

Cordt Kassner

From: Hospice & Palliative Care Today Newsletter
<subscriptions@hospicepalliativecaretoday.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 10, 2024 4:00 AM
To: Cordt Kassner
Subject: Your Hospice & Palliative Care Today Newsletter for 04/10/24

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**HOSPICE &
PALLIATIVE CARE
TODAY**

April 10th, 2024

Contents

1. [Reminder: April 16 is National Healthcare Decisions Day](#)
2. [New hospice physician requirements sow claims submission confusion](#)
3. [Healthcare on the brink: navigating the challenges of an aging society in the United States](#)
4. [People with dementia and their care partners have an increased loneliness risk](#)
5. [The Sunday Read: 'What deathbed visions teach us about living'](#)
6. [Lost for words? Research shows art therapy brings benefits for mental health](#)
7. [Telehealth access threatened as internet subsidies near end](#)
8. [California bill would impose more controls on private equity investments in healthcare](#)
9. [Jefferson CEO lays out Lehigh Valley integration plan](#)
10. [5 things to know about the Waud capital-backed Senior Helpers](#)
11. [Mixed reactions as St. Patrick Hospital nurses approve new contract](#)
12. [Modern ultrasound tech benefits extend from Alzheimer's to palliative care](#)

13. [Insurers' response to the Change breach failed providers](#)
14. [Virtual reality therapy offers 'sustained improvement' in cancer-related pain](#)
15. [The art of the obit: Longtime journalist offers tips of the trade](#)
16. [The day Ram Dass Died](#)
17. [Overcome fear of financial regret to embrace a fulfilling life](#)
18. [Iowa River Hospice resident receives Quilt of Valor](#)
19. [EverHeart Hospice shares career paths](#)
20. [Today's Encouragement: Regret ...](#)

Hospice Provider News

Reminder: April 16 is National Healthcare Decisions Day

The Conversation Project, Institute for Healthcare Improvement; ongoing until 4/16/24
[Read for] specific ideas and suggestions for ways to implement National Healthcare Decisions Day (NHDD) activities in your community and at your facility. First and foremost, lead by example...be sure you have thoughtfully considered and made your own healthcare decisions known.

Editor's Note: from The Conversation Project's "About Us": "The Conversation Project began 2010, when Pulitzer Prize-winning writer Ellen Goodman and a group of colleagues and concerned media, clergy, and medical professionals gathered to share stories of 'good deaths' and 'hard deaths' within their own circle of loved ones."

New hospice physician requirements sow claims submission confusion

McKnights Home Care, by Adam Healy; 4/8/24

As hospice providers prepare for new physician certification rules going into effect next month, many are still seeking clarification from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services on how the new rules will affect claims processes, experts said in a recent webinar. "The new requirement is effective May 1, 2024," Katie Wehri, director of regulatory affairs for the National Association for Home Care & Hospice, said during the webinar Thursday. "We know that is right around the corner, and we have some concerns about that date, frankly, because of some of the inconsistent instructions that we have seen from CMS."

Healthcare on the brink: navigating the challenges of an aging society in the United States

npj Aging, by Charles H. Jones and Mikael Dolsten; 4/6/24

The US healthcare system is at a crossroads. With an aging population requiring more care and a strained system facing workforce shortages, capacity issues, and fragmentation, innovative solutions and policy reforms are needed. ... Through a comprehensive analysis of the impact of an aging society, this work highlights the urgency of addressing this issue and the importance of restructuring the healthcare system to be more efficient, equitable, and responsive.



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Clinical News

People with dementia and their care partners have an increased loneliness risk

HCP Live, by Chelsie Derman; 4/8/24

The study highlights how the experience of loneliness for care partners of people with dementia changes relationship roles throughout the dementia trajectory. A new study sought to widen the knowledge gap on why people with **dementia** and their care partners have an increased loneliness risk and identified primary themes: losing external social networks, losses with the dyadic relationship, and the burden of a care partner supporting their loved ones.

