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**HOSPICE &
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TODAY**

April 5th, 2024

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Headlines

Hospice update: March goes out like a lion

Morgan Lewis - Health Law Scan, by Howard J. Young; 4/2/24

The old adage—March comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb—didn't quite hold true for the hospice sector, which experienced a late-month flurry of activity. The government gave the hospice sector a lot to consider, from MedPAC's suggested freeze on hospice rates to CMS's 2025 Proposed Hospice Rule (public comments due May 28, 2024) that, if finalized as is, would include a 2.6% payment bump. CMS's Proposed Hospice Rule lays the groundwork for the long-anticipated Hospice Outcomes and Patient Evaluation (HOPE) quality measures data collection instrument, which will be used to collect data at various points during the hospice stay, not just at admission and discharge.

Hospice Provider News

Ohio's Hospice celebrates Spring Spectacular Treasures of Time: Raises over \$36k

Carroll County Messenger, by Thomas Clapper; 4/2/24

Ohio's Hospice celebrated its Spring Spectacular Treasures of Time March 16 with food, entertainment, silent and live auctions and as always, celebrity servers. Celebrity servers have become the mainstays of the annual event which raised funds for local hospice care. 2024 celebrity servers, who raised a total of \$36,671, included Gary and Nicole Chaddock, Brad Eick, Rick and Holly Morgan, Matt Kishman, Kate Offenberger, Janet Smith, Katie DeLane, Allan Furbee, Tom James, Grant Bake and Cedar One, Mark Scott, John Weyand and Bill and Barb Newell.

Mortality, hospice use rates differ in assisted living communities depending on whether memory care is offered

McKnights Senior Living, by Kimberly Bonvissuto; 4/4/24

Assisted living communities that provide memory care services may attract residents closer to the end of life or promote [hospice](#) use at the end of life compared with assisted living communities without such services, according to the findings of a new study. ... Researchers from the Brown University School of Public Health, the University of Melbourne and the Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing examined whether end-of-life outcomes — mortality and hospice use — differed between assisted living facilities with and without memory care services among 15,152 residents who moved into larger communities between 2016 and 2018.

Editor's Note: [Click here for the source article, "Do end-of-life outcomes differ by assisted living memory-care designation?"](#)



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RNs are moving away from home health and hospice, federal survey reveals

McKnights Home Care, by Adam Healy; 4/2/24

Though the number of registered nurses continues to grow, fewer are working in home healthcare and hospice compared to years past, according to the latest national sample survey collected by the Health Resources & Services Administration. In 2018, there were 179,509 RNs working in home health and hospice, representing about 6% of the nursing workforce, according to an earlier national survey. HRSA's latest count estimated that there were 173,808 RNs in home health and hospice in 2022, or only 5% of the workforce .

Community Hospice & Palliative Care recognizes National Volunteer Month

JAX Chamber, Press Release; 4/3/24

As April marks National Volunteer Month, Community Hospice & Palliative Care reaffirms its dedication to promoting and celebrating the invaluable contributions of volunteers. Volunteers are the heart and soul of our organization, providing companionship and a compassionate presence to patients and their families during challenging times. Throughout the month, Community Hospice & Palliative Care will spotlight individual volunteers and their inspiring stories through various social media platforms. These narratives will highlight the profound impact that volunteers have on the lives of those they serve and showcase the diverse ways in which they enrich our community.

Editor's Note: Use this to spark your own planning and recognition for your all-important hospice and palliative care volunteers!

Palliative Care Provider News

Palliative care could be a game changer for public health

Harvard Public Health, by Meredith Lidard Kleeman; 4/4/24

California and Hawaii are pioneering ways to expand access. ... California is one of the first states in the country to require insurance companies that administer Medicaid benefits to fully cover palliative care services for eligible residents. ... Palliative care is poised to be a game changer for public health. Nearly 50 percent of states now include palliative care services for eligible Medicaid recipients, according to C-TAC. And in California and Hawaii, two paths are being forged toward wider palliative care access. ...

- The California model changes who pays for palliative care ...
- Hawaii develops a model beyond palliative care vs. hospice ...

Dana-Farber's new push to integrate palliative, behavioral services in cancer care

Hospice News, by Audrie Martin; 4/2/24

Boston-based Dana-Farber Cancer Institute has launched the Neuro-Inclusive Oncology Care and Empowerment Program, a psychosocial oncology initiative focused on adults with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (IDD).

... Patients with disabilities are largely underserved, but they represent a growing need as well as an untapped market for providers. More palliative care and hospice companies are developing programs to meet the specific concerns of these patients to improve access to care.

