

Cordt Kassner

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<subscriptions@hospicepalliativecaretoday.com>
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**HOSPICE &
PALLIATIVE CARE
TODAY**

March 8th, 2024

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Headlines

[House-passed funding bill makes Medicare hospice benefit a 'piggybank,' provider groups argue](#)

McKnights Home Care, by Adam Healy; 3/7/24

To keep the government open in fiscal year 2024, hospice partially may be bankrolling it — and providers are not pleased about this prospect. The House late Wednesday passed a newly released appropriations bill that includes an extension of the Improving Medicare Post-Acute Care Transformation Act of 2014 (IMPACT Act). This act which would effectively allow the Medicare hospice benefit to act as a pay-for for nonhospice legislative priorities.

Hospice Provider News

[50 most influential clinical executives: Nominate a clinical leader!](#)

Modern Healthcare; email 3/6/24

Eligibility: Nominees must carry an executive title of senior vice president or higher. Nominees must be or have previously been a licensed clinician working within the healthcare industry.

Judging Criteria: Nominations will be reviewed and judged based on the following criteria:

- Actions the nominee took in the past year to help the organization achieve or exceed financial, operational and clinical goals, and the measurable results that were recorded
- Examples of how the nominee has improved community health, address sector-wide challenges and otherwise influenced the healthcare industry at the local or national level

End-of-life care stakeholders celebrate end of hospice VBID carve-in

McKnights Home Care, by Adam Healy; 3/6/24

Various hospice associations on Tuesday cheered the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' recent decision to abandon the Hospice Benefit Component of the Value-Based Insurance Design (VBID) model. ... Providers have long held that the uniqueness of hospice care, a multidisciplinary, person-centered care model, would make it a poor fit for MA.



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Home health leaders on leaders: 4 C-suite execs that are driving the industry forward

Home Health Care News, by Joyce Famakinway; 3/6/24

The most compelling and innovative leaders in home health care don't just inspire the people who work at their companies, they also catch the attention of fellow industry leaders. ... Home Health Care News recently caught up with four C-suite executives to find out which leaders they believe are driving home-based care forward and why. ...

- Trent Smith, ... operating multiple hospice and home health sites, Accentra Health ...
- Shelly Smith, ... home-based care, BrightStar Care ...
- RJ Gagnon, ... Andrscoggin Home Healthcare & Hospice ...
- Beau Sorenson, ... First Choice Home Health & Hospice ...

Lower reimbursement a leading cause for poor margins, CFOs say

Becker's Hospital CFO Report, by Madeline Ashley; 3/6/24

A recent [report](#) from the Healthcare Financial Management Association and Eliciting Insights, a healthcare strategy and marketing research company, found that 84% of health systems have cited lower payer reimbursements as a leading cause for low operating margins. [Click on the title's link for six more findings from the report.]

Health systems invest in productivity

Becker's Hospital Review, by Laura Dyrda; 3/6/24

Productivity is a buzzword for most workplaces today, and healthcare is no different. U.S. productivity measures showed big increases for the first time in years, according to a report in *The New York Times*, as organizations leverage artificial intelligence and aim to do more with less. For [health systems], many experiencing staffing shortages and tight margins, developing a culture of increased productivity is imperative.



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UNE medical school students donate \$2,000 to local hospice center

Portland Press Herald; 3/4/24

Students at the University of New England's College of Osteopathic Medicine (COM) have donated \$2,000 to the Gosnell Memorial Hospice House in Scarborough, building upon a successful partnership between the two organizations that has lasted nearly 10 years. The money was raised during a fundraising dinner held by the UNE COM American Geriatrics Society/Gerontological Society of America Student Chapter for Geriatrics and Palliative Care last November. The event, a "murder-mystery" dinner, featured several students and faculty performing a script written by chapter members. Over 160 people attended the dinner.

