

## Cordt Kassner

---

**From:** Hospice & Palliative Care Today Newsletter  
<subscriptions@hospicepalliativecaretoday.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 1, 2024 4:00 AM  
**To:** Cordt Kassner  
**Subject:** Your Hospice & Palliative Care Today Newsletter for 04/01/24

### OUR SPONSORS

[Teleios Consulting Group](#)

[LMHPCO](#)

[Composing Life](#)

[Hospice Analytics](#)



**HOSPICE &  
PALLIATIVE CARE  
TODAY**

## April 1st, 2024

### Contents

- [1. New Federal Health IT Strategy sets sights on a healthier, more innovative, and more equitable health care experience](#)
- [2. \[UPDATED\] CMS 2025 proposed rule signals changes to quality measurement, omits program integrity actions](#)
- [3. WhidbeyHealth Hospice - \\$600,000 donation toward new building](#)
- [4. Hospice providers serving assisted living residents: Association of higher volume with lower quality](#)
- [5. Hospice of the Chesapeake's culinary event raises \\$100K for care in Calvert County](#)
- [6. A multicentre survey on the perception of palliative care among health professionals working in haematology](#)
- [7. High intensity of end-of-life care for minority patients with lung cancer](#)
- [8. Palliative care bill a win for South Dakota, Amendment F looms as possible major setback for cancer community](#)
- [9. Physician-assisted deaths reached new high in 2023](#)

10. [\\$45B worth of physician group acquisitions since 2019](#)
11. [Hospital charity care falls short of nonprofit tax breaks: Lown](#)
12. [\[Rural Hospitals\] A popular healthcare myth debunked](#)
13. [14 Joint Commission patient safety goals for post-acute facilities](#)
14. [Kaiser Permanente, Town Hall ventures to launch PACE Program 'Habitat Health'](#)
15. [Northwell backs 'emotionally intelligent' AI voice startup](#)
16. [Sutter Health Partners with Abridge on generative AI solution to improve patient, physician experience](#)
17. [Touching graduation ceremony for Fulton County student at her grandfather's bedside in hospice](#)
18. [Why a Texas system hasn't hired a travel nurse in 30 years](#)
19. [MultiCare healthcare workers in Spokane might go on strike](#)
20. [Death is inevitable. Doctors should be prepared to manage it appropriately.](#)
21. [Could assisted dying be coming to Scotland?](#)
22. [Today's Encouragement: ... Fools talk because ...](#)

## Headlines

### **[New Federal Health IT Strategy sets sights on a healthier, more innovative, and more equitable health care experience](#)**

*U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; 3/28/24*

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) through the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC), today released the draft 2024–2030 Federal Health IT Strategic Plan (the draft Plan) for public comment. The draft Plan:

- Outlines federal health IT goals and objectives ...
- Places an emphasis on the policy and technology components ...
- Supports the Department's recent Health Data, Technology, and Interoperability: Certification Program Updates, Algorithm Transparency, and Information Sharing (HTI-1) final rule ...
- Aligns with the HHS Health Care Sector Cybersecurity concept paper and voluntary health care specific Cybersecurity Performance Goals (CPGs) ...

The ONC seeks public comment by May 28, 2024.

# Hospice Provider News

## **[UPDATED] CMS 2025 proposed rule signals changes to quality measurement, omits program integrity actions**

*Hospice News, by Jim Parker; 3/29/24*

In a proposed rule released [Thursday], the U.S. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) proposed a **2.6% increase** in hospice per diems for 2025. The agency also proposed two new quality measures and 2025 implementation of the Hospice Outcome and Patient Evaluation (HOPE) assessment tool to replace the Hospice Item Set. However, stakeholders in the hospice space contend that the increase is insufficient in light of continued inflation, interest rates, staffing shortages and wage hikes.