Changes coming to Long Beach homeless center where 20 enrolled died

NBC TV 4 Los Angeles, by Mekahlo Medina; 4/3/24

... Mayor Rex Richardson addresses the death of 20 residents at the Homekey Hotel, a transitional housing facility in Long Beach, where many employees say was understaffed to attend medical needs. Mekahlo Medina reports for the NBC4 News on March 26, 2024. ... Long Beach said in its statement that "they will be continuing onsite partnerships with Healthcare in Action, Long Beach Community College nursing students, Wellbe Health, and Echo Hospice (palliative care).

Clinical News

Tool simplifies requests for palliative care consults

American Association of Critical-Care Nurses; 4/2/24

A simple screening tool integrated into the admissions process for critically ill patients can streamline requests for palliative care consultations, according to a study published in *Critical Care Nurse (CCN)*. ... An initiative in the mixed surgical and medical ICU at Bon Secours Mercy Health Anderson, a 230-bed, community hospital in Cincinnati, sought to improve the process of requesting palliative care consultations. " [Integrating Palliative Care Screening in the Intensive Care Unit: A Quality Improvement Project](#)" demonstrates the potential impact of adding a

simple screening tool at the point of admission to initiate automatic referrals for palliative care consultations.

Editor's Note: We posted the cited research article on 4/2/24. This article describes its processes and uses in more practical detail.



Integration of palliative care across the spectrum of heart failure care and therapies: considerations, contemporary data, and challenges

Current Opinion in Cardiology, by Sarah Chuzi and Katharine Manning; online ahead of May 1, 2024 print

Recent findings: Patients with chronic heart failure [HF], as well as those who are being evaluated for or who have undergone advanced HF surgical therapies such as left ventricular assist device or heart transplantation, have a number of palliative care [PC] needs, including decision-making, symptoms and quality of life, caregiver support, and end-of-life care. ... PC skills and teams may also help address preparedness planning, adverse events, and psychosocial barriers in patients who have had HF surgeries, but more data are needed to determine association with outcomes.

Neuropsychiatric effects associated with opioid-based management for palliative care patients

Current Pain and Headache Reports; by Alan D Kaye, Kylie Dufrene, Jada Cooley, Madeline Walker, Shivam Shah, Alex Hollander, Sahar Shekoochi, Christopher L Robinson; 4/2/24

Findings: Opioid usage has detrimental and confounding effects that have been overlooked for many years by palliative care providers and patients receiving palliative care. It is necessary, even lifesaving, to be cognizant of potential neuropsychiatric effects that opioids can have on an individual, especially for

those under palliative care. By having an increased understanding and awareness of potential opioid neuropsychiatric effects, patient quality of life can be improved, healthcare system costs can be decreased, and patient outcomes can be met and exceeded.

Regulatory News

5 most challenging requirements in 2023 [for hospitals]: Joint Commission

Becker's Clinical Leadership, by Mackenzie Bean; 4/3/24

Maintaining infection prevention and control during disinfection and sterilization activities was the most challenging compliance standard for hospitals in 2023, according to The Joint Commission. The organization identified the top five requirements for which hospitals were most frequently out of compliance, based on surveys and reviews from Jan. 1 through Dec. 31. ... [Click on the title's article for the 5 top challenges.]



CMS provides first look at shorter, Risk-Based Survey process

McKnights Long-Term Care News, by Kimberly Marselas; 4/4/24

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services on Wednesday revealed initial information about a potential “Risk-Based Survey” option that could be available to some of the nation’s best performing nursing homes. ... CMS said in an update to its nursing home provider enrollment page Wednesday that it is working with states to test this process over the next several months. ... CMS said the proposed risk-based survey, or RBS, approach would allow “consistently higher-quality facilities” to receive a more focused survey, while still ensuring compliance with health and safety standards.

Public Policy News

Vermont bill would address violence against home health workers

CBS TV 3 WCAX, by Laura Ullman; 4/3/24

The increase in violence against health care workers in recent years is also happening behind closed doors. Vermont's hospice and home health care workers say they're facing sexual violence, threats, and assault. Now, Vermont lawmakers are considering a bill to provide further protections. "Home health nurses go into homes, unknown homes, by themselves all the time. So, we really need to be able to protect them," said Jill Mazza Olson with the Vermont Visiting Nurse Association.

