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From: Hospice & Palliative Care Today Newsletter
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Sent: Thursday, March 7, 2024 4:00 AM
To: Cordt Kassner
Subject: Your Hospice & Palliative Care Today Newsletter for 03/07/24

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**HOSPICE &
PALLIATIVE CARE
TODAY**

March 7th, 2024

TCN Talks (podcast): Top new stories of the month February 2024

*TCN Talks Podcast, with Chris Comeaux, Mark Cohen, and Cordt Kassner; 3/6/24
Publisher's note: A summary of Hospice & Palliative Care Today's top news stories in January.*

Contents

- [1. Hospices welcome VBID's demise, but questions remain](#)
- [2. Why home care leaders are now banking on 'Caregiver-First' cultures](#)
- [3. Hospice golf tourney raises more than \\$130,000](#)
- [4. Charity Spotlight: Ryan House and Executive Director Tracy Leonard-Warner](#)
- [5. Johns Hopkins study reveals medical marijuana lowers pain, hospital visits](#)
- [6. Healthcare access dimensions and racial disparities in end-of-life care quality among ovarian cancer patients](#)
- [7. Why I chose palliative care: A nurse's personal journey to providing comfort care](#)

8. [Death doulas: Helping people at the end of their life](#)
9. [CMS offers relief to providers affected by Change Healthcare outage](#)
10. [MA's cost-management tools may be hurting home healthcare quality, outcomes](#)
11. [Wound coding changes bring compliance, legal questions](#)
12. [Rising suicide risk among seniors due to loneliness, mobility, financial insecurity, study finds](#)
13. [Roughly 1,000 nursing home workers hit the picket lines across Twin Cities](#)
14. [4 hospital closures in 2024](#)
15. [Understanding the role algorithms play in our lives and navigating palliative care](#)
16. [HHS intervenes in Change Healthcare hack](#)
17. ['World's most ethical companies' list includes health systems](#)
18. [Judge: Iowa hospice program told worker to 'let people die'](#)
19. [Apparently healthy, but diagnosed with Alzheimer's?](#)
20. [WellSky ® and Millennium Physician Group set new standard for healthcare delivery with innovative new partnership](#)
21. [UChicago Medicine nurses plan 1-day strike](#)
22. [Board Director Role: A discreet leadership role gets tougher](#)
23. [Today's Encouragement: Being blind ...](#)

Hospice Provider News

Hospices welcome VBID's demise, but questions remain

Hospice News, by Jim Parker; 3/5/24

Citing "operational challenges," the U.S. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) [announced](#) [Monday] that it would bring to a close the hospice component of the value-based insurance design (VBID) demonstration, effective Dec. 31. ... Hospice News spoke with leaders of hospice organizations, industry groups and other stakeholders to gauge providers' perceptions of the CMS decision.

Why home care leaders are now banking on 'Caregiver-First' cultures

Home Health Care News, by Patrick Filbin; 3/4/24

Over the last several years, a notable trend is emerging in home care: Top-tier companies are shifting their focus from prioritizing customers to prioritizing caregivers. This strategic move reflects a growing recognition of the critical role caregivers play, and aims to address persistent caregiver shortages.

Hospice golf tourney raises more than \$130,000

Ocala Gazette, by Bruce Ackerman; originally posted 1/30/24, redistributed 3/5/24

The event raised \$131,365 through the 184 participating golfers and a silent auction. At the culmination of the event, a giant check for that amount was presented to Hospice of Marion County CEO Rick Bourne by Gary and Dawn Crawford, co-owners of Pinnacle Retirement Advisors. ... The event was sponsored by Pinnacle Retirement Advisors to benefit the Nancy Renyhart Dementia Education Program.



Accelerate Results
Accelerate Growth
Accelerate Learning

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Charity Spotlight: Ryan House and Executive Director Tracy Leonard-Warner

Fiesta Bowl - Charity Stories, by Theresa Palmquist; 3/5/24

In its latest grant cycle, Fiesta Bowl Charities granted \$25,000 to the Sponsor-A-Stay fund at Ryan House, a nonprofit pediatric-focused facility that provides respite, palliative and end-of-life care for patients with life-limiting and life-threatening diagnoses. ... It is only one of three facilities like its kind in the United States and is modeled after Helen-House in the United Kingdom, which has more than 50 pediatric respite, palliative and hospice care houses.