## **WhidbeyHealth Hospice - \$600,000 donation toward new building**

*South Whidbey Record, WA; by Jessie Stensland; 3/26/24*

Thanks to an anonymous donation, the staff members of WhidbeyHealth Hospice will soon have their own space outside of the hospital in Coupeville. The board of Whidbey Island's public hospital district voted last week to purchase a 3,100-square-foot building at 101 Northeast Birch Street in Coupeville. ... The [hospice] staff currently works out of an awkward space inside the hospital that's not always easy for families to find. The office space acts as a hub for the employees and a place to store supplies. It's also the site of volunteer training, patient care meetings and bereavement support. ... The hospital's palliative services will also share the building.



**Accelerate Results**  
**Accelerate Growth**  
**Accelerate Learning**

*Sponsor of Hospice & Palliative Care Today*

## **Hospice providers serving assisted living residents: Association of higher volume with lower quality**

*Journal of American Geriatrics Society; by Wenhan Guo MS, MA, Helena Temkin-Greener Phd, Brian E. McGarry PT, PhD; 3/27/24*

Background: Assisted living (AL) community caregivers are known to report lower

quality of hospice care. However, little is known about hospice providers serving AL residents and factors that may contribute to, and explain, differences in quality. We examined the association between hospice providers' AL patient-day volume and their quality ratings based on Hospice Item Set (HIS) and Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS) Hospice Surveys.

### **Hospice of the Chesapeake's culinary event raises \$100K for care in Calvert County**

*Southern Maryland News Net; 3/28/24*

The Calvert County community came together to enjoy fine cuisine, local wines and spirited dancing, helping to raise more than \$100,000 for Hospice of the Chesapeake at the 11th annual Culinary Event held March 22 at The Hall at Huntingtown. ... Funds from this year's event will continue to benefit programs at the Burnett Center as well as hospice and supportive care for residents of Calvert County.

## **Palliative Care Provider News**

### **A multicentre survey on the perception of palliative care among health professionals working in haematology**

*Multicenter Study / PubMed; by Sara Di Lorenzo, Lisa Mozzi, Flavia Salmaso, Claudia Silvagni, Silvia Soffientini, Vanessa Valenti, Vittorina Zagonel; 3/27/24*

Purpose: Patients with haematologic malignancies have less access to palliative care and are referred later than patients with solid tumours. We developed a survey to investigate this phenomenon, with the intention of analysing palliative care perceptions among health professionals who treat haematology patients and identifying barriers and facilitators to referrals to palliative care services.



*Sponsor of Hospice & Palliative Care Today*

## **Clinical News**

### **High intensity of end-of-life care for minority patients with lung cancer**

*U.S. Medicine; 3/27/24*

While disparities in lung cancer mortality among racial and ethnic minorities are

well documented, not as much is understood about how racial and ethnic minority patients with lung cancer are treated at the end of life. A study led by researchers from the Indiana University School of Medicine and the Richard L. Roudebush VAMC, both in Indianapolis, sought to determine if those patients experience higher rates of intensity of care at the end of life (EOL) compared with non-Hispanic white (NHW) patients.

## Public Policy News

### **Palliative care bill a win for South Dakota, Amendment F looms as possible major setback for cancer community**

*American Cancer Society / Cancer Action Network Press Release; 3/28/24*

When Gov. Kristi Noem signed Senate Bill 147 into law it improved access to palliative care and allowed the state's health care providers to better serve individuals with serious illnesses. ... SB 147 adds the definition to statute, allowing for improved access to and reimbursement for palliative care services as well as providing for the distribution of education materials on palliative care. ... SB 147 was the health care high point for the 2024 Legislature, which missed an opportunity to improve coverage for breast cancer diagnostic tests for South Dakotans by not advancing House Bill 1122 and passed the problematic Senate Joint Resolution 501 [will be Amendment F on November ballot] ...

### **Physician-assisted deaths reached new high in 2023**

*The Lund Report, by Anna Del Savio; 3/28/24*

The most common end-of-life concerns were loss of autonomy, dignity and access to activities that make life enjoyable. A growing number of people said they were concerned about the financial costs of continued medical treatment. ... More than four out of five patients were 65 years or older. The youngest person was 29. The oldest was 102. Two-thirds had cancer. One in 10 had a neurological disease.



