

## Cordt Kassner

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**From:** Hospice & Palliative Care Today Newsletter  
<subscriptions@hospicepalliativecaretoday.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 10, 2024 4:00 AM  
**To:** Cordt Kassner  
**Subject:** Your Hospice & Palliative Care Today Newsletter for 01/10/24

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**January 10th, 2024**

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## Headlines

### [2024 Hospice News outlook survey and report](#)

*Hospice News; 1/9/24*

From rising industry challenges to the latest technology investments, participants of this year's Hospice Outlook Survey shared their take on the industry's obstacles and growth opportunities in the year ahead. Hospice News is pleased to share these survey results, revealing how providers are:

- Navigating today's challenging hiring environment
- Planning to drive growth in the year ahead
- Investing in technology
- And more

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### [2024 Hillman funding opportunities announced](#)

*Global Newswire, The Rita and Alex Hillman Foundation*

Seeking proposals for nursing-driven innovations that address the health and social needs of marginalized communities

## Hospice Provider News

### [Second-hand sales turn into second-chance grants](#)

*The Daily Yonder - Keep It Rural, by Bill Bishop; 1/9/24*

A non-profit store in La Grange, Texas, called Second Chance Emporium created a "virtuous circle" of community-donated items that turn into grants that support that and other communities. ... The year Second Chance has made \$583,000 in grants. ... The community has a stake in the store. For example, the local hospice organization even hosts an annual fashion show fundraiser with people decked out in things they picked up at Second Chance.



## Accelerate Results Accelerate Growth Accelerate Learning

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### **Finding a voice for the terminally ill**

*Health Affairs, by Richey Piiparinen, 1/9/24*

A patient with terminal illness reflects on the reluctance in health care to discuss death.

*Access to the full-text article requires either an online subscription or purchase of 24-hour access to this article.*

## **Palliative Care Provider News**

### **Use of palliative care for ICU patients, families**

Review of Doherty, C., Feder, S., Gillespie-Heyman, S., & Akgün, K. M. (2023). Easing Suffering for ICU Patients and Their Families: Evidence and Opportunities for Primary and Specialty Palliative Care in the ICU. *Journal of Intensive Care Medicine*.

*Yale School of Medicine, review by Chigoziri Knokwo; 1/8/24*

... The authors identify the most commonly worrisome symptoms affecting ICU patients as the inability to communicate, pain, difficulty breathing, and thirst. They also highlight distressing experiences for families and caregivers of patients in the ICU, particularly depression and complicated grief. They recommend the continued incorporation of humanistic palliative care principles, considering perspectives from a more diverse representation of countries and cultures, particularly more resource-limited settings.

### **Provider partnerships driving palliative care growth**

*Hospice News, by Holly Vossel; 1/8/24*

An increasingly diverse base of health care providers have taken an interest in the palliative care space, a trend that could be indicative of how strategic growth is taking shape in the field. ... A range of palliative care joint ventures, care

collaborations and partnerships have evolved in recent years as more health care providers work to address the needs of a swelling aging population.



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## Clinical News

### [The prevalence of hospital diagnostic errors](#)

*Becker's Clinical Leadership, by Paige Twenter; 1/8/24*

Nearly a fourth of patients who are transferred to intensive care units or die in hospitals are misdiagnosed or have delayed diagnoses, according to research published Jan. 8 in *JAMA*. In a study of more than 2,400 patient records, researchers employed physician reviewers trained in error adjudications to inspect each EHR for the admission and events leading up to an ICU transfer or death across 90 hospitals.

*Editor's Note: Consider the implications of this for your palliative and hospice care physicians.*

### [Bringing peace and joy: Evensong performs familiar music for hospice patients](#)

*The Ellsworth American, by Jess Cummings; 1/8/24*

Evensong, a group of choral singers operating under the Hospice Volunteers of Hancock County, has spent the last 15 years singing for individuals nearing the final moments of their lives. The group specializes in hospice and palliative care, traveling upon request all over Hancock County to sing at the bedsides and homes of patients in need. ... "Music is a huge thing," [musical director] Cookie Horner says. "It goes to a different part of your brain than everything else...we've seen that firsthand." Evensong's repertoire includes music like spiritual and secular hymns, familiar folk songs and even popular special requests.

### [Humana wins \\$360M in Walgreens drug price settlement](#)

*Modern Healthcare, by Lauren Berryman; 1/8/24*

Walgreens will pay Humana \$360 million to resolve allegations the pharmacy chain overcharged the health insurer for prescription drugs.



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## Regulatory News

### [Home healthcare company agrees to pay nearly \\$10 million to resolve false claims act allegations relating to its participation in the energy employees occupational illness compensation program](#)

*Office of Public Affairs; 1/5/24*

Atlantic Home Health Care LLC (AHH), a home health care agency operating in Arizona and eight other states, has agreed to pay \$9,990,944 to resolve allegations that it violated the False Claims Act by submitting false claims to the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program (EEOICP or the Energy Program), a healthcare program administered by the Department of Labor (DOL) for the benefit of Department of Energy employees and contractors with occupational illnesses.

