

Cordt Kassner

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<subscriptions@hospicepalliativecaretoday.com>
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Headlines

Advance care planning reaches underserved across U.S. recruitment continues for National Institutes of Health (NIH) Research

Hospice Foundation of America; 1/18/24

Community outreach leaders and liaisons are urged to apply to serve as hosts for the Project Talk Trial, a national, 5-year research project funded by National Institutes of Health that seeks to evaluate the effectiveness of advance care planning conversations and whether those discussions result in advance care planning actions. ... The project is specifically focused on underserved communities of people who historically have the poorest access to healthcare services and the lowest engagement in advance care planning, which include racial and ethnic minorities, low-income individuals, and rural populations.

'You can complain about it, or lean in': Top home health leaders brace for 2024

Home Health Care News, by Joyce Famakinwa; 1/19/24

With the start of a new year, home health leaders are looking ahead, and identifying their top priorities. Some of these areas of focus will directly address last year's challenges, and some are proactive measures that will place them

ahead. At Bayada Home Health Care, these priorities include focusing on the employee experience, as well as clinical model evolution.

New dementia-focused payment model emphasizes caregiver support

Hospice News, by Holly Vossel; 1/18/23

Without family caregivers, most hospice and palliative care patients would be unable to receive care in the home. Now, some emerging payment models are including caregiver support as a key component. ... [These come] at a time when dementia-related illnesses are on the rise among hospice patients.



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Hospice Provider News

Parsons named president and CEO of Blue Ridge Hospice

The Winchester Star, by Brian Brehm; 1/18/24

Jason Parsons, who had been the nonprofit's chief strategy officer since coming to Blue Ridge Hospice two years ago, has been named president and CEO.

How Medicare Advantage, labor, AI will shape home-based care in 2024

Home Health Care News, by Andrew Donlan; 1/18/24

Home Health Care News recently spoke with 15 home-based care leaders for our annual "Executive Forecast" articles, which we published at the end of last year. Those executives' responses covered a wide range of topics, and were surprisingly and refreshingly diverse. But, in the end, a few themes emerged.

'Snow was up to my knees': Iowa hospice nurse walks through blizzard to reach patient

KETV (NE), by Maddie Augustine; 1/20/24

Iowa — Communities across Nebraska and Iowa have felt the impact of recent snowfall and below-zero temperatures, but that weather didn't stop one Iowa hospice nurse. Tiffany McArdle, hospice nurse for St. Croix Hospice, told KETV that in her seven years of working as a hospice nurse, she never imagined she

would be walking through a blizzard to reach a patient, but she said she never doubted she would find a way to make it to the family in need on Sunday.



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Teleios announces addition of Emmanuel Hospice to network

Press release; 1/19/24

Hendersonville, NC January 11, 2024: Teleios Collaborative Network (TCN) announced the addition of Emmanuel Hospice to its clinically integrated network, expanding the nonprofit's resources, tools and expertise in order to grow its presence and services in West Michigan.

Visiting Nurses Foundation awards \$130,000 to Assured Hospice for comfort therapies

The Chronicle; 1/19/24

The Visiting Nurses Foundation has awarded Assured Hospice \$130,000 as part of a continued partnership to provide therapies for end-of-life patients. The money supports comfort therapies, which include acupuncture and acupressure, animal-assisted therapy, guided imagery, healing touch, therapeutic touch, reiki, music and sound therapy and massages, which are integrated to enhance existing treatment plans.

Palliative Care Provider News

Cambia Health Foundation announces 10th cohort of the Sojourns Scholar Leadership Program

Cambia health foundation; 1/18/24

Each Sojourns Scholar receives \$180,000 in funding (\$90,000 per year over a two-year grant) to carry out an innovative and impactful project in the field of palliative care and execute a leadership development plan designed to support the individual's growth as a national leader in the field. ... Each grantee is a member of an interdisciplinary palliative care team or is otherwise working to

advance the field.

Click on the link above for descriptions, and then on "Meet Our Cohorts" for the new list, awarded in Dec 2023 and posted 1/18/24. Click on the person's name for details about each project.



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Clinical News

Talking about death and dying

The Saturday Evening Post; by N. West Moss; 1/19/24

Last summer, my 88-year-old mother was diagnosed with late-stage colon cancer and opted for in-home hospice. She died three months later. Talking about death can be difficult. It can bring up feelings of fear, anxiety, and sorrow. It can also feel awkward as it requires acknowledging one's own (or a loved one's) mortality.

