

## Cordt Kassner

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## Headlines

### **BrightSpring Health Services Files To Go Public For The Second Time**

*Home Health Care News, by Andrew Donlan; 1/3/24*

BrightSpring Health Services officially filed plans for an initial public offering Tuesday. The home- and community-based services provider first planned to go public in 2021, but ultimately decided against it. Now, those plans are full speed ahead yet again. Based in Louisville, Kentucky, and backed by the investment firm KKR, BrightSpring provides home- and community-based provider services to complex populations. It provides care across all 50 states to 350,000 patients daily, and provides home-based care specifically to 250,000 patients daily across 40 states.

*Notable Mentions: Jon Rousseau, CEO; Michael McMaude.*

### **How do you ethically integrate a GIP hospice service into the hospital?**

*Hospitalist.org, by William Frederick, et.al.; 1/2/24*

[General inpatient (GIP) hospice] ... provides holistic end-of-life care and family support in acute-care hospitals. Patients who are appropriate for GIP hospice services often have a life expectancy of hours to days, require care that cannot be delivered at home, and have symptoms that are difficult to control in any other setting

*Editor's Note: Examine this article for (1) a flow chart of the "GIP Hospice Process at UCSD Health System" and (2) "Indications for GIP Hospice Care Indications for GIP Hospice Care."*

### **Education Calendar**

Hospice & Palliative Care Today has begun a page dedicated to hospice and palliative care focused state and national conferences. Please click the link above to access the current calendar and let us know about your events!



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## Hospice Provider News

### [Niagara Hospice CEO John Lomeo stepping down after 24 years](#)

*Buffalo News, by Jon Harris; 1/3/24*

Niagara Hospice President and CEO John Lomeo will be stepping down July 31 after 24 years with the nonprofit organization, the Hospice and Palliative Care Group board of directors announced Wednesday. The board also announced that Carlo Figliomeni, chief financial officer and chief operating officer, will become president and CEO on Aug. 1. Figliomeni has been with the organization for 18 years.

### [Hospice Savannah honored with Best of Georgia Award](#)

*BNN Health, by Nimrah Khatoon; 1/3/24*

Georgia based non-profit organization, Hospice Savannah, has been honored with the prestigious Best of Georgia Award in 2023. Bestowed by the Georgia Business Journal, this accolade is a testament to Hospice Savannah's unwavering commitment to quality care and service to the community. ... Legacy of Excellence: With roots dating back to 1979, Hospice Savannah has evolved to be the largest and most comprehensive non-profit hospice in Chatham, Effingham, Bryan, and Liberty counties.

*Editor's Note: I was born and raised in Savannah. I feel deep gratitude to Hospice Savannah for having tended many family members and friends through the years. Congratulations Hospice Savannah! We celebrate your devotion to quality, compassionate care! Joy Berger (Louisville, KY)*

### [Medscape: Long COVID has caused thousands of US deaths: New CDC data](#)

*Medscape Medical News, by Lisa Rapaport; 1/3/24*

While COVID has now claimed more than one million lives in the United States alone, these aren't the only fatalities caused at least in part by the virus. A small but growing number of Americans are surviving acute infections only to succumb months later to the lingering health problems caused by long COVID. Much of the attention on long COVID has centered on the sometimes debilitating symptoms that strike people with the condition, with no formal diagnostic tests or standard treatments available, and the impact it has on quality of life. But new figures from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) show that long COVID can also be deadly. At least 4600 Americans have died from long COVID since the start of the pandemic, according to new estimates from the CDC.



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### [How to live: What the dying tell us](#)

*Psychology Today, by Tasha Seiter; 1/2/24*

Subtitle: The top regrets of the dying and how we can use them to better our lives.

Bronnie Ware, a hospice nurse, asked the dying what they regretted most. While it may have been too late for her patients, their answers can tell us about how we should be living while we still have the chance. Here are the top five regrets of the dying, according to her research (both qualitative and quantitative):

1. I wish I had the courage to live a life true to myself, not the life others expected of me.
2. I wish I hadn't worked so hard.
3. I wish I had the courage to express my feelings.
4. I wish I had stayed in touch with my friends.
5. I wish I had let myself be happier.

