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Hospice Provider News

[Care Planning Issues Top Lists of Hospice Survey Deficiencies](#)

Hospice News, by Jim Parker; 1/4/24

Amid rising regulatory scrutiny, issues related to care planning continue to top lists of the most common survey deficiencies among hospices. The most frequently cited deficiency is the requirement that each patient should have a customized care plan developed by the interdisciplinary team with involvement from a physician as well as the patient and family, the Accreditation Commission for Health Care (ACHC) reported. The noncompliance rate was 66% for 2022.

[NY healthcare organizations collaborate to deliver value-based hospice, palliative care](#)

TechTarget, by Victoria Bailey; 1/3/24

Bassett Healthcare Network, a New York-based health system, has [partnered](#) with Helios Care to provide patients with value-based hospice and palliative care. ... Together, the two organizations will create an electronically driven referral process that will promote value-based contracting for hospice and palliative care services and establish a comprehensive palliative care and hospice service to treat patients in the hospital, in outpatient settings, and at home. In addition, the partnership will prioritize developing a transitional care program to provide in-home care for patients with serious illnesses, chronic diseases, and end-of-life needs.

[Gentle endings: Lessons learned in a hospice for those without a home](#)

DeseretNews, by Eliza Anderson; 1/3/24

Jillian Olmsted was intrigued by a news story in 2015 about attempts to open a small residential hospice for the homeless in Salt Lake City, where she lives. The INN Between would offer a home for people who were unsheltered and dying so they could be fed and cared for, in beds and out of the cold. But she was also floored by the hue and cry of neighbors who didn't want them around — even though they were terribly medically frail. Her dad was fighting cancer, and she had just helped care for her mom and stepfather, who died a month apart. Both “had insurance and a nice home and family to take care of them.” Why begrudge someone shelter, care and comfort in such dire circumstances?



Accelerate Results Accelerate Growth Accelerate Learning

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Palliative Care Provider News

[What is Palliative Care?](#)

Money, by Bianca Rodriguez Rojas; 1/4/24

Palliative care is a healthcare approach that aims to provide comfort and improve the quality of life of people diagnosed with a serious or life-threatening disease such as cancer, heart failure or Parkinson's.

Editor's Note: Interesting this appeared in Money magazine...

Clinical News

[Death anxiety impairs self-esteem, quality of life in older adults with chronic disease](#)

McKnight's Long-Term Care News, by Kristen Fischer; 1/4/24

No surprise here: A new study that shows anxiety about dying can affect self-esteem and quality of life among people with chronic diseases. The authors said they'd like to see more interventions to bolster self-esteem and lower death anxiety in middle-aged and older adults who have chronic diseases. The study was published on Tuesday in *BMC Psychiatry*. The negative consequences of chronic diseases like cancer, diabetes and cardiovascular disease (along with the unpredictability of death) makes middle-aged and elderly adults who have these diseases more vulnerable to death anxiety, the authors wrote.

Public Policy News

[California becomes first state to offer health insurance to all undocumented immigrants](#)

ABC News, by Mary Kekatos; 1/2/24

California will welcome the new year by becoming the first state to offer health insurance for all undocumented immigrants. Starting Jan. 1, all undocumented immigrants, regardless of age, will qualify for Medi-Cal, California's version of the federal Medicaid program for people with low incomes.

Editor's note: Hospice implications...?

Mergers & Acquisition News

[St. Luke's merger will be 'the first of many' M&A deals in the hospital sector this year](#)

MedCity News, by Katie Adams, 1/4/24

On New Year's Day, two Missouri health systems — St. Louis-based BJC HealthCare and Kansas City-based St. Luke's Health System — officially completed their merger. The deal, which was first announced last May, combines the two organizations into one integrated academic health system. The merger was one of the biggest hospital M&A deals announced last year. The combined health system comprises 28 hospitals and hundreds of clinics serving 6 million people across Missouri, Illinois and Kansas. It is expected to generate \$10 billion in annual revenue.

[The Wall Street Journal: Exclusive: Cigna nears deal to offload Medicare business](#)

The Wall Street Journal, by Laura Cooper, Anna Wilde Mathews and Lauren Thomas; 1/3/24

Cigna is in advanced talks to sell its Medicare business in an about-face for the health-insurance giant, which had been expanding its footprint in the fast-growing sector. Cigna, which has been running an auction for the business, known as Medicare Advantage, is now in exclusive talks to sell it to Health Care Service Corp. for between \$3 billion and \$4 billion, according to people familiar with the matter.

Editor's Note: Access to the full article requires a subscription to The Wall Street Journal.

Post-Acute Care News

[Compassus, Pennant Group expand home health JV portfolios](#)

Home Health Care News, by Joyce Famakinwa; 1/3/24

Two home-based care providers – Compassus and the Pennant Group (Nasdaq: PNTG) – have expanded their JV portfolios this week. On Wednesday, Compassus and Ascension announced the expansion of their Tennessee-based home health partnership, which is dubbed Ascension Saint Thomas at Home. Subsequently, Ascension Saint Thomas at Home's service area now covers 17 Tennessee counties in the mid and west parts of the state.



HOSPICE ANALYTICS

TURNING DATA INTO INFORMATION – TO IMPROVE PATIENT CARE

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[Nursing home struggles expected to worsen hospital backlogs](#)

McKnights Long-Term Care News, by Josh Henreckson; 1/4/24

Nursing homes' familiar struggles with insufficient staffing and insurance reimbursements are contributing to growing backlogs of patients awaiting throughput from hospitals to post-acute care across the US. Those waitlists are set to grow more congested in 2024 and cause even bigger disruption throughout the US healthcare system, according to recent state-level reports.