## Mergers & Acquisition News

### **\$45B worth of physician group acquisitions since 2019**

*Becker's ASC Review, by Paige Haeffele; 3/28/24*

Here are 10 of the biggest-budget acquisitions of physician groups, totaling approximately \$45.3 billion, as reported by *Becker's* since 2019: ...

## Post-Acute Care News

### **Hospital charity care falls short of nonprofit tax breaks: Low**

*Modern Healthcare, by Caroline Hudson; 3/26/24*

The vast majority of nonprofit hospitals aren't providing a level of community support equal to the value of what they are receiving in tax breaks, according to a study published Tuesday. ... Using 2021 Internal Revenue Service data, Lown found about 80% of nonprofit hospitals, or more than 1,900 out of 2,425 hospitals, received more in tax break benefits than the support provided to communities.

### **[Rural Hospitals] A popular healthcare myth debunked**

*Becker's Hospital CFO Report, by Laura Dyrda; 3/28/24*

Many in the healthcare industry assume rural hospitals are inherently worse off financially than urban hospitals. It's easy to see why. ... But a February Kaufman Hall [report](#) refutes the financial divide between rural and urban hospitals. When comparing rural and urban hospitals as a collective, the firm found no statistically significant difference in average operating margin. Rural and urban hospitals on average have similar operating margins and financial performance. So why do we often associate more dire financial struggles with rural hospitals over urban ones?



# HOSPICE ANALYTICS

TURNING DATA INTO INFORMATION – TO IMPROVE PATIENT CARE

*Sponsor of Hospice & Palliative Care Today*

## **14 Joint Commission patient safety goals for post-acute facilities**

*Becker's Hospital Review, by Mariah Taylor; 3/21/24*

The Joint Commission released a breakdown of patient safety goals for post-acute care facilities in 2024. The organization published an easy-to-read resource outlining goals for nine sectors of healthcare, including nursing facilities, surgery, hospitals and behavioral care. For post-acute facilities, the goals mostly revolved around identifying patients correctly, using medicines safely, and preventing infections and falls. Here are the patient safety goals for post-acute facilities: ...

*Editor's Note: Ensure that your interdisciplinary team members who make hospice/palliative care visits in post-acute facilities are trained to tend these safety goals--within the scope of their roles and responsibilities--and in collaboration with the facility's compliance standards (especially if you or they are accredited by The Joint Commission).*

## **Kaiser Permanente, Town Hall ventures to launch PACE Program 'Habitat Health'**

*Home Health Care News, by Andrew Donlan; 3/27/24*

Kaiser Permanente and an investment firm are teaming up to launch a Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) venture. Specifically dubbed Habitat Health, Kaiser and Town Hall Ventures will begin building out the program in California in 2025 – in Sacramento and Los Angeles.

## **Technology / Innovations News**

### **Northwell backs 'emotionally intelligent' AI voice startup**

*Becker's Health IT, by Gile Bruce; 3/28/24*

The venture capital arm of New Hyde Park, N.Y.-based Northwell Health is backing a startup that is developing a conversational artificial intelligence

platform that mimics human speech. Northwell Holdings participated in a \$50 million series B funding round March 27 for Hume AI, which was founded by a former Google researcher to provide "near-human-level conversation" with AI. Northwell has already invested several million dollars in the "emotionally intelligent" voice interface.

*Editor's Note: What kinds of communication transparency will these systems have, or not? Will patients and families they think they are talking with a person, and then be duped by a robot? Additionally, these descriptions do not align with core, researched foundations of "emotional intelligence." I ask: What longer term, life-changing differences could \$50 million make if invested in transforming the emotional intelligence of healthcare executives, leaders, clinicians, and support staff?*

### **Sutter Health Partners with Abridge on generative AI solution to improve patient, physician experience**

*Business Wire Press Release, by Jill O'Brien and Liz Madison; 3/27/24*

Abridge and Sutter Health announced they will make Abridge's generative AI platform for clinical documentation available to groups of its physicians across California. ... For physicians and advanced practice clinicians, Abridge generates a draft note in real-time based on the clinical conversation that flows directly into the electronic health record. Once clinicians review and verify the note, their paperwork is complete.

## **General News**

### **Touching graduation ceremony for Fulton County student at her grandfather's bedside in hospice**

*WSB-TV 2 Atlanta, by Berndt Petersen; 3/27/24*

A graduating senior from Cambridge High School wanted to give her grandfather, who is in hospice care, one last gift. He wanted to attend her graduation ceremony. Channel 2's Berndt Petersen shares how they brought the ceremony to him.

### **Why a Texas system hasn't hired a travel nurse in 30 years**

*Becker's Hospital Review, by Kelly Gooch; 3/28/24*

Beth Schmidt remembers the last time Fort Worth, Texas-based Cook Children's Health Care System hired a travel nurse, and it was not recently. ... Many hospitals and health systems increased their reliance on travel nurses during the



pandemic to fill vacancies. However, a number of organizations are now making efforts to decrease their dependence for financial reasons. ... [This organization has had 15-20 years success with] the Winter Plan, a program ... [that] allows workers to temporarily become Cook Children's employees for four to six months to help augment the health system's nursing staff.

### **MultiCare healthcare workers in Spokane might go on strike**

*NBC KHQ - NonStop Local, by Laura Erickson; 3/28/24*

Over 1,400 healthcare workers at MultiCare Deaconess and Valley Hospitals plan to strike for seven days beginning April 7, denouncing what they're calling "bad faith bargaining" from institution executives in response to short staffing crises in their hospitals. The SEIU Healthcare 1199NW union consists of over 33,000 caregivers throughout hospitals, clinics, mental health, skilled home health and hospice programs in Washington and Montana.

## **Education**

### **Death is inevitable. Doctors should be prepared to manage it appropriately.**

*MedPageToday, by Gabrielle Kis Bromberg, MD; 3/28/24*

In preparation for my clinical year, my medical school instructors taught me about the importance of assessing the goals and wishes of patients at the end of life. ... [My Aunt] Daniella shared with my mom and me that she was tired of being so sick and tired of feeling stuck in the hospital's revolving door. So, I asked my aunt the questions I'd just learned in class. "What is most important to you?" "If you were sicker and could not share your own medical wishes, what would you want us to tell your doctors about your goals?" "Would you accept another ICU stay, CPR, a breathing tube?" My mom and I drove home with crystal clear instructions from Daniella. If she got sicker, she wanted to die without prolonged suffering. ... [Months later] Despite many doctors, hospitalizations, a years-long decline, and countless healthcare touch points, no one had asked Daniella how she was faring as her body failed. Why did it require a medical student -- me -- just 4 months into training, to achieve an end of life consistent with her wishes?

## **International News**

## Could assisted dying be coming to Scotland?

*BBC, by James Cook; 3/28/24*

Scotland could become the first UK nation to provide terminally-ill people with assistance to end their lives if a bill that has been introduced at Holyrood is approved. Supporters of the legislation say it would ease suffering. Opponents worry that some terminally-ill people could feel under pressure to end their lives.

## Today's Encouragement

**Wise men talk because they have something to say. Fools talk because they have to say something. - Plato**

***Sign up for our free daily newsletters [here!](#)***

### ***The Fine Print:***

**Paywalls:** Some links may take readers to articles that either require registration or are behind a paywall. **Disclaimer:** Hospice & Palliative Care Today provides brief summaries of news stories of interest to hospice, palliative, and end-of-life care professionals (typically taken directly from the source article). Hospice & Palliative Care Today is not responsible or liable for the validity or reliability of information in these articles and directs the reader to authors of the source articles for questions or comments. Additionally, Dr. Cordt Kassner, Publisher, and Dr. Joy Berger, Editor in Chief, welcome your [feedback](#) regarding content of Hospice & Palliative Care Today. **Unsubscribe:** Hospice & Palliative Care Today is a free subscription email. If you believe you have received this email in error, or if you no longer wish to receive Hospice & Palliative Care Today, please unsubscribe [here](#) or reply to this email with the message "Unsubscribe". Thank you.