Clinical News

Johns Hopkins study reveals medical marijuana lowers pain, hospital visits

BNN, by Wojciech Zylm; 3/5/24

Recent research highlights significant improvements in well-being for cannabis users, offering hope for those with chronic illnesses. The study showcases a potential shift in the perception and utilization of medical cannabis in healthcare.

Healthcare access dimensions and racial disparities in end-of-life care quality among ovarian cancer patients

Cancer Research Communications; by Shama Karanth, Oyomoare L. Osazuwa-Peters;

Lauren E. Wilson, Rebecca A. Previs, Fariha Rahman, Bin Huang, Maria Pisu, Margaret Liang, Kevin C. Ward, Maria J. Schymura, Andrew Berchuck, and Tomi F. Akinyemiju; 3/5/24

This study investigated the association between healthcare access (HCA) dimensions and racial disparities in end-of-life (EOL) care quality among Non-Hispanic Black (NHB), Non-Hispanic White (NHW), and Hispanic patients with ovarian cancer (OC).



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Why I chose palliative care: A nurse's personal journey to providing comfort care

Anschutz, by Lauren Carter; 3/5/24

My interest in palliative care started with my grandma's use of hospice services seventeen years ago. She suffered with multiple sclerosis for over forty years. ... What may have been a terrible experience for most people was actually made very positive for me. ... Unfortunately, I had another opportunity fifteen years later, to once again be there for my family in this way. ... It takes empathy and specialized training to assist in end-of-life care. It may be something that we are called to. I care deeply about these patients and their families. I am able to have difficult conversations when necessary. I try to create space for family members to talk about who the person in the hospital bed is, when that person can no longer talk for themselves. ...

Death doulas: Helping people at the end of their life

The Conversation, by Joel Abrams; 3/5/24

The role of death doulas is still relatively new, so the terminology and definitions of what they are based on what they do are in flux. They are sometimes referred to as an end-of-life doula, soul midwife, death coach, dying guide, death midwife and palliative care doula. ... In addition to their doula training, doulas bring their own professional and personal experience to the role. International research on death doulas has noted that many who have become death doulas have a

background in professional healthcare, social care or education, and may already have some experience with death.

Regulatory News

CMS offers relief to providers affected by Change Healthcare outage

Modern Healthcare, by Lauren Berryman; 3/5/24

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services has rolled out efforts to help providers navigate the Change Healthcare outage disrupting healthcare operations nationwide, the Health and Human Services Department announced Tuesday.

Editor's Note: Access to the full article requires a subscription



MA's cost-management tools may be hurting home healthcare quality, outcomes

McKnights Long-Term Care News, by Adam Healy; 3/5/24

Medicare Advantage's use of cost-reducing tools such as copays, prior authorizations and restricted provider networks may be preventing home healthcare providers from delivering higher-quality care, according to one home healthcare leader.

Wound coding changes bring compliance, legal questions

McKnights Long-Term Care News, by Josh Henreckson; 3/5/24

Changes to end-of-life wound classification in a recent Minimum Data Set update should be a positive for long-term care, but regulatory and legal ambiguity still surrounded the new coding procedures at press time.

Post-Acute Care News

Rising suicide risk among seniors due to loneliness, mobility, financial insecurity, study finds

McKnights Home Care, by Adam Healy; 3/5/24

As the number of adults over 65 continues to grow, suicide rates among older adults have also been rising, according to [data](#) from the National Center for Health Statistics. Between 2008 and 2017, the share of suicide-related emergency department visits among adults 65 years and older < a

target="_blank" href="https://www.hospicepalliativecaretoday.com/redirect?u=1737&s=email&b=2300&n=20240307&r=https://hcup-us.ahrq.gov/reports/statbriefs/sb263-Suicide-ED-Visits-2008-2017.pdf" rel="noreferrer noopener" target="_blank">more than doubled. These older adults face age-related stressors that can negatively affect mental health, such as declining physical health, reduced mental sharpness, or the loss of friends or loved ones, which can heighten the risk of suicide.



Roughly 1,000 nursing home workers hit the picket lines across Twin Cities

CBS News WCCO TV, by Beret Leone; 3/5/24

Nearly 1,000 nursing home workers are away from their residents and marching on a picket line. It's one of the biggest strikes the industry has seen in our state. ... The workers striking come from 12 different facilities across the Twin Cities. It's not just nurses ... but maintenance, laundry and kitchen staff too. All of them are represented by SEIU Healthcare MN and IA and UFCW 663.

