification program and more. Below are 30 actions and updates from the accrediting body Becker's has covered since the start of the year, starting with the most recent.

### [\*\*The 10 biggest Medicare Advantage stories in 2023\*\*](#)

*Becker's Payer Issues, by Rylee Wilson; 12/21/23*

2023 was an eventful year for Medicare Advantage. As the program continued to grow, with enrollment surpassing 30 million in 2023, some hospitals are beginning to push back on private Medicare plans. CMS also introduced new rates and regulations in 2023 that are taking effect in 2024. Here are 10 of the biggest Medicare Advantage stories Becker's reported in 2024...

## **Post-Acute Care News**

### [\*\*Executives detail UnitedHealthcare, Optum Health's growth plans\*\*](#)

*Modern Healthcare, by Lauren Berryman; 12/28/23*

At its annual investor conference, company executives provided an update on how the healthcare behemoth has sought to minimize the financial impact of Medicare Advantage rate changes, its progress hiring physicians and its use of technology to improve the patient, provider and payer experiences. The company said it projects 2024 revenue to hit \$400 billion, a 9.1% increase over 2023's anticipated revenue, after accounting for Medicare funding reductions. The company's insurance arm expects revenue of \$302 billion to \$304 billion next year.

### [\*\*Best Buy Health plans bigger healthcare presence in 2024\*\*](#)

*Becker's Health IT, by Laura Dyrda; 12/28/23*

Best Buy Health became a major player in healthcare over the last 12 months by partnering with some of the largest health systems in the U.S. to support in-home services, virtual care, supply chain management and more. The company partnered with Charlotte, N.C.-based Atrium, a part of Advocate Health, in March to deliver hospital-level care at home. Best Buy provides patient education and enabling technologies, and deploys the Geek Squad to provide logistics and technical support. The company also has a partnership with Danville, Pa.-based Geisinger to deliver in-home care for chronic conditions.

### [\*\*From -10.6% to 11.1%: 34 systems ranked by operating margins\*\*](#)

*Becker's Hospital CFO Report, by Alan Condon and Madeline Ashley; 12/29/23*

Hospitals began 2023 with a median operating margin of -0.9%, but that figure has increased steadily month over month to hit 2% in November — the ninth consecutive month of positive margins. Despite a modest positive turning point for some hospitals and

health systems this year, Fitch Ratings projects 2024 to be another "make or break" year for a significant portion of the sector.

## Technology / Innovations News

### [How can hospitals prepare for 2024's cyberthreats?](#)

*MedCity News, by Katie Adams; 12/27/23*

Many hospitals remain underprepared to protect themselves against cybercriminals' barrage of increasingly sophisticated attacks, but there are a couple concrete steps they can take to build a stronger defense structure — like virtual patching and thinking twice about moving to the cloud.

### [Chatty AI robot companions help seniors fight loneliness: 'She makes them smile and brings joy'](#)

*News8, by Terry Spencer; 12/31/23*

CORAL SPRINGS, Fla. — Joyce Loaiza lives alone, but when she returns to her apartment at a Florida senior community, the retired office worker often has a chat with a friendly female voice that asks about her day. ... The women are some of the first in the country to receive the robot ElliQ, whose creators, Intuition Robotics, and senior assistance officials say is the only device using artificial intelligence specifically designed to alleviate the loneliness and isolation experienced by many older Americans. ... The robots are mostly distributed by assistance agencies in New York, Florida, Michigan, Nevada and Washington state, but can also be purchased individually for \$600 a year and a \$250 installation fee. Skuler wouldn't say how many ElliQs have been distributed so far, but the goal is to have more than 100,000 out within five years.

### [Tech that will change your life in 2024](#)

*Wall Street Journal, by Joanna Stern, Nicole Nguyen, and Christopher Mims; 12/29/23*

Generative AI will remain huge, and we'll also see big moves with electric vehicles, Apple's mixed-reality headset, password security and regulation around social media.

## General News

### [I didn't know anything about aging in place—here are some important lessons I learned about caregiving](#)

*Morningstar.com, by Lisa B. Samalonis; 12/29/23*

From being an advocate to finding peace, here's what I learned during my family's journey with aging parents.

### [2023 saw several health care deals that changed the landscape](#)

*The Boston Globe, by Bob Herman and Tara Bannow; 12/30/23*

Every year, the health care industry behaves more like a balloon: Squeeze one side, and the other expands. Companies that were once just insurers or just pharmacies are tacking on

new business lines. The idea is that when profit inevitably gets squeezed in one, it'll expand in another. That trend of vertical integration was on full display in 2023, a year when the country's biggest pharmacy chain bought a primary care provider, and the biggest private insurer branched further into home health. Hospitals, meanwhile, continued to push the boundaries of expansion — their leaders following through on their promises to grow market power. Here are some of the biggest and most consequential health care transactions in 2023.

*Editor Note: Article appears behind paywall.*

### [CHP Angel Foundation grants wishes to terminally ill adults](#)

*The West Bend News; 12/30/23*

Back in 1995, the staff at CHP Home Care & Hospice noticed the need to fulfill wishes for adults in its hospice program who had limited time remaining in their lives. The idea was expanded to include individuals from throughout the state of Ohio, and the Angel Foundation was established.

## Non-print News

### [Doctors are pushing Hollywood for more realistic depictions of death and dying on TV](#)

*KQED, by April Dembosky; 12/28/23*

We've seen it so many times. A young, handsome man rushed into the emergency room with a gunshot wound. A flurry of white coats racing the clock: CPR, the heart zapper, the order for a scalpel. Stat! Then finally, the flatline. This is Dr. Shoshana Ungerleider's biggest pet peeve. Where are the TV scripts about the elderly grandmothers dying of heart failure at home? What about an episode on the daughter still grieving her father's fatal lung cancer, ten years later? "Acute, violent death is portrayed many, many, many times more than a natural death," says Ungerleider, an internal medicine doctor and founder of [End Well](#), a nonprofit focused on shifting the American conversation around death.

## Today's Encouragement

[History despite its wrenching pain cannot be unlived, but if faced with courage, need not be lived again. ~Maya Angelou](#)

***Sign up for our free daily newsletters [here!](#)***

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

**UNSUBSCRIBE NOTICE:** Hospice & Palliative Care Today is a free subscription email. If you believe you have received this email in error, or if you no longer wish to receive Hospice & Palliative Care Today, please unsubscribe [here](#) or reply to this email with the message "Unsubscribe". Thank you.