*Editor's Note: Pair this with an article we posted in our newsletter on 3/9/24, with 3/17/24 "most read" rating from our readers: **Rising suicide risk among seniors due to loneliness, mobility, financial insecurity, study finds***

The Sunday Read: 'What deathbed visions teach us about living'

New York Times Podcasts, 4/7/24

Chris Kerr was 12 when he first observed a deathbed vision. His memory of that summer in 1974 is blurred, but not the sense of mystery he felt at the bedside of his dying father. ... Kerr now calls what he witnessed an end-of-life vision. His father wasn't delusional, he believes. ... Kerr followed his father into medicine, and in the last 10 years he has hired a permanent research team that expanded studies on deathbed visions to include interviews with patients receiving hospice

care at home and with their families, deepening researchers' understanding of the variety and profundity of these visions.

Lost for words? Research shows art therapy brings benefits for mental health

The Conversation; 4/8/24

Creating art for healing purposes dates back tens of thousands of years, to the practices of First Nations people around the world. ... When people face significant physical or mental ill-health, it can be challenging to put their experiences into words. Art therapists support people to explore and process overwhelming thoughts, feelings and experiences through a reflective art-making process. This is distinct from art classes, which often focus on technical aspects of the artwork, or the aesthetics of the final product.



Public Policy News

Telehealth access threatened as internet subsidies near end

Modern Healthcare, by Sarah Jane Tribble, KFF News; 4/4/24

More than 23 million low-income households — urban, suburban, rural, and tribal — are enrolled in the federal discount program Congress created in 2021 to bridge the nation's digital connectivity gap. The program has provided \$30 monthly subsidies for internet bills or \$75 discounts in tribal and high-cost areas. But the program is expected to run out of money in April or May, according to the Federal Communications Commission. In January, FCC Chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel asked Congress to allocate \$6 billion to keep the program running until the end of 2024.

Mergers & Acquisition News

California bill would impose more controls on private equity investments in healthcare

McKnights Senior Living, by Kathleen Steel Gaivin; 4/9/24

A bill under consideration by the California State Legislature would “add scrutiny

on private equity companies when considering healthcare investments, amplifying the pressure already imposed by enforcement agencies in California and throughout the country,” attorneys from Polsinelli told the *McKnight’s Business Daily* on Monday. ... According to attorneys at Sidley Austin law firm, the legislation would affect “direct and indirect purchases of a material amount of assets and operations of a healthcare facility or provider; changes in voting control of a healthcare facility or provider; or direct and indirect changes in control over the healthcare services or operations of a healthcare facility or provider.”

Jefferson CEO lays out Lehigh Valley integration plan

Modern Healthcare, by Alex Kacik; 4/9/24

Jefferson Health and Lehigh Valley Health Network will soon take the next steps toward the formation of a \$15 billion nonprofit health system. Philadelphia-based Jefferson and Lehigh in December signed a non-binding letter of intent under which Jefferson would merge with Lehigh. The organizations plan to sign a definitive agreement this month, Jefferson CEO Dr. Joseph Cacchione said.



Post-Acute Care News

5 things to know about the Waud capital-backed Senior Helpers

Home Health Care News, by Andrew Donlan; 4/8/24

One of the biggest home-based care deals of the year thus far was Waud Capital’s acquisition of Senior Helpers. The Maryland-based franchise – which was previously owned by the health system Advocate Health – will be the foundation of Waud Capital’s home care platform moving forward. Overseeing that platform will be Steve Jakubcanin, the home-based care veteran and former

CEO of Cornerstone Healthcare Group. Here are five important things to know about Senior Helpers as it takes a different direction under new ownership.

Mixed reactions as St. Patrick Hospital nurses approve new contract

KPAX-8 Missoula & Western Montana, by Claire Peterson; 4/8/24

The nurse's union at St. Patrick Hospital approved a three-year contract by a narrow vote. ... On Friday, April 5, the nurse's union at Providence St. Patrick Hospital approved a three-year contract by a narrow vote, bringing months of negotiation to an end. ... The new contract was approved by 56% of the nurses who voted, according to Marmorato. St. Patrick Hospital nurses were fighting for higher wages, plans to prevent workplace violence and more effort to retain staff.

Technology / Innovations News

Modern ultrasound tech benefits extend from Alzheimer's to palliative care

McKnights Senior Living, by Aaron Dorman; 4/9/24

New research is showing that ultrasound innovations can be ultra-beneficial to seniors across a wide range of applications. ... [A] valuable use of ultrasound tech could be in palliative care. Portable or handheld ultrasound diagnostic tools could allow for more effective treatment options, and reduce the need for costly rehospitalizations. These imaging tools are already available and researchers conducted a narrative study of existing literature that appeared to validate their effectiveness; based on previous findings, new portable ultrasound devices made a difference in 50% of treatment decisions, the researchers found.