4 hospital closures in 2024

Becker's Hospital CFO Report, by Madeline Ashley; 3/5/24

Many hospitals and emergency departments have been forced to close in 2024 due to circumstances like high costs and shifts in care needs. Becker's has

reported on four hospital and emergency department closures in 2024.
Editor's Note: Locations include Michigan, Wisconsin, Texas, and Ohio. Click on this article's link for details.

Technology / Innovations News

Understanding the role algorithms play in our lives and navigating palliative care

Listen - Life Matters, by Hilary Harper, presenter podcast; 3/4/24

Every day, we interact with dozens of algorithms as we go about our lives, but many of us don't understand how they work. How do we get the the best out of these tools while keeping the potential dangers in check?

Editor's Note: While this podcast is from Australia, its information about algorithms and Artificial Intelligence (AI) has insights for our USA palliative care.

HHS intervenes in Change Healthcare hack

Becker's Health IT, by Giles Bruce; 3/5/24

HHS [said](#) March 5 it would help accelerate payments to hospitals affected by the Change Healthcare cyberattack and institute other workarounds for providers. The agency said hospitals facing cash-flow issues from the IT outage can submit accelerated payment requests, like those issued during the pandemic, to their Medicare Administrative Contractors for "individual consideration." HHS said more details would be coming from the contractors later this week.

Ethics

'World's most ethical companies' list includes health systems

Becker's Hospital Review, by Kelly Gooch; 3/4/24

Ethisphere Institute, a for-profit company that defines and measures corporate ethical standards, has released its 2024 list of the "world's most ethical companies," which includes health systems and other healthcare companies. This year's list recognizes 136 organizations "for their unwavering commitment to business integrity." Honorees span 20 countries and 44 industries, and include 15 first-time honorees and six organizations that have been on the list since its inception 18 years ago. [Click on the title's link for the] healthcare companies that made the 2024 list, along with their headquarters. ...

Judge: Iowa hospice program told worker to 'let people die'

Iowa Capital Dispatch, by Clark Kauffman; 3/5/24

An Iowa judge has awarded jobless benefits to a hospice worker who allegedly quit after being told to let patients die rather than provide them with services.

General News

Apparently healthy, but diagnosed with Alzheimer's?

The New York Times, by Paula Span; 3/4/24

New criteria could lead to a dementia diagnosis on the basis of a simple blood test, even in the absence of obvious symptoms.

WellSky® and Millennium Physician Group set new standard for healthcare delivery with innovative new partnership

Benzinga, by Business Wire; 3/5/24

WellSky, a leading health and community care technology company, and Millennium Physician Group, a value-based physician group with more than 800 healthcare providers across the Southeast, today announced a new multi-year partnership to drive improved outcomes for Millennium patients. ... WellSky serves more than 20,000 client sites — including the largest hospital systems, blood banks, cell therapy labs, home health and hospice franchises, post-acute providers, government agencies, and human services organizations.

UChicago Medicine nurses plan 1-day strike

Becker's Hospital Review, by Kelly Gooch; 3/5/24

Members of the National Nurses Organizing Committee, an affiliate of National Nurses United, are [set](#) to hold a one-day strike March 14 at UChicago Medicine. The union represents 2,800 nurses at UChicago Medicine, according to a union news release. UChicago Medicine, which includes the flagship 811-bed University of Chicago Medical Center, has roughly 13,000 employees total.

Editor's Note: The University of Chicago Medical Center provides palliative and hospice care services. At the time of this publication, we do not know if or how these services will be impacted.

Other News

Board Director Role: A discreet leadership role gets tougher

Becker's Hospital Review, by Molly Gamble; 3/5/24

A position at the top of organizations, including health systems, is "probably more complex than ever" but with limited visibility. The board director role is increasingly demanding, according to Frithjof Lund, the global leader of McKinsey's Board Services practice. "New topics pile onto the board agenda almost by the day," Mr. Lund said. "We've also seen a massive increase in the expectations of the board to engage on strategy, investments and M&A, performance management, risk, talent, and the organization."

Today's Encouragement

The only thing worse than being blind is having sight but no vision. - Helen Keller

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