Tour a room at Quiet Oaks Hospice House video

WJON News, St. Cloud, MN; 3/6/24

Even though Quiet Oaks Hospice House has been in our community for over 15 years now, many of us have never actually visited the home. They have eight rooms with all suites similar in size and layout. Executive Director Linda Allen says they have a large-sized hospital bed so loved ones can sleep together. Other room amenities include a TV, radio, and wifi. ... The rooms are equipped with a call button for help and have a camera monitoring system.

Editor's Note: This simple, warm, practical video can help allay fears of hospice patients, caregivers, and family members. This type of visual information can be especially supportive to long distance family members who might be grappling with the news of moving their loved one to a hospice facility.

Palliative Care Provider News

The question of palliative care sustainability

Palliative Care News, by Holly Vossel; 3/5/24

A wide variety of palliative care services have cropped up nationwide in recent years, but not all have remained viable. The forces driving some community-based palliative programs to shutter are two-pronged, related to financial and operational sustainability, according to Renee McInnes, CEO of NVNA & Hospice. Reimbursement and staffing challenges are the most significant factors.



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Clinical News

Transforming tragedy into triumph: Lynne Hughes creates grief camp, helping 24,000 children

BNN, by Emmanuel Abara Benson; 3/6/24

Lynne Hughes' journey from personal tragedy to establishing Comfort Zone Camp (CZC) spotlights the transformative power of empathy and support. Losing both parents by age 12, Hughes navigated her grief with little support, a struggle that later fueled her mission to ensure no child felt as isolated in their sorrow as she did. Today, CZC stands as a beacon of hope, having supported over 24,000 grieving children across the United States.

Last Writers craft legacies, embrace stories in hospice care

The Daily Texan, by Sabrina Ye; 3/6/24

At local hospice homes, a passionate group of volunteers task themselves with writing memoirs that celebrate the richness of patients' experiences. This heartfelt service they provide not only preserves legacies but highlights the timeless beauty of storytelling. UT Last Writers volunteer to converse with hospice patients and capture their life stories.

Research News

Digital 'communication bridge' for seniors with aphasia is \$13M closer to reality

McKnights Senior Living; by Aaron Dorman; 3/5/24

An upcoming research program will examine the potential for telehealth and wearable sensors to address a specific and nasty form of aphasia. The University of Chicago was awarded \$13.2 million by the National Institutes of Health to study the disease, as part of its five-year Communication Bridge Research Program. The university recently announced the grant windfall and has begun reaching out to potential participants for a clinical trial.



Post-Acute Care News

Bringing the hospital home

Penn Medicine News, by Mary Beth Budnyk; 3/5/24

Since his 2020 diagnosis with multiple sclerosis, Steve Lengle has had good and bad days. The bad days are becoming more frequent as his condition continues to decline, causing debilitating pain, weakness, and fatigue, and affecting everything from his memory to his ability to walk. The Lengles found the help they needed through Penn Medicine Advanced Home Health (PMAHH), a new program that aims to prevent hospitalizations by providing a higher level of in-home care to patients who are experiencing an acute medical concern.

Editor's Note: This article describes an example of the fairly new Acute Hospital Care At Home program, launched by CMS in November 2020.

The U.S. health system should focus on pre-acute care, not post-acute

Forbes, by Howard Gleckman; 3/5/24

The U.S. health system focuses an enormous amount of money and attention on post-acute care—the medical treatment patients receive after they have been discharged from a hospital. But it would more cost-effective, and far better for patients, to refocus on what you might call pre-acute care: what the U.S. can do to prevent those hospitalizations in the first place.

Technology / Innovations News

Why healthcare cyberattacks last so long

Becker's Health IT, by Giles Bruce; 3/7/24

The cyberattack on Change Healthcare that has caused disruptions across a wide swath of the industry has entered its third week. But why do these IT outages last so long?