Technology / Innovations News

FDA approves AI Tool that can detect sepsis

Forbes, by Cailey Gleeson; 4/3/24

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration [approved](#) an AI tool that can diagnose sepsis, Prenosis, the company behind the software, announced Wednesday, the latest in a series of agency approvals for AI diagnostic tools. ... At least 350,000. That's how many adults who develop sepsis die from the condition or are discharged to hospice annually, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

General News

Fostering respect and appreciation seen as keys to retaining direct care workers

McKnights Online Forum, by Kimberly Bonvissuto; 3/27/24

Expressions of appreciation and respect can go a long way in addressing senior living's direct care [workforce](#) crisis, according to a panel of direct workers and employers who addressed what makes employees want to stay — or go. ... Nate Hamme, president and executive director of the Ceca Foundation, ... said that the most important part of employee recognition is listening to people. ... He added that there is a science to recognition backed by research into what motivates people and implementing programs around that. ... Recognition programs, Hamme added, should focus on IMPACT: inclusive, mission-aligned, public, authentic, consistent and timely.

The operational advantages of hiring seniors to provide home care

Home Health Care News, by Joyce Famakinwa; 4/1/24

Seniors Helping Seniors has long distinguished itself from other home care companies by hiring active seniors to serve as caregivers. Josh Obeiter — an owner of one of the company's franchise locations — has seen even more added value from this strategy as the industry at large combats labor shortages. At Seniors Helping Seniors, the average age of an employee is around 70 years old, and 80% of caregivers are in their 60s and 70s, according to Obeiter.

Central Dauphin football building connections with residents at Grane Hospice

ABC TV 27 WHTM, Harrisburg, PA; by Amber Charnoff; 4/2/24

Volunteering is a cornerstone of the Central Dauphin football team and over the past 15 years the team has donated their time to Grane Hospice. ... Central Dauphin seniors Kannyon Miller and Elijah McDonald have enjoyed interacting with the residents at Grane. ... Coach McNamee enjoys stepping back and watching these relationships develop. ... "It's so much fun watching them in action and seeing that room with the interactions between the players and the residents," McNamee said. "There's no doubt it's a win-win. The residents are really enjoying it and our players are really enjoying it."

American Airlines: Make-A-Wish® and Disney host Wish Flight in support of 28 children battling critical illnesses

MarketScreener; 4/3/24

American Airlines, Make-A-Wish and Disney will grant the wishes of children battling critical illnesses in celebration of World Wish Month. On April 17, 28 wish families will board the Wish Flight and fly on a one-of-a-kind, chartered plane from Dallas-Fort Worth to Orlando, Florida, to fulfill their wishes to go to Walt Disney World Resort®.

ASCO Congratulates 2024 Special Awards Recipients

The ASCO Post, by ASCO (American Society of Clinical Oncology, Inc.); 4/2/24

ASCO and Conquer Cancer, the ASCO Foundation, recognized researchers, patient advocates, philanthropists, teachers, and global oncology leaders who have reshaped cancer care around the world with the Society's highest honors at the 2024 ASCO Annual Meeting. [Click on the title's link for ASCO's 2024 Special Award Recipients.

Non-print News

World's Strongest Firefighter from Toledo lifts spirits of woman at hospice care facility

CBS TV WTOL 11; 4/3/24

Marcus Waugh from TFRD went bak to a nursing home to visit a woman after she recognized him as the "World's Strongest Firefighter" during a lift assist last month.

Other News

Hospital CEO turnover up 36% in February

Becker's Hospital Review, by Kelly Gooch; 3/29/24

Hospitals reported 15 CEO changes last month, marking a 36% increase from January. Hospitals announced 26 CEO changes total in the first two months of 2024, according to a March 29 report from Challenger, Gray & Christmas, an executive coaching firm that examines CEO turnover in the U.S. ... Across the 29 industries and sectors measured by the firm, there were 248 CEO changes in February, up 28% from the 194 CEO exits recorded the month prior. Last month's total marked the highest monthly total on record, according to the firm. Challenger, Gra y & Christmas began tracking CEO exits 22 years ago.

Other Business Headlines of Interest, updated 4/4/24 per nasdaq.com

- [Adus HomeCare \(ADUS: \\$103.14\)](#)
- [Amedisys \(AMED: \\$92.41\)](#)

- [BrightSpring Health \(BTSG: \\$10.52\)](#)
- [Encompass \(EHC: \\$82.59\)](#)
- [Enhabit \(EHAB: \\$11.00\)](#)
- [Ensign Group \(ENSG: \\$121.39\)](#)
- [HCA Healthcare \(HCA: \\$329.11\)](#)
- [Humana \(HUM: \\$310.98\)](#)
- [Pennant Group \(PNTG: \\$20.37\)](#)

- [Vitas / Chemed Corp \(CHE: \\$638.39\)](#)

Today's Encouragement

To me, teamwork is a lot like being part of a family. It comes with obligations, entanglements, headaches, and quarrels. But the rewards are worth the cost. - Pat Summit

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