Hospital death less likely, hospice more likely for white women with ovarian cancer

Healio, by Erin T. Welsh; 1/19/24

Women with ovarian cancer from underrepresented groups have a higher likelihood of in-hospital mortality vs. hospice mortality compared with their white counterparts. ... Key takeaways:

- Black, American Indian, Asian and Hispanic women with ovarian cancer had higher in-hospital mortality odds vs. white women.

- Women from underrepresented groups had lower hospice mortality odds vs. white women.

Regulatory News

Nursing home operators feel there's a lot to learn from hospice surveys despite regulatory differences

Skilled Nursing News, by Amy Stulick; 1/18/24

Many nursing home operators that also have hospice operations can't help but notice that the survey process on the hospice end is generally a more positive experience than in the nursing home world. And some say the collaborative nature – between facilities and the federal government – of hospice surveys can and should be replicated for nursing homes.

\$15 billion win for physicians on prior authorization

AMA, by Kevin B. O'Reilly; 1/18/24

Under the leadership of Administrator Chiquita Brooks-LaSure, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has released a final rule making important reforms to prior authorization to cut patient care delays and electronically streamline the process for physicians. Together, the changes will save physician practices an estimated \$15 billion over 10 years, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

More details needed on hospice use of therapists and counselors

AAPC, by Rebecca Johnson; 1/18/24

Hospices are seeking clarification concerning Medicare's interdisciplinary group (IDG) requirements in light of hospices' new ability to use marriage and family therapists (MFTs) and/or mental health counselors (MHCs). ... Help is on the way, indicated CMS. "We currently have [questions and answers] related to this topic area finishing up CMS clearance right now," an agency official responded in the forum. They "hope to have them out to the industry and also be posted on the hospice center web page ... [to] answer these questions," she said.

Public Policy News

New bill would give California parents more control over whether state can store their kid's DNA

CBS News / TV, by Julie Watts; 1/17/24

Should you have the right to know that the state is storing your child's DNA and that researchers or law enforcement may use it without your consent? ... A 2018 statewide CBS News poll found that the majority of new parents did know about the lifesaving test. Three quarters (of new parents) had no idea the state was storing their baby's leftover bloodspots after the required test genetic test was complete.

Technology / Innovations News

HHS: Lack of incentives bar home health, hospice providers from creating interoperable solutions

McKnights Senior Living, by Adam Healy; 1/19/24

Long-term and post-acute care organizations have not received the same support as other care settings for creating interoperable patient data tools, putting home health and hospice providers at a disadvantage, according to [new research](#) by the US Department of Health and Human Services.

General News

Head chef at Jersey Hospice cherishes the privilege of cooking for end-of-life patients

BNN, by Mahnoor Jehangir; 1/19/24

The head chef at Jersey Hospice, Sam Sherwood, has a deeply personal mission. His role is not merely a professional one, but a labor of love, driven by the memory of his father who passed away just days before Sherwood took the helm of the hospice kitchen. For Sherwood and his team, preparing meals for patients in end-of-life care is more than just a job; it's a calling.

Healthcare ranks second among industries with workers frustrated by low pay: survey

McKnights Senior Living, by Kathleen Steele Gaivin; 1/19/24

Healthcare workers rank second among those frustrated about their industry's pay, according to a recent analysis from USA Today Blueprint. ... The research included 3 million Glassdoor reviews of 500 large employers in 25 industries. ... Only workers in the education field are less satisfied with their pay than are workers in healthcare, according to the findings.

Pals for Life helps animals lend a paw while treating community members with pet therapy

ABC News, by Nick Iadonisi; 1/19/24

Kristen Abbott as Program Director of Pals for Life is bringing pet therapy across the Delaware Valley. She guides animals as they lend a paw, and lift the spirits of our community members. The pets will visit people in various locations, such as "elder care homes...mental health hospitals...hospice centers," said Abbott.

Editor's Note: Are you interested in visits for your organization, or doing pet therapy with your dog? For a list of reputable, AKC Recognized Therapy Dog Organizations, [click here](#).

Today's Encouragement

The most exciting breakthroughs of the 21st century will not occur because of technology but because of an expanding concept of what it means to be human. - John Naisbitt

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