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PALLIATIVE CARE
TODAY**

April 21st, 2024

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

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Headlines

Physician coaching by professionally trained peers for burnout and well-being: A randomized clinical trial

JAMA Network; by Stephanie B. Kiser, MD, MPH; J. David Sterns, MD, MPH; Po Ying Lai, MS; et al; 4/12/24

Findings: In this randomized clinical trial of 138 physicians, participants who received 3 months of coaching by professionally trained physician peers had a statistically significant reduction in interpersonal disengagement and burnout, with improvement in professional fulfillment and work engagement.

Today is National Healthcare Decisions Day.

Are your advance directives in place? When did you last update them? Have you communicated your decisions with those involved? Use and share these resources with your employees and volunteers.

- [Advance Directives](#), by the Hospice Foundation of America, with links to each state
- [Caring Info](#), by the National Hospice & Palliative Care Organization
- [The Conversation Project](#), by the Institute for Healthcare Improvement

LGBTQ+ individuals have higher rates of cancer because of disparities in modifiable risk factors, ACS says

ONS Voice [Oncology Nursing Society]; by Magdalen Millman; 4/18/24

About 7% of the U.S. population identifies as LGBTQ+, but understanding cancer in this population is difficult because surveillance data are limited to national

surveys on risk factors and screening, the American Cancer Society (ACS) [observed](#) in a special section of its Cancer Facts and Figures 2024 report on cancer in the LGBTQ+ community. More than 50% of LGBTQ+ individuals have experienced harassment such as slurs, violence, microaggressions, and sexual harassment, even in healthcare settings. “One in 6 LGBTQ+ adults, and 1 in 5 transgender adults specifically, avoid health care due to previous discrimination,” ACS reported. It’s one factor implicated for the disparities affecting LGBTQ+ individuals’ access to cancer care, including prevention, screening, diagnosis, treatment, and palliative care.

Editor's Note: [Click here for this site's downloadable pdf, Cancer Facts and Figures 2024, Special Section: Cancer in People Who Identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, or Gender-nonconforming.](#) Pair this with another article in today's newsletter, "Stillwater Hospice earns SAGECare credential for LGBTQ+ care."



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The HAP Foundation conducts research study on Black Americans’ experience with serious illness care in Chicago

The HAP Foundation, by Rachel French; 4/9/24

The HAP Foundation and NORC at the University of Chicago have completed a joint research project to understand the knowledge, attitudes, and experiences of Black Americans around serious illness care in Chicago. Through a community-based participatory research design, narratives from Black individuals living in Chicago were captured by focus groups and in-depth interviews. “Community-Based Study: Prioritizing Dignity and Respect in End-of-Life Care for Black Chicagoans” is being distributed widely to health care providers and the community to encourage conversations and create change in behavioral patterns during end-of-life care.

Editor's Note: [Click here for this downloadable, 17 page booklet.](#)

Executive Personnel Changes - 4/19/24

- Hospice of the Foothills welcomes Heidi Wingo as new Executive Director
- Envision Healthcare appoints Jason Owen as President and CEO
- Pathways Hospice names Dr. Michael Towbin as Medical Director
- Carolina Caring names Maria Reese as its new VP of Marketing & Communications
- [Joint Commission taps 4 execs](#) [*Becker's Hospice Review, by Alexis Kayser; 4/12/24*]:
 - Lisa Steininger, named Executive Vice President and CFO ...
 - Elizabeth Mort, MD, named Vice President and Chief Medical Officer ...
 - Andrew Rosen, named Vice President, International ...
 - Kathryn Petrovic, named Vice President for Accreditation and Certification Product development ...

Hospices and emergency preparedness planning: A scoping review of the literature

Journal of Palliative Care, by Janna E Baker Rogers; 4/24

Palliative and end-of-life care, as provided by hospices, are important elements of a healthcare response to disasters. A scoping review of the literature was conducted to examine and synthesize what is currently known about emergency preparedness planning by hospices.



A process evaluation of a palliative care social work intervention for cancer patients in skilled nursing facilities

Journal of Palliative Medicine, by Sarguni Singh, MD; Ashley Dafoe, MA; Dana Lahoff, LCSW; Laurel Tropeano, LCSW; Bree Owens, LCSW; Erin Nielsen, LCSW; John Cagle, MSW, PhD; Hillary D. Lum, MD, PhD; Brooke Dorsey Holliman, PhD; Stacy Fischer, MD; 4/24

Assessing and Listening to Individual Goals and Needs (ALIGN) is a palliative care social work intervention that aims to improve delivery of goal-concordant care for hospitalized older adults with cancer discharged to skilled nursing facilities. ... ALIGN offers support in prognostic understanding, communication, and decision

making during a pivotal time when patient and caregivers' goals have not been met and they are reassessing priorities.

'Are nursing homes our only option?' These centers offer older adults an alternative.

Rhode Island Current, by Anna Claire Vollers; 4/12/24

PACE centers attract bipartisan interest and, in some states, scrutiny. ... PACE (Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly) centers provide government-funded medical care and social services to people older than 55 whose complex medical needs qualify them for nursing home care, but who can live at home with the right sort of help. ... Nationally, PACE centers are owned by a variety of health care organizations, including nonprofits, for-profit companies, large health care systems and religious organizations. ... [The] explosive growth has come with challenges ...

"To prescribe or not to prescribe, that is the question": Perspectives on opioid prescribing for chronic, cancer-related pain from clinicians who treat pain in survivorship

Cancer, by Hailey W Bulls, Megan Hamm, Julia Wasilewski, Donna Olejniczak, Sarah G Bell, Jane M Liebschutz; 4/24

Opioid pain management in cancer survivorship is a complex and understudied topic. ... Participants suggested that opportunities to improve chronic cancer pain care include developing clear, systematic guidance for chronic cancer pain management, facilitating clinician communication and consultation, creating tailored survivorship care plans in partnership with patients, and developing accessible, evidence-based, complementary pain treatments.



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We are not okay: Moral injury and a world on fire

American Journal of Bioethics, by Keisha S. Ray; 4/24

Moral injury gives name to a feeling that I have been having lately as I'm asked to show up to work and my life as if there aren't people who didn't wake up today because of violence, disease, and greed. I've celebrated holidays and my own professional accomplishments, but I can't escape that lump in my throat, that nagging feeling that this is all meaningless given the state of the world. After all, my principles won't feed the starving, shelter the bombed, free the captive, or care for the sick. I don't have the answer. I do not know what we are supposed to do about our perpetual moral injury. I do find some comfort in the origins of moral injury—calling out a broken system rather than broken individuals (Talbot and Dean Citation 2018). I am not broken; I am just a bioethicist and a human forced to work and live within a broken world.

Hospice Provider News

Volunteers make best days possible for 600 people a day at VNA Hospice NWI

GreatNews.Life, Valparaiso, IN; 5/19/24

VNA Hospice NWI serves over 600 people a day. From Hospice and Palliative Care, Grief Support services for adults and children to the Medical Guardian help button and a Meals on Wheels program, the impact of VNA services around the region is tremendous. The VNA staff work tirelessly to ensure these essential services are available each day – but they can't do it alone. Their team relies on an army of volunteers, who do everything from stuