

Cordt Kassner

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<subscriptions@hospicepalliativecaretoday.com>
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Headlines

Regulatory reference links for home health care, hospice and durable medical equipment

National Association for Home Care & Hospice; per email 3/25/24

Includes reference descriptions and links to the following:

- [CMS Home Health Care Provider Home Page](#)
- [CMS OASIS Home Page](#)
- [CMS Hospice Provider Home Page](#)
- [DME Home Page](#)
- [CMS Open Door Forum: Home Health, Hospice & Durable Medical Equipment](#)
- [Home Health Care Compare](#)
- [Medlearn Matters](#)
- [Federal Register](#)
- [Manual links to Medicare's policy on coverage and billing](#)
- [Code of Federal Regulations](#)

Hospice Provider News

15 top health system workplaces, per USA Today

Becker's Hospital Review, by Giles Bruce; 3/21/24

Fifteen health systems were named top workplaces in the U.S. by *USA Today* and human resources technology company Energage. Released March 20, the Top Workplaces USA 2024 [list](#) was determined using Energage's confidential employee engagement surveys and participating company benchmarks that take into account years of workplace culture research. [Click on the title's link to view these 15 health systems]

Editor's Note: Each of these health systems has a hospice and/or palliative program. We honor your commitments and innovations to ensure "top workplace cultures" for your employees.

Partners In Care sets sights on service diversification, hospice-pharmacy partnership

Hospice News, by Jim Parker; 3/22/24

Hospice providers need to evolve with their changing patient populations and the larger health care system, according to Greg Hagfors, CEO of Partners In Care. The Oregon-based hospice, palliative care and home health provider recently celebrated the 45th anniversary of its founding, which preceded the establishment of the Medicare Hospice Benefit. ... Hospice News recently spoke with Hagfors about the ways the industry has changed since Partners In Care came on the scene — and how it is moving towards the future.



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The process of dealing with death is experiencing rebirth in a less-religious Pittsburgh

Digital Daily; by Med St-Esprit, PublicSource; 3/24/24

Tanisha Bowman, of the North Side, a palliative care social worker for Butler Health System and a "death walker," walks amongst the old graves in St. Mary's Cemetery. ... From green burial to glass orbs containing ashes, the norms of funerals and burials are broadening as religious affiliation declines. ... According to a 2021 survey by Pew Research, 3 in 10 American adults are religiously unaffiliated. Data compiled by Pew Research about the Pittsburgh metro

region found that 50% of adults in the region describe religion as “very important” and nearly 20% consider themselves not religious. Shifts in faith and worship mean families as well as businesses related to death and dying have had to alter their approaches.

Palliative Care Provider News

Researchers advocate for more home-based options for end-of-life care

McKnights Home Care, by Adam Healy; 3/25/24

As older adults increasingly prefer to receive end-of-life care in their homes, new, community-based options will be critical to help patients achieve a home death, according to a new [research review](#) published in *Palliative Care and Social Practice*. ... The researchers analyzed 28 studies conducted between 2002 and 2023 related to factors that affect patients’ abilities to achieve a home death. One persistent issue, they found, was a lack of available home palliative care services.

Clinical News

Incurable but not hopeless: How hope shapes patients’ awareness of their advanced cancer prognosis

The Conversation, by Jean Mathews and Michael Brundage; 3/24/24

Hope is defined as the expectation of achieving a future good. Patients with cancer, whether it is curable or not, prioritize cure as their highest hope. ... Previous research indicates that less than half of patients with incurable cancer are aware of their prognosis. This is often attributed to a failure of communication. ... In the context of advanced cancer, the relationship between hope and hopelessness is balanced by acceptance, which can re-direct hope to new goals beyond cure, such as hope for connection with others and enjoyment of daily pleasures.



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Accelerate Influence
Accelerate Innovation

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4 things nobody tells you about watching a loved one die of cancer

The New York Post; by Jessica Ariel Wendroff; 3/23/24

... "The surgery was successful. However, tests after the operation found cancer had been present," the Princess of Wales, 42, revealed in a bombshell videotaped statement Friday. ... While the royal insisted she is "well and getting stronger every day," other patients' real pain begins when the cancer has spread too far and chemotherapy and radiation no longer work, so doctors stop treatment. As the daughter of a Stage 4 bladder cancer patient, I've empirically learned four realities that people usually don't talk about ...

1. How angry your loved one with cancer becomes due to pain
2. How exhausting the emotional rollercoaster of cancer is for the patient-- and you
3. The confusion and lack of appetite felt by the cancer patient at the end of their life
4. How brutal and sad a cancer patient's end of life truly is

Editor's Note: This article does not address any type of palliative or hospice pain management and emotional support. Its "#4" ends with despair and hopelessness. We encourage caution and discernment with this new plethora of media coverage reaching your communities and those you serve.

Regulatory News

Improving the Quality Of Quality Metrics

Health Affairs Forefront; by Aditya Narayan, Bob Kocher, and Nirav R. Shah; 3/19/24

... The landscape of health care quality measures is dynamic, reflecting efforts to enhance patient care, safety, and outcomes. These measures are developed and reimbursed by a variety of stakeholders, including government agencies such as the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), health care organizations, and independent bodies such as the National Quality Forum and the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ). The development process involves rigorous research, stakeholder engagement, and consensus-building to ensure measures are evidence-based, applicable across different health care settings, and meaningful to patient care.

Editor's Note: Read and share this informative, big-picture article about the evolution of healthcare's quality metrics, its tools, and best practices. Your organization's entire

leadership/management team needs basic knowledge and understanding of these all-important foundations for CMS payments.

Mergers & Aquisition News

Personal health companies up for sale as costs rise

Modern Healthcare, by Diane Eastabrook; 3/26/25

Labor shortages, tighter access to capital and low reimbursements from some payers could force more healthcare providers to shed non-core operations, such as personal care and post-acute care, according to analysts... More than three-quarters of 51 active buyers of home health, hospice and personal care companies said they planned to increase acquisitions in 2024...



Post-Acute Care News

Eight nurses from St. Vincent Hospital filed suit yesterday in Worcester Superior Court against Tenet Healthcare for wrongful termination after blowing the whistle on unsafe patient care conditions

ABC WATE.com 6 / Cision PR Newswire; by Massachusetts Nurses Association; 3/22/24

Eight registered nurses represented by the Massachusetts Nurses Association at St. Vincent Hospital filed a lawsuit yesterday in Worcester Superior Court against the hospital and its owner, Dallas-based for-profit owner Tenet Healthcare alleging they were fired for exercising their legal and professional obligation to report "unsafe and illegal conduct and conditions" that jeopardized the health and dignity of the patients under their care. ... last month the nurses' claims were validated by The Joint Commission, which conducted an investigation into the nurses' complaints and found the hospital to be "non-compliant with applicable Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS) Conditions."

Midwest nursing home operator files for bankruptcy

Modern Healthcare; 3/21/24

Nursing facility operator Petersen Health Care filed for reorganization Wednesday in U.S. Bankruptcy Court in Delaware, citing between 5,000 and 10,000 creditors in its petition. The Peoria, Illinois-based company, which operates 62 nursing homes in Illinois and Missouri, listed assets between \$100 million and \$500 million in its Chapter 11 filing and between \$100 million and \$500 million in liabilities.

Last Dance: Holland Home throws prom for retirees, end-of-life patients

Fox 17 West Michigan, by Sam Landstra; 3/23/24

The timeless nature of the suit and tie was again proven on Saturday by senior promgoers at Holland Home as they danced with their longtime dates at the Grand Rapids retirement home and hospice care facility. ... Donning formal wear donated by Belding Beauties & Bro's, residents walked and wheeled down a fourth floor hallway in Holland Home, gathering in a room decorated with streamers and disco balls.



Technology / Innovations News

Digital avatars and personalized voices—How AI is helping to restore speech to patients

JAMA Network, by Samantha Anderer and Yulin Hswen, ScD, MHP; 3/22/24

This conversation is part of a series of interviews in which JAMA Editor in Chief Kirsten Bibbins-Domingo, PhD, MD, MAS, and expert guests explore issues surrounding the rapidly evolving intersection of artificial intelligence (AI) and medicine. As a specialist in advanced brain mapping methods, Edward Chang,

MD, set out to understand the mechanisms that turn our thoughts into words. Now, with the help of AI, his team at the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) Weill Institute for Neurosciences has demonstrated that the brain signals associated with speech-related sensory and motor processes could grant a new voice to patients who have lost the ability to speak.

General News

'I'm kinder and more compassionate': actor Greg Wise on men and grief

The Guardian, by Tim Jonze; 3/24/24

How the tragic death of his beloved sister, Clare, gave Greg Wise a new outlook on navigating the end of life. ... Wise is best known as an actor. He met [his wife, Emma] Thompson on the set of 1995's *Sense and Sensibility* and has notched up more than 30 years in film and TV. But these days he has carved out a niche for himself as someone who wants to change the way we think, and talk, about the end of our lives. "Not having a proper relationship with one's grief is one of the great ills of the world," is how he puts it. "[Without] witnessing and accepting our own pain, we can't have empathy – proper empathy. I don't think we can see someone else's suffering until we can see our own."

My Mother is in Hospice Care

Reformed Journal, by Doug Browser; 3/25/24

My 96-year-old mother entered hospice care a few months ago. For a while, it seemed as though she would go on forever, even though we knew that was unlikely. ... [Here's] the thing, maybe the most striking thing I've learned while sitting with my mom over these last few months. Loss of memory can sometimes be a gift. ... I realize that there can be a kind of grace in not remembering a few things. ... We don't have to go back and revisit any of it. We have this time together. ... And together we are a mom and a son, present in the moment, a moment with a surprising amount of grace. I never expected to get there.

Medicaid Health Plan will reimburse Health Equity Certification

HealthPayerIntelligence, by Kelsey Waddill; 3/22/24

Meridian Health Plan of Illinois, Inc.—a wholly-owned subsidiary of Centene Corporation that offers Medicaid coverage—announced that it will cover part of the fee hospitals must pay to undergo health equity certification through the

Joint Commission. ... The health plan's goal in offering this aid is to support providers' efforts to reduce local care disparities.

Nurse managers' 4-day workweeks: How it's going at Mount Sinai

Becker's Clinical Leadership, by Mariah Taylor; updated 3/22/24

In fall 2022, New York City-based Mount Sinai Health System launched its four-day workweek program for nurse managers. More than a year later, the program continues to improve staff engagement, satisfaction and has become an important retention strategy, Beth Oliver, DNP, RN, chief nurse executive for the system, told *Becker's*. Dr. Oliver added, experienced nurse managers play a critically vital role in supporting staff retention and engagement, championing organizational culture, and ensuring quality and safety of patient care.

Other News

Nominate an influential clinical executive today

Modern Healthcare; 3/20/24

Modern Healthcare is seeking nominations through April 15 for our annual 50 Most Influential Clinical Executives awards. The recognition program recognizes [clinical leaders](#) across the industry who are paving the way to better health through their executive responsibilities, leadership qualities, innovative ideas, community service and achievements inside and outside of their organizations. Nominations are open.

The do's and don'ts after an abrupt exec resignation

Becker's Hospital Review, by Kelly Gooch; updated 3/21/24

Turnover among hospital and health system CEOs and other executives is to be expected, and many times they involve planned retirements or advance notice of departures for new roles. However, there are also times when a leader abruptly exits their role. ... There is also no one-size-fits-all approach when it comes to preparing C-suite members for what comes next when an abrupt executive exit occurs. However, Dr. Dunkle and leaders at executive search firms provided some general do's and don'ts.

- Having a succession plan ...
- Moving into the search process ...
- Transparency amid the unknown ...

- Connections between C-suite leaders and community leaders ...

Today's Encouragement

Spring brings new growth. Weed out the bad and make room for something beautiful! - Anonymous

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