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Headlines

A kind reminder

... to look out for your staff, colleagues, patients, and family members impacted by the bitter cold snap, power outages, frozen pipes, etc...

JPM 2024: 10 takeaways for providers, insurers, digital companies

Modern Healthcare, by Alex Kacik; 1/12/24

Key takeaways from the 42nd annual J.P. Morgan Healthcare Conference include:

1. Ambulatory care is the way to grow
2. Patient volumes rebound, straining capacity
3. Health systems were light on AI specifics
4. Digital Health companies got more specific about AI
5. Health systems decry insurer denials
6. Insurers manage star ratings, risk adjustment changes
7. PBMs prep for policy changes
8. Healthcare disruptors remain eager
9. Finances remain a rough patch
10. Medicare Advantage utilization remains high

Hospice Provider News

Optum a rising star at UnitedHealth Group, has more room to grow

Hospice News, by Jim Parker; 1/12/24

The UnitedHealth Group subsidiary Optum Health has emerged as one of the largest players in home-based care, primary care and other health care services. Nevertheless, the company sees vast market opportunities on the road ahead.



Accelerate Results
Accelerate Growth
Accelerate Learning

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JVs a major growth engine for hospices in 2024

Hospice News, by Jim Parker; 1/10/24

Moving into 2024, more hospices see joint ventures or similar partnerships to be a major growth engine.

Chattahoochee Hospice celebrates 40 years

Valley Times, by Charlotte Reames; 1/13/24

Chattahoochee Hospice was founded in 1984 when hospice care became more prominent in the country. The hospice is a community-based nonprofit that strives to provide the highest quality care possible to patients in the community.

Walla Walla Valley uncorks history, hosts first Hospice du Rhône event

Union-Bulletin, by Hannah McIntyre; 1/13/24

Walla Walla Valley, home to 135 wineries, will host the Hospice du Rhône for the first time in the Pacific Northwest. Starting Wednesday, April 24, and running through Saturday, April 27, is a celebration of the Valley's Rhône-style grape varietals that thrive both in the soil of the Rocks District and the Walla Walla Valley AVA.



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Clinical News

Despite Increased Awareness, Gender Bias Persists Across Healthcare

Forbes, by Amy Shoenthal; 1/12/24

When a 50-year-old woman attorney noticed some chest pressure and had trouble maintaining endurance during regular exercise, she initially sought counsel from two doctors: her internist and her gynecologist. Both reassured her that she was experiencing perimenopausal symptoms along with the stress of a high-powered job. Her intuition suggested otherwise. Going up stairs was leaving her winded. So she searched for a third opinion ... It's no secret that women's symptoms are frequently dismissed or their ailments misdiagnosed by reputable medical professionals.

Federal scientists conclude there is credible evidence for certain medical uses of marijuana

Politico, by Natalie Fertig; 1/12/24

The Department of Health and Human Services concluded that marijuana is less harmful than other dangerous drugs and that there is some evidence of its medical benefits in recommending loosening federal restrictions on the drug. For the last 60-plus years, cannabis has been classified as a Schedule I drug — the same as heroin — under the Controlled Substances Act, which means it's a substance of high abuse potential and no accepted medical use. Bloomberg first reported in August that HHS had recommended marijuana be moved to Schedule III, and the release of these documents on Friday confirms that.

Publisher note: The full FDA report can be found [here](#).

Experts scramble to understand rising cancer rates in young adults

Becker's Hospital Review, by Erica Carbajal; 1/11/24

Cancer diagnosis rates among people under 50 are on the rise. In the U.S, the rate among this group jumped nearly 13% from 2000 — when it was 95.6 cases per 100,000 people — to 107.8 by 2019. Physicians and scientists are baffled, scrambling to determine what's beneath the surge and how to identify people at high risk, The Wall Street Journal reported Jan. 11.



TURNING DATA INTO INFORMATION – TO IMPROVE PATIENT CARE

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'Men who are grieving, or facing up to a terminal illness, can come here to share their experience'

MSN, by Roland White; 1/14/24

When volunteers from the Marie Curie charity were looking for a place where men could support each other through serious illness and bereavement, there was really only one option. They built a large shed. That's no surprise. Sheds are very handy for storing garden tools and spare cans of oil, but they also serve an even more important function as places of male refuge. We escape to the shed in times of distress, or when we just need a bit of peace.

Regulatory News

Hospice providers: CON laws need overhaul in some states

Hospice News, by Holly Vossel; 1/12/24

Some hospice providers have hit roadblocks when it comes to navigating needs determination methodologies certificate of need (CON) laws in certain states, citing outdated processes for assessing underserved populations.

Mergers & Aquisition News

Fortis Health Further Grows Midwest Footprint With Latest Acquisition

Home Health Care News, by Joyce Famakinwa; 1/11/24

Fortis Health has purchased Physiocare Home Health and Hospice, a Medicare-certified home health and hospice provider that operates in Indiana. Grant Avenue Capital — a middle-market private equity firm — provided the equity financing for the transaction.

Post-Acute Care News

Creative thinking needed to save rural hospitals

South Dakota Searchlight, by Tom Dean; 1/14/24

Over the last 15 years, approximately 150 rural hospitals have closed nationwide. What does it mean? Are these facilities obsolete, no longer needed? Maybe in a few places, but in the vast majority of communities they provide critically important services.

General News

UnitedHealth Group posts \$5.5B profit in fourth quarter

Becker's Payer Issues, by Jakob Emerson; 1/12/24

UnitedHealth Group recorded double-digit growth in revenue year over year across its core lines of business at UnitedHealthcare and Optum, according to the company's fourth quarter earnings report released Jan. 12. UnitedHealth Group total revenues in 2023 were \$371.6 billion, up 14.6% year over year. In the fourth quarter, revenues were \$94.4 billion. For 2024, the company projects revenues of \$400 billion.

Notable mention: Andrew Witty, CEO.

Today's 10-Second Question

Today's 10-Second Question

We are asking for your feedback: [What have you most appreciated about Hospice & Palliative Care Today \(e.g., what kinds of articles, formatting, website, etc.\)? What improvements can be made?](#) Thank you!

Today's Encouragement

Success is not final; failure is not fatal: It is the courage to continue that counts. ~Winston Churchill

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