TURNING DATA INTO INFORMATION – TO IMPROVE PATIENT CARE

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Insurers' response to the Change breach failed providers

Modern Healthcare, by Chip Kahn and Dr. Bruce Siegel; 4/8/24

... The Feb. 21 attack on Change Healthcare, a subsidiary of UnitedHealth Group's Optum unit, severed the electronic ties that connect patients, providers and insurance companies. The attack robbed patients of the certainty they could seek and receive care, and it robbed physicians, pharmacists and hospitals of the resources necessary for patient care. ... Overlooked in this crisis, is that **insurance companies failed to act** decisively and collectively to protect patients and providers. ... Here's what should have happened immediately when the threat facing patient care became painfully obvious.

Virtual reality therapy offers 'sustained improvement' in cancer-related pain

Healio, by Josh Friedman; 4/8/24

Individuals with cancer reported significantly reduced pain immediately following a 10-minute virtual reality (VR) session, study results published in *Cancer* showed. The findings from the randomized trial suggest that pain reductions associated with VR use are sustainable for up to 24 hours and produced a reduction in pain bothersomeness and distress, according to researchers.

General News

The art of the obit: Longtime journalist offers tips of the trade

Times Colonist, by Pedro Arrais; 4/5/24

Sandra Martin has written obituaries for everyone from Queen Elizabeth II to Margaret Thatcher, Betty Fox — mother of Marathon of Hope runner Terry Fox — Nelson Mandela, Farley Mowat and Jackie Burroughs. ... When she tells the story of an individual's life and legacy, Martin says, she does it with the reader, not the family, foremost in mind. In that way, her work is different from a family's death notice. ... "As a journalist, I write for the reader, not the family. That means that it has to be true. What I include has to have had an effect on the subject's life."

The day Ram Dass Died

The New Yorker, by Christopher Fiorell; 4/6/24

He taught me to be more curious, present, and self-loving. His final lesson was more surprising. ... I woke up every thirty minutes the night before Ram Dass

died. Stretching my perception through the big divider that separated his study—where I lay on a narrow couch—from his bedroom, I'd count the seconds between the short, ragged breaths churning through his sleep-apnea machine. Four years later, I still have no idea why I was chosen to watch over him that night.

Overcome fear of financial regret to embrace a fulfilling life

Advisorpedia, Viewpoints by Ross Levin; 4/8/24

... A primary job of financial planners is to help their clients see what is possible. It is also to help them balance living today while preparing them for tomorrow. But not knowing how many tomorrows we have can create too much emphasis on an uncertain future. ... One of our long-term clients is now in hospice. As we were talking, she said how grateful she was for what she and her husband did with their family ... Although cancer will rob her of some years, she has lived her life fully. I have worked with countless clients, and here is some wisdom I have discovered that helped them avoid regret: [click on the title's link to read].

Iowa River Hospice resident receives Quilt of Valor

Times Republican, by Robert Maharry; 4/8/24

Kenny King may have only spent two years in the military after being drafted into the U.S. Army at the height of the Vietnam War, but he's always recognized the importance of that period in his life since returning to central Iowa. King who spent the vast majority of his life in the Grinnell area, has been living at Iowa River Hospice since late December, and recently, he received a Quilt of Valor recognizing his service from Denise Straits of the Central Iowa Quilt Sew-ciety, who also happens to be an RN at Iowa River Hospice.

Education

EverHeart Hospice shares career paths

Daily Advocate, Greenville, OH; 4/9/24

EverHeart Hospice was honored to have the opportunity again this year to share the wide variety of career paths within their organization at the annual Impact Stem2D Conference. The event is a one-day interactive event offered to empower young women in Darke County Schools and aims to encourage them to explore careers in STEM. ... Team members from EverHeart Hospice ... explained to the group what hospice is and the types of careers available within

the organization: ... nurses and aides, ... HR, business development, finance, IT, bereavement, social work and music therapy to make the organization successful.

Today's Encouragement

Regret for the things we did can be tempered by time; it is regret for the things we did not do that is inconsolable. - Sydney Harris

Editor's Note: This quote is from today's post, "Overcome financial regret to embrace a fulfilling life," in category "General News."

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