### [Investigating Medicare hospice overpayments](#)

*Hospice News, by Jim Parker; 1/2/24*

As auditing activity by regulators continues to spike, hospices need to know how to conduct internal investigations to identify any potential improper payments.

## **Palliative Care Provider News**

### [Palliative care providers can enhance care coordination](#)

*Hospice News, by Rachel Edwards; 1/2/24*

Fragmented health care has significant ties to adverse outcomes in patients with chronic or serious illnesses. Palliative care providers' ability to navigate the health care system, coordinate the delivery of care, interact regularly with patients and facilitate communication between providers can reduce this fragmentation. This type of coordination can improve outcomes, decrease costs and offer patients a better quality of life.



**HOSPICE  
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### [The silent battle: Addressing depression among cancer patients](#)

*BNN, by Mazhar Abbas; 1/2/24*

Dr. Michelle King, a specialist psychiatrist, expounded on the psychological tribulations

cancer patients endure, including grief, depression, and anxiety. ... [Cancer survivors] find themselves on an emotional rollercoaster, oscillating between hope and despair, underlining the necessity for balanced mental health management. Dr. King advocates for early referral to palliative care services, delivering holistic support, symptom relief, and assistance with treatment decisions. Palliative care, designed to enhance the quality of life for patients and their families, is beneficial at any stage of the illness.

## Clinical News

### [Young paperboy volunteers for hospice in memory of grandparents](#)

*BNN, by Ayesha Mumtaz; 1/3/24*

Jack Hartley, a 14-year-old paperboy, has taken up a noble cause close to his heart. Channeling personal loss into community service, Jack is volunteering his time to distribute leaflets for the East Cheshire Hospice, an organization that holds deep significance for him and his family. Both of Jack's grandparents, Philip and Olwen Hobson, received care at the hospice before their demise just three months apart in 2015.

*Editor's Note: I wish the word "demise" had not been used, as it has (to this reader) negative connotations similar to the word "expired," for life's natural processes of dying and death. Otherwise, this story might spark ideas for creative ways to involve younger volunteers--with appropriate parental / adult supervision--for other meaningful ways to contribute toward your hospice mission.*

### [A not-so-silent battle: Tackling nurse burnout with innovative solutions](#)

*Electronic Health Reporter, by Brandy Sparkman-Beierle; 1/2/24*

... "The intersection of rising patient volumes and staffing challenges has led to a significant drop in nursing satisfaction rates. This overextension puts healthcare professionals at risk of burnout, impacting their physical and mental well-being." Brandy Sparkman-Beierle, chief clinical officer for Homecare Homebase identifies these needs:

- The need for innovation
- Mobile communication for patient care
- Education and training
- The role of clinician scorecards

### [Wings of togetherness: National nonprofit providing flights for families of New Braunfels Hope Hospice veterans](#)

*New Braunfels Herald-Zeitung, by Erica Wilson; 1/2/24*

Luke's Wings, ... [a] D.C. nonprofit, provides emergency travel planning services and airplane tickets for the families of wounded or ill service members, veterans and fallen officers. Founders recognize the critical role families play in recovery and aim to eliminate financial constraints that could leave families separated for months or years at a time.

## Mergers & Acquisition News

## **[Pennant and John Muir Health enter into a home health joint venture in the Bay Area, California](#)**

*Globe Newswire; 1/2/24*

The Pennant Group, Inc. (NASDAQ: PNTG), the parent company of the Pennant group of affiliated home health, hospice, home care and senior living companies, today announced that it has closed on a home health joint venture with John Muir Health, a leading nonprofit integrated health system that serves communities throughout San Francisco's East Bay Region. ... "Muir Home Health will bring together the deep experience of one of the Bay Area's premier health systems with Pennant's deep experience in managing and supporting the delivery of life-changing home health services, ..." said Brent Guerisoli, Pennant's Chief Executive Officer.