General News

Workforce trends CFOs must know

Becker's Hospital CFO Report, by Alan Condon; 3/6/24

The labor market pendulum is beginning to swing back in the favor of employers, but staffing shortages and controlling workforce costs are **expected** to continue

to be a challenge for finance leaders for the foreseeable future. ... Here are eight trending workforce terms leaders should know in 2024, according to [cfo.com](https://www.cfo.com):

1. Resenteeism
2. Rage Applying
3. Acting Your Wage
4. Lazy Girl Jobs
5. Career Cushioning
6. Boreout
7. Bare Minimum Mondays
8. QuitTok

UnitedHealthcare, Humana, Aetna continue to outgain peers in Medicare Advantage

Home Health Care News, by Andrew Donlan; 3/6/24

In 2023, Medicare Advantage (MA) plan members represented more than half of all Medicare beneficiaries for the first time. In 2024, while penetration continues, there are other trends within MA that home-based care providers should be paying attention to. ... A few of the top companies continue to gain market share. Specifically, UnitedHealth Group (NYSE: UNH), Humana Inc. (NYSE: HUM) and CVS Health (NYSE: CVS) – through Aetna – continue to outpace competitors.

States eye (and deny) 4-day workweek

Becker's Hospital Review, by Alexis Kayser; 3/4/24

The shortened workweek appeals to most Americans. A July survey found that 81% of the full-time U.S. workforce supports a four-day schedule, and 89% would sacrifice something else for that extra day off: working longer hours on "on-days," taking a pay cut or even switching industries. But the idea is less likely to win executives' favor. ... Multiple states have introduced their own legislation to support the four-day workweek, to varying levels of success.

Lubbock salon owners deliver hope with hospice manicure for cancer fighter Norma Hernandez

BNN, by Shivani Chauhan; 3/4/24

In an inspiring act of kindness, John Dawkins and his wife, owners of Absolute Nails in Lubbock, Texas, visited Norma Hernandez in the hospital to offer her a manicure and pedicure. Battling cancer and facing uncertain days ahead,

Norma's simple wish was to have her nails done, a request that was turned down by other salons until Debbie, a close friend of Norma's, reached out to the Dawkins. Moved by the story, they decided to fulfill Norma's wish, bringing not just nail polish but also much-needed joy and comfort to her hospital room.

Mother and daughter brave Sahara trek in memory of beloved Grace for hospice fundraiser

BNN, by Wojciech Zyim; 3/7/24

Rebecca Gaskell and her daughter, Imogen, from Chalfont St Peter, are embarking on a moving journey across the Sahara Desert this March to honor the memory of their daughter and sister, Grace, while raising funds for Helen & Douglas House, the hospice that provided care for Grace during her battle with a brain tumor. Diagnosed at just 12, Grace's brave fight ended two years later, leaving her family seeking ways to give back to the hospice that offered them comfort in their darkest times.

Editor's Note: The Helen & Douglas House for terminally ill children is located at Oxford, United Kingdom.

Other News

Other Business Headlines of Interest, updated 3/7/24 per [nasdaq.com](https://www.nasdaq.com)

- [Adus HomeCare \(ADUS: \\$100.00\)](#)
- [Amedisys \(AMED: \\$93.15\)](#)

- [BrightSpring Health \(BTSG: \\$9.07\)](#)
- [Encompass \(EHC: \\$77.62\)](#)
- [Enhabit \(EHAB: \\$9.63\)](#)
- [Ensign Group \(ENSG: \\$124.89\)](#)
- [HCA Healthcare \(HCA: \\$325.23\)](#)
- [Humana \(HUM: \\$340.02\)](#)
- [Pennant Group \(PNTG: \\$18.58\)](#)

- [Vitas / Chemed Corp \(CHE: \\$647.00\)](#)

Today's Encouragement

Here comes the sun. And I say, it's all right. - The Beatles

Editor's Note: Here's to Daylight Saving Time's extra hours of sunshine, starting Sunday, March 10th!

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