

Cordt Kassner

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March 24th, 2024

Sunday newsletters focus on headlines and top read stories of the last week (in order) - enjoy!

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Headlines

MedPAC releases March 2024 report on Medicare payment policy

CMS MedPAC; 3/15/24

Washington, DC, March 15, 2024—Today, the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission (MedPAC) releases its March 2024 Report to the Congress: Medicare Payment Policy. The report presents MedPAC's recommendations for updating provider payment rates in traditional fee-for-service (FFS) Medicare for 2025 and for providing additional resources to acute care hospitals and clinicians who furnish care to Medicare beneficiaries with low incomes. ... MedPAC recommends ... eliminating the payment update for hospice providers; and payment reductions for three post-acute care sectors (skilled nursing facilities, home health agencies, and inpatient rehabilitation facilities).

Editor's Note: Click here to download this report's "Chapter 9: Hospice Services"

Hearing with Health and Human Services Secretary Becerra

House Ways and Means Committee

Publisher's note: CA Representatives Steel (@ 4:01) and Van Duyne (@ 4:14) ask pointed questions of Secretary Becerra regarding hospice fraud, particularly focused on Southern California. Thanks to Sheila Clark, [California Hospice & Palliative Care Association](#), for sharing this link. Also, yesterday (3/20/24) Judi Lund Person, [Lund Person & Associates Hospice Consulting](#), presented on this specific topic at the [Nebraska Hospice & Palliative Care Association Annual Conference](#).

CAHPS Hospice Survey - Quality Assurance Guidelines V10.0: Technical Corrections and Clarifications, March 2024

HospiceCahpsSurvey.org; 3/20/24

Subsequent to the release of the CAHPS Hospice Survey Quality Assurance Guidelines V10.0 (QAG V10.0), it has been determined that there is a specific content item that requires correction, addition and/or further clarification. The protocol listed in this document replace the previous release of the content in

the CAHPS Hospice Survey Quality Assurance Guidelines V10.0. The items are identified [in the pdf available at the title's link].



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Student-run Arizona non-profit uses origami to connect with hospital [and hospice] patients

The State Press, by Pippa Fung; 3/19/24

The Wishing Crane Project, founded by Arizona student Charles Zhang, serves hospice and hospital patients through art. In the story of Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes, a young girl tried to fold 1,000 paper cranes in the hopes that it would help her push through a terminal illness. Years later, students across Arizona and at ASU are folding their own cranes [and writing hopeful messages] to support others through their difficult journeys.

Editor's Note: To Hospice Volunteer Directors/Managers, do you receive requests from high school students/groups requesting community service hours? [Click here for The Wishing Crane Project.](#)

Hospice group pushes for clarity in N.Y. state budget as some warm to for-profit care

Spectrum News 1; by Susan Arbetter; 3/19/24

New York state has the lowest utilization of hospice in the country, which can be attributed to several factors, including low health literacy rates. But the state's recent progress in support of end-of-life care may be threatened by something even more insidious: corporate greed. To investigate that issue nationally, a joint request for information was issued by the federal Department of Health and Human Services and the Federal Trade Commission into private equity-backed health care and its impact on quality. Yet despite dire warnings, New York state is slowly opening the door to for-profit, private equity-backed hospice care.

Home-focused PACE model continues to gain traction across US

Home Health Care News, by Joyce Famakinwa; 3/19/24

A Georgia House Bill that would create a Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) was passed by the state senate earlier this month. House Bill 1078 passed in a 49 to 1 senate vote.

Specifically, the bill creates a new adult day center licensure exclusion in order to authorize the Department of Community Health to establish and implement PACE in Georgia as part of the state's medical assistance program. The Department of Community Health would manage the program.



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How the analytics of care can balance workforce capacity

MedCity News, by Derek Streat; 3/19/24

U.S. healthcare is experiencing a supply and demand crisis as it races to keep pace with an aging population amidst a workforce shortage and mounting financial pressures. And the situation appears unlikely to improve anytime soon. In fact, recent projections anticipate a shortfall of 139,000 physicians in the next decade, according to the Association of American Medical Colleges. One limiting factor preventing the efficient management of workforce resources is a lack of data interoperability. ...

Responding to Soul Injury: Tools for hope and healing

Journal of Hospice & Palliative Nursing; by Deborah Grassman, Abi Katz, Luann Conforti-Brown, Josephine F Wilson, Angie Snyder; 3/13/24

Soul Injury is defined as a wound that separates a person from their real self, caused by unmourned loss and hurt, unforgiven guilt and shame, and fear of helplessness or loss of control. Tools and interventions have been developed to guide people impacted by Soul Injury. This study assessed the effectiveness of 12 tools and interventions, ... The Anchor Your Heart tool was the most frequently used tool and had the most enduring utilization across time and settings.

Editor's Note: [Click here for The Anchor Your Heart Tool](#) identified in this article. Share this research and article with your clinical teams and bereavement counselors.

The identity dilemma: Navigating rebranding decisions in home health M&A

Home Health Care News, by Patrick Filbin; 3/14/24

... While some companies swiftly integrate acquired businesses into their brand and splash their logo, marketing materials and likeness on the newly acquired assets, others opt to maintain the selling company's identity. In home-based care, the decision to "rebrand or retain" takes into account a number of factors, sources told Home Health Care News. They include operational efficiency, patient/client retention, market positioning and more.



Medicaid Fraud Control Units Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report

*U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Inspector General;
3/14/2024*

Medicaid Fraud Control Units (MFCUs or Units) investigate and prosecute Medicaid provider fraud and patient abuse or neglect. [This 32 page, downloadable document includes:]

- Background
- Case Outcomes
- MCO Fraud Referrals Received by Units
- Conclusion
- Appendices
- Acknowledgments and Contact
- About the Office of Inspector General
- Endnotes

What are ageing and death from a biological point of view?

Polytechnique insights, by Alexis Gautreau and Clemence Guillermain; 3/12/24

Linking philosophy and biology may seem strange. Yet there are many subjects where the two disciplines come into play and are, in turn, essential to understanding them. Death is a perfect example. This biological reality remains an abstract concept until we experience it in our own lives. But, however abstract it may be, death is based on a biological reality.

Preventing adverse drug events in hospice care

Hospice News, by Holly Vossel; 3/15/24

Documentation errors and a fragmented health system pose the greatest risks for adverse drug events among hospices. ... Evaluating these risks involves having solid medication reconciliation processes in place — both at the time of a patient's admission and throughout their end-of life care experience, according to Mary Lynn McPherson, professor and executive program director of advanced post-graduate education in palliative care at the University of Maryland's School of Pharmacy. McPherson also serves on the board of the American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine (AAHPM).



Today's Encouragement

Have a heart that never hardens, and a temper that never tires, and a touch that never hurts. ~Charles Dickens

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