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Headlines

Hospice Benefit Policy Manual updates related to the addition of Marriage and Family Therapists or Mental Health Counselors to the Hospice Interdisciplinary Team

CMS; 1/22/24

[Change Request 13437 \(PDF\)](#) purpose is to manualize changes to the hospice interdisciplinary group (IDG) to include Marriage and Family Therapists (MFTs) or Mental Health Counselors (MHCs).

Publisher's note: Also see [CMS Hospice Open Door Forum \(November 29, 2023\) Q&A](#).

46% of C-Suite execs prioritizing cost reduction, survey says

Becker's Hospital CFO Report, by Madeline Ashley; 1/23/24

"The New Healthcare C-Suite Agenda: 2024-2025" report surveyed more than 100 C-suite executives and focused on topics like digital tools, EMR optimization, patient publication, operations, and more. ... For top strategic initiatives for executives, 57% said growing revenue, 55% said staff recruitment and retention, and 46% said reducing cost.

Healthgrades' 50 top hospitals for 2024

Becker's Hospital Review, by Mariah Taylor; 1/23/24

Healthgrades has recognized 250 hospitals nationwide for exceptional care via its "America's Best Hospitals" awards, released Jan. 23. Three lists feature

America's 50, 100 and 250 best hospitals, which represent the top 1 percent, 2 percent and 5 percent of hospitals in the nation, respectively.



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Palliative telecare team aids QOL, health status for chronic conditions

HealthDay News, by Lori Solomon; 1/23/24

Use of a nurse and social worker palliative telecare team is associated with clinically meaningful improvements in quality of life at six months for adults with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), heart failure, or interstitial lung disease (ILD) versus usual care, according to a study published in the Jan. 16 issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*.

Hospice Provider News

Coastal Hospice & Palliative Care hit with data breach of patient information

The Daily Record (MD); 1/23/24

Salisbury-based Coastal Hospice & Palliative Care on Tuesday reported a data security incident that involved some of its patient data including certain personal and protected health information. Coastal Hospice has sent notification of this incident to potentially affected individuals and provided resources to assist them.

Hospice providers must be better regulated

Scientific American, 2/1/24 (updated from last week's publication)

Too many hospice providers in the U.S. are run by private equity and for-profit corporations. A lack of regulation allows them to provide abysmal end-of-life care.



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PeaceHealth hospice and homecare nurses plan strike as negotiations hit standstill

Eugene Register-Guard, by Miranda Cyr; 1/23/24

PeaceHealth Sacred Heart Home Care Services nurses have declared their intent to strike after continued standstill in negotiations. The Eugene/Springfield home care and hospice nurses intend to launch a two-week strike starting at 7 a.m. on Feb. 1 ... These nurses do home visits, serving some of the most vulnerable patients in Lane County, many of whom are in the final days, weeks or months of their lives, in the comfort of their own homes.

Publisher's note: Access to article requires a subscription.

Tournament raises over \$10k for hospice

Albert Lea Tribune; 1/24/24

The 21st annual Mayo Hospice Tournament took place Dec. 8-10 at the Albert Lea Moose Lodge, ... [raising] \$10,762. ... The tournament has now raised over \$115,000.

Clinical News

Cancer report highlights LGBTQ+ issues

Philadelphia Gay News, by Gary L. Day; 1/23/24

Each year, the American Cancer Society (ACS) puts out an annual report with extensive up-to-date information on cancer, its incidence, treatment and other pertinent facts. Cancer Facts & Figures 2024 includes something new: a separate special section on cancer in the LGBTQ+ community.



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Soul doctors: How Minnesota chaplains' roles are changing

Minnesota Public Radio News, by Angela Davis and Maja Beckstrom; 1/24/24

Chaplains often show up on the worst days of people's lives. They arrive in a hospital room after a distressing diagnosis. They accompany police to help inform someone of a loved one's death. One in four Americans have been visited by a chaplain, usually at a hospital or hospice, ... But the role of spiritual caregiver is evolving as society becomes both less religious and more religiously diverse.

Editor's Note: [Click here for the Board of Chaplaincy Certification, Inc., Palliative Care & Hospice Certification](#)

Craft a memorial pillow for your loved one at this DeKalb workshop

Shaw Local News Network; 1/22/24

The DeKalb Public Library will partner with Northern Illinois Hospice to host a workshop for patrons to create pillows out of a loved one's shirt. ... Attendees can create up to two pillows out of a T-shirt or button-down shirt. Sewers will be available to assist. Participants should not bring denim, jackets or thick fabrics. Bereavement information and support will be provided.

Editor's Note: Explore this lovely, meaningful activity for your hospice's bereavement care, volunteer services, and community outreach.

Regulatory News

Historic 21.3 million people choose ACA Marketplace coverage

CMS.gov Press Release; 1/24/24

Marketplace enrollment climbs nearly 5 million higher than previous year. ... Total plan selections include more than five million people — about a fourth — who are new to the Marketplaces and 16 million people who renewed their coverage. Notably, open enrollment continues in four states and Washington, D.C., through January 31.