### [Will we close the Medicare Advantage primary care gap in 2024?](#)

*MedCity News, by Jim Bonnette; 1/8/24*

... Across all healthcare industry stakeholders, there is a pressing need to address this growing concern: MA members without primary care physicians (PCPs). This cohort, called the MA Primary Care Gap, may present the highest risk to health plans as MA becomes their fastest-growing segment . ... Furthermore, the MA Primary Care Gap is widening due to industry shortages of primary care providers and the rise of healthcare deserts in both rural areas and under-served urban areas. The absence of primary care physicians is particularly troublesome for Medicare Advantage patients with multiple chronic diseases and complex healthcare needs.

## Public Policy News

## Public policy: Potential bills from multiple states

- [Maryland advocates want to focus on access, patients in 2024 session](#)  
*Maryland Matters, by Danielle Brown; 1/8/24*

“We really want to talk about the patient,” said Gene Ransom, CEO of MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society, discussing the organization’s priorities for the upcoming session. “This year, I’m hoping will be the year that we talk about access and patients, and that will be the thing we focus on,” he said.

- [Wisconsin Republicans' medical marijuana plan gets lukewarm reception from Evers, lawmakers](#)  
*AP News, by Scott Bauer; 1/8/24*

The bill would limit medical marijuana only to severely ill people with chronic diseases such as cancer and allow for it to be dispensed at only five state-run locations.

- [Aid-in-dying debate likely to reignite in Connecticut in 2024. What to know](#)  
*Hartford Courant, by Alison Cross; 1/9/24*

Since 2013, proposed aid-in-dying bills have brought hundreds to the State Capitol to testify in favor of or in opposition to the proposal. The debate is expected to reignite with equal fervor in the 2024 session.

## Mergers & Aquisition News

### [New Day Healthcare acquires Compassion Hospice](#)

*Hospice News, by Jim Parker; 1/8/24*

The home health and hospice provider New Day Healthcare has acquired Texas-based Compassion Hospice for an undisclosed amount. The transaction expands New Day’s footprint to 29 locations, concentrated in Texas, Missouri, Kansas and Illinois. The company’s nearly 6,500 employees serve close to 100,000 patients annually across all of its business lines, including home health, hospice, pediatrics, clinical decision support and personal care. Compassion Hospice will not rebrand and will retain its current leadership.

## Post-Acute Care News

## [Mortality rates low among hospital-at-home patients: study](#)

*Modern Healthcare, by Diane Eastabrook; 1/9/24*

Older patients receiving care through hospital-at-home programs across the U.S. experienced low mortality rates, Mass General Brigham researchers found. *Accessing the entire article requires a subscription to Modern Healthcare*

## Technology / Innovations News

### [What Amazon's latest healthcare play could mean for ASCs](#)

*Becker's ASC Review, by Paige Haeffele; 1/8/23*

Amazon launched digital health monitoring services through a [partnership](#) with Omada Health. Omada's more than 20 million members are eligible to enroll in the service through Amazon, according to a Jan. 8 post on Amazon's website.

... Sri Sundaram, MD, an electrophysiologist at South Denver Cardiology Associates, told *Becker's*; "From a patient's perspective, it's only positive. From a physician's perspective, it can be overwhelming. I get daily reports from patients about abnormal recordings from their wearables. How do I respond when only the wearable is abnormal? Keeping up with this data and questions from patients has already become demanding."

*Editor's Note: How might hospices integrate wearable technology into patient care?*

## General News

### [It's unbelievable how retired congresswoman's son found her months before death](#)

*Rolling Out, by Darryl Maxie; 1/8/24*

Though she was 89 years old, trailblazing politician Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-Texas) should not have died on Dec. 31. ... [She was] the first nurse ever elected to Congress. ... Johnson's family plans to sue Baylor Scott & White Health, claiming negligent post-surgery care at the hospital's rehabilitation center led to the death of the woman known as EBJ, who represented the Dallas area in Congress for 30 years.

### [This Florida resort gives critically ill children the chance to just be kids](#)

*USA Today, by Eve Chen; 1/9/24*

Eight-year-old Zachary Doyle was in hospice when his family got a chance for one more adventure. "We adopted Zachary when he was 7 weeks old, and he had spina bifida and hydrocephalus, which at the time seemed like manageable

diagnoses that we could tackle as a family," his mom, Susan Doyle. ... She said he underwent around 40 brain and heart surgeries like "a champ," but ran out of treatment options last year. "We were pretty resigned to being at home and finishing out the end at home," Doyle said. That was until Zachary was granted a rush wish trip to [Walt Disney World](#) through Gentle Shepherd Hospice in Lynchburg, Virginia.

## International News

### [Feds must decide whether 'all Canadians' have right to assisted dying](#)

*The Canadian Press; 1/8/24*

A senator who pushed for people with mental illness to be able to seek a medically assisted death says the federal government must decide whether it will "allow all Canadians" their choice of end-of-life care.

## Today's Encouragement

**The strength of the team is each individual member. The strength of each member is the team. Phil Jackson**

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