## **[Ensign \(ENSG\) buys 2 nursing facilities in Tennessee & Nevada](#)**

*Zacks Equity Research; 1/2/24*

The Ensign Group, Inc. announced that it bought the operations of a nursing facility in Harrogate, TN. It has also acquired the operations of a nursing facility in Sparks, NV. ... The 116-bed unit in Harrogate, named TriState Health and Rehabilitation Center, is ENSG's first skilled nursing facility in Tennessee. ... The other acquisition, the 125-bed Hearthstone Health and Rehabilitation facility in Nevada, is likely to boost its footprint in the region. The acquisition deals have increased Ensign's portfolio to encompass 299 healthcare operations spanning 14 states. Of the total, 27 also have senior living operations.

## **Technology / Innovations News**

### **[The impact of Artificial Intelligence on healthcare and medicine](#)**

*Medium/Technology Buzz, by Mark R.; 1/3/24*

... Artificial intelligence, or intelligence dominated by machines and algorithms, has a growing significance in multiple industries. From finance to education and healthcare, AI has completely reformed the ways of working. One of the significant contributions of AI is to the healthcare and medical industry. From improving diagnostic accuracy to personalizing the treatments for patients, AI has revolutionized the structure of healthcare facilities. By analyzing complex human data and drawing accurate conclusions without much human intervention, AI technology can help medical researchers make new discoveries. AI applications are primarily centered on 3 main investment areas: diagnostics, engagement, and digitization.

*Editor's Note: For pro's and con's of AI in hospice and palliative care, examine other articles about AI posted in our newsletter (past and future).*

## **Ethics**

### **[Should patients be allowed to die from anorexia?](#)**

*DNYUZ; 1/3/24*

The doctors told Naomi that she could not leave the hospital. She was lying in a narrow bed

at Denver Health Medical Center. Someone said something about a judge and a court order. Someone used the phrase “gravely disabled.” Naomi did not think she was gravely disabled. Still, she decided not to fight it. She could deny that she was mentally incompetent — but this would probably just be taken as proof of her mental incompetence. Of her lack of insight. She would, instead, “succumb to it.” *[Read more of Naomi's story, followed by an examination of palliative care.]*

### **[Medical assistance in dying: What are we talking about?](#)**

*University of Oxford Practical Ethics, by Alberto Giubilini; 1/2/24*

Medical assistance in dying – or “MAID”, to use the somehow infelicitous acronym – is likely to be a central topic in bioethics this year. That might not be true of bioethics as an academic field, where MAID has been widely discussed over the past 40 years. But it is likely true of bioethics as a wider societal and political area of discussion. There are two reasons to think this. First, the topic has attracted a lot of attention the last year, especially with “slippery slope” concerns around Canada’s policies. Second, MAID has recently been in the news in the UK, where national elections will take place in 2024. It is not hard to imagine it will feature in the heated political polarization that always accompanies election campaigns.

## **General News**

### **[Kingston man arrested for allegedly threatening bedridden father](#)**

*BNN, by Salman Akhtar; 1/2/24*

31-year-old Tyler Jason Vasquez, a resident of Kingston, was apprehended by the local law enforcement following a disturbing incident involving his ailing father. The event, captured by a Ring doorbell camera at their home on New Hurbane Street, had Vasquez allegedly threatening his bedridden father with a firearm. The security camera had been installed by Vasquez’s sister to keep an eye on their father, who is under home hospice care.

## **Books**

### **[The book "The In-Between: Unforgettable encounters during life's final moments](#)**

*HSJ Online, by David Webster; 1/2/24*

Recently, I received a book from one of my daughters for my birthday, “The In-Between” by Hadley Vlahos, RN. While in Florida for a vacation, I made reading the best-selling book a priority and admittedly cried with each chapter as Hadley shares her personal life mixed in with being a Hospice nurse. Hadley made a statement ... that really struck me, ... “I have learned how important it is to be a human first and an employee second.”

## **Today's 10-Second Question**

**Yesterday's 10-Second Question was: What is your greatest hope for the new year? (per a Wall Street Journal email). Responses included:**

- Good health
- That the FTC and DOJ look at United as a Monopoly and do something about it.
- Greater access to high quality hospice and palliative care for all desiring it.

## Today's Encouragement

**New Year: a new chapter, new verse, or just the same old story? Ultimately we write it. The choice is ours. Alex Morritt**

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