Public Policy News

New York State Bar Association endorses medical aid in dying bill

Brooklyn Daily Eagle, by Robert Abruzzese; 1/24/24

The New York State Bar Association's House of Delegates, the association's governing body, has officially endorsed the Medical Aid in Dying bill, the group announced Monday. ... "The Task Force on Medical Aid in Dying has worked tirelessly on this issues and produced recommendations that safeguard our most vulnerable populations," said NYSBA President Richard Lewis. "Support for medical aid in dying offers both dignity and compassion for those grappling with what can be a very difficult time in their lives."

Post-Acute Care News

Health system is closing two Wisconsin hospitals

Chief Healthcare Executive, by Ron Southwick; 1/24/24

The Hospital Sisters Health System said this week that it will close HSHS Sacred Heart Hospital in Eau Claire and HSHS St. Joseph's Hospital in Chippewa Falls over the next three months.

New program to provide emergency funding to rural hospitals

Capitol Beat, by Dave Williams; 1/17/24

A nonprofit health-care organization announced plans ... to help financially struggling rural hospitals in Georgia in danger of closing. Ohio-based CareSource will contribute \$5 million in emergency funding to hospitals and hospital-owned nursing homes in rural communities suffering critical cash deficits. Working in partnership with Cumming-based HomeTown Health, which represents rural hospitals across Georgia, the CareSource Rural Access Advancement Program will provide bridge loans to be repaid and reinvested into the program once the

recipient has stabilized. Since 2010, nine rural hospitals have closed in Georgia, third-most in the nation.

Technology / Innovations News

'Sky is the limit' for health information networks' SNF insights

McKnights Senior Living, by Kimberly Marselas; 1/24/24

An expanding health information exchange connecting 71 hospitals and almost 600 post-acute providers in New Jersey is exceeding expectations and providing staffing insights not necessarily envisioned when state officials launched a patient discharge initiative.

General News

Cleveland Clinic confiscated 30K weapons last year

Becker's Hospital Review, by Alexis Kayse; 1/24/24

In 2023, Cleveland Clinic saw a record 14 million patients — and took 30,000 weapons from those patients and their visitors. Tomislav Mihaljevic, MD, president, CEO and Morton L. Mandel CEO Chair of Cleveland Clinic, delivered the statistic during the system's annual "State of the Clinic" address Jan. 24. ... Cleveland Clinic, which employs 81,000 people across 300 global locations, was designed to be an "optimal work environment," Dr. Mihaljevic said: engaging, rewarding, inclusive and safe. But workers' safety was threatened thousands of times last year, with caregivers reporting 3,800 incidents of physical and verbal violence.

Jon Franklin, two-time Pulitzer winner as science journalist, dies at 82

The Washington Post, by Brian Murphy; 1/23/24

Jon Franklin, a journalist and author who intertwined detail-driven reporting and a storyteller's flair for narrative during a career highlighted by two Pulitzer Prizes for medical-based stories at the Baltimore Evening Sun, died Jan. 21 in Annapolis, MD. He was 82. Mr. Franklin had been in a hospice care since Jan. 8 ...

Editor's Note: Another public obituary identifies Hospice of the Chesapeake as having provided Jon's hospice care.

Publisher's note: Access to article requires a subscription.

A psychologist offers advice on 'being there' for aging parents

Forbes, by Mark Travers; 1/22/24

As our parents age, we find ourselves on a challenging emotional journey, one that often remains unspoken but deeply felt. It's the journey of anticipatory grief, a complex mix of emotions and thoughts that arise as we witness our parents becoming older, weaker and more frail. This concept, often overshadowed by post-loss grief, is equally devastating.

'A really low blow': Michigan environmentalists say town banned all cemeteries to stop them from opening 'green burial ground'

Law & Crime, by Elura Nanos; 1/23/24

A Michigan couple is asking a state court to strike down a local ordinance banning all cemeteries that they say was put in place just to stop them from opening the environmentally friendly burial ground they had planned for over a decade.

Masonic Village Elizabethtown hosts hiring event to combat nurse shortage

Fox43 WPMT, by Cyera Williams; 1/24/24

According to the American Association of Colleges of Nursing, the U.S. is projected to experience a shortage of registered nurses (RNs) that is expected to intensify as baby boomers age and the need for health care grows. Masonic Village at Elizabethtown is combatting that shortage by hosting a nursing service hiring event ...

International News

Timing of prognostic discussions in people with advanced cancer: a systematic review

Support Care Cancer, by Sharon H Nahm, Shalini Subramaniam, Martin R Stockler, Belinda E Kiely; 1/23/24

Conclusions: Prognostic discussions with people with advanced cancer need to be individualised, and there are several key timepoints when doctors should attempt to initiate these conversations. These recommended timepoints can inform clinical trial design and communication training for doctors to help improve prognostic understanding.

Publisher's note: Australia.

Today's Encouragement

Find a group of people who challenge and inspire you, spend a lot of time with them, and they will change your life. – Amy Poehler

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