Editor's Notes: Hospice leaders, how might your organization help reduce these backlogs and delays?

[Cap rates increase by 74 basis points across all segments of senior living and care](#)

McKnight's Senior Living, by Kathleen Steele Gaivin; 1/3/24

The average senior housing and care capitalization rate across all segments increased by 74 basis points between April and October, according to results of the [13th edition](#) of CBRE's US Senior Housing & Care Investor Survey for the second half of 2023. An April survey had found that cap rates had increased for all sectors but skilled nursing.

[Nursing homes invest in campaigns, reap millions in taxpayer money](#)

Iowa Capital Dispatch, by Clark Kauffman; 1/2/24

An Iowa Capital Dispatch review of legislation, campaign contributions, federal tax returns, inspection reports and audio recordings of industry lobbyists reveals the extent to which money influences critical public policy decisions related to the protection of Iowa's elderly and people with disabilities.

[Optum, SSM Helath end partnership](#)

Becker's Hospital CFO Report, by Jakob Emerson; 1/3/2024

St. Louis-based SSM Health and UnitedHealth Group's Optum have ended their administrative partnership around inpatient care management, digital transformation and revenue cycle management, an SSM Health spokesperson confirmed with *Becker's*. The health system declined to provide any additional information when asked on Jan. 3. The partnership was [announced](#) in October 2021 and formally began in early 2022. The deal included the hiring of about 2,100 SSM employees by Optum.

Technology / Innovations News

[8 healthcare tech trends in 2024, per DataLink](#)

Becker's Health IT, by Noah Schwartz; 12/28/23

Health IT company DataLink projected eight trends in healthcare technology for 2024. Artificial technology dominated the trends list. Here are the eight healthcare technology predictions for 2024, according to a Dec. 28 DataLink news release:

1. Predictive analytics
2. AI-powered medical imaging
3. Virtual reality for medical training
4. Robotic process automation
5. Natural language processing
6. Internet of things devices
7. Ethical AI
8. Interoperable data exchange

General News

[Sleep pods, coffee bars, and coworking spaces: Hospital staff lounges get a makeover](#)

Healthcare Brew, by Shannon Young; 12/7/23

Health systems are looking at how they can better attract, retain, and support staff with respite spaces. Picture this: a large coworking environment with collaboration areas, cappuccino bars, and programmable spaces. No, it's not a Silicon Valley startup, a student union, or even a swanky airport lounge. It's the next generation of hospital employee break rooms. After years of optimizing hospital spaces to focus on the patient experience, more health systems are looking at how they can better attract, retain, and support staff, Mike Pukszta, codirector of CannonDesign's global health practice, told Healthcare Brew.

Editor's Note: Consider implications for today's hospice staffing. Office-based leaders, have you ever spent a day with a team member making visit after visit? While you want staff out in the field, do they have a home base where they can easily collaborate, eat, communicate with each other? Seek feedback and consider adjustments that can make a big difference in employee satisfaction and well-being.

[Financial hardship drives unhappiness in people living with dementia, study finds](#)

McKnights Long-Term Care News, by Kristen Fischer; 1/4/24

A new study is uncovering just how tough it can be financially to live with dementia. The [report](#), published Dec. 29 in the *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*, found that nearly 56% of people with dementia face financial hardships. Those financial challenges are linked with worse reported satisfaction with life and healthcare. ... The study examined data from 534 participants with dementia who shared details on satisfaction with their lives and their healthcare. The researchers compared that data to information from

questionnaires from 576 people who were newly diagnosed with cancer and receiving treatment.

[After loved ones' long-awaited organ transplants, caregivers often find challenges are just beginning](#)

STAT, by Annalisa Merelli; 1/4/24

By the time his wife Glenda Daggert received a double organ transplant in 1999, Ira Copperman already had a lot of experience as a caregiver. ... After the transplants, Daggert had a new kidney and a new pancreas, and was no longer diabetic. Yet this was not the ending to all her health issues, nor to Copperman's role as a caregiver. "Transplantation is not the end story. You don't stop what you do as caregiver or care partners the day after a transplant," said Copperman, who serves as vice president of the nonprofit Transplant Recipients International Organization. "It is a lifelong journey."

[My father, the giant: His life's work was caring for the people he loved](#)

The Atlantic, by Ross Andersen; 1/3/24

Yesterday afternoon, my dad, Erik Dybkaer Andersen, lay sleeping at home in his hospice bed when a calm settled over his body and he drew his last breath. He was 78. For more than a year, we had known that cancer would take him; only the hour was uncertain. But it is still a shock to find him missing from his bedroom, from his family, from the world. It is too early to measure, much less put into writing, all that he meant to us. For now, I want only to read his life into the record, and to get across his essence, above all as a caretaker of those he loved.

Editor's Note: Access to the full article requires a free trial or subscription to The Atlantic.

Other News

Other Business Headlines of Interest, updated 1/4/24 per [nasdaq.com](https://www.nasdaq.com)

- [Adus HomeCare \(ADUS: \\$89.91\)](#)
- [Amedisys \(AMED: \\$94.28\)](#)
- [Encompass \(EHC: \\$66.88\)](#)
- [Enhabit \(EHAB: \\$9.38\)](#)
- [Ensign Group \(ENSG: \\$113.84\)](#)
- [HCA Healthcare \(HCA: \\$273.10\)](#)
- [Humana \(HUM: \\$466.50\)](#)
- [Pennant Group \(PNTG: \\$14.16\)](#)

- [Vitas / Chemed Corp \(CHE: \\$570.19\)](#)

Today's Encouragement

[If you do not try, your chance of success drops to 0.0%...](#)

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