

Cordt Kassner

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Headlines

Sunday Newsletters

Top read stories of the last week (in order) is the focus of Sunday newsletters - enjoy!

Palliative care doctor: What dying feels like

Mind Matters, by Denyse O'Leary; 2/15/24

What does dying actually feel like? Most human beings have always believed that the essence of a human being survives the death of the body though the outcome is envisioned [in a variety of ways](#). But, assuming that pain and distress are controlled, what does dying actually feel like? Can science tell us anything about that?

A year after Jimmy Carter entered hospice care, advocates hope his endurance drives awareness

ABC News, by Bill Barrow, Associated Press; 2/18/24

Since [Jimmy Carter](#) entered hospice care at his home in south Georgia one year ago, the former U.S. president has celebrated his 99th birthday, enjoyed tributes to his legacy and lost his wife of 77 years. Rosalynn Carter, who died in November, about six months after the Carter family disclosed her dementia diagnosis, lived only a few days under hospice supervision, with her frail husband at her bedside. Experts on end-of-life care say the Carters' different paths show the range of an oft-misunderstood service. Those advocates commend the Carter family for demonstrating the realities of aging, dementia and death. They express hope that the attention spurs more Americans to seek out services intended to help patients and families in the latter stages of life.

Editor's Note: How are you addressing this length of 1+ year with the patients you serve? [Click here](#) for the CMS pdf of the 6-month rule, "Face-to-Face Requirement Affecting Hospice Recertification."

Patient Focus: When should people with heart failure who were admitted to the hospital think about palliative or hospice care? An explanation of “Factors associated with mortality and hospice use among Medicare beneficiaries with heart failure who received home health services”

Journal of Cardiac Failure, by Spencer Carter, MD; Jennifer T. Thibodeau, MD, MSCS; 12/23

Hospital stays for patients with heart failure are serious events that mean that the heart may be sicker. Some people with heart failure who are in the hospital are at higher risk of dying within 6 months after their hospital stay. This study describes differing characteristics of people who might be at higher risk of death and who may benefit from palliative or hospice care to better support them.

Publisher's note: Also see [https://onlinejcf.com/article/S1071-9164\(23\)00922-3/abstract](https://onlinejcf.com/article/S1071-9164(23)00922-3/abstract).

NJ's 'medical aid-in-dying' law upheld by state Supreme Court

Public News Service, by Roz Brown; 2/13/24

After a five-year court battle, New Jersey's [medical aid-in-dying law](#) has been affirmed by the state's Supreme Court, which rejected an attempt to overturn the statute. Signed by the governor in 2019, the law was soon challenged by a physician based on religious, personal and constitutional grounds. It allows mentally capable, terminally ill adults with six months or less to live to get a prescription they can use to end their lives.

How New Day Healthcare plans to be the face of a changing home health landscape

Home Health Care News; 2/12/24

New Day Healthcare has been one of the most active acquirers in home health care over the last year. As it grows, it's looking to set itself apart from the home health company archetype of yesteryear.



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Live discharge of hospice patients with Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias: A systematic review

American Journal of Hospice and Palliative Medicine, by Stephanie P Wladkowski, Cara L Wallace, Kathryn Coccia, Rebecca C Hyde, Leslie Hinyard, Karla T Washington; 2/24

This systematic review summarizes the growing body of evidence on live discharge among hospice patients with Alzheimer's Disease and related dementias (ADRD), a clinical subpopulation that disproportionately experiences this often burdensome care transition.

Commentary: Virginia hospice care coalition a model for other states to emulate

The Roanoke Times, by Steve Cone; 2/16/24

Here in Virginia, eight nonprofit hospice care organizations are working together with a private sector sponsor on a statewide initiative called the Virginia Hospice Awareness Campaign to publicize the benefits of hospice. This approach should serve as a model for other states to emulate. (Two of the nonprofits in the campaign serve the Roanoke and New River valleys and Alleghany Highlands: Good Samaritan and ConnectionsPlus.)

South Dakota campaign joins state and federal efforts to expand rural telehealth access

McKnights Senior Living, by Aaron Dorman; 2/12/24

The continued need for telehealth options is particularly important for older adults living in rural areas. That reality may explain, in part, why South Dakota is working on [legislation](#) that would grant \$5 million to assisted living communities and nursing facilities in the state to implement telehealth and telemedicine technology.



Looking at the challenges involving hospice care

NPR WOSU PBS, podcast by All Sides with Anna Staver; 2/19/24

Hospice care prioritizes comfort and quality of life by reducing pain and suffering for patients facing the end of life. However, physicians are voicing concerns about a prevalence of serious deficiencies in hospice care and believe it is in need of fixing.

Host: Mike Thompson, WOSU chief content director of radio

Guests: Dr. Ira Byock, palliative care physician and advocate; Dr. Jennifer Hirsh, hospice & palliative medicine specialist, Mt. Carmel

Editor's Note: Originally aired 7/24/23; reposted 2/19/24

Death and redemption in an American prison

KFF Health News / NPR, by Markian Hawryluk; 2/19/24

Publisher's note: This is a "must read" article about Steven Garner, including circumstances regarding how he was sentenced to life without parole at the Louisiana State Penitentiary in Angola, his 26-year service in their hospice program, his release two years ago, and his hospice work since.

Notable mentions: Warden Burl Cain; Jamey Boudreaux, Louisiana ~ Mississippi Hospice & Palliative Care Organization; Cordt Kassner, Hospice Analytics; Kim Huffington, Sangre de Cristo Community Care.

Today's Encouragement

One of the hardest things in life is having words in your heart that you can't utter. — James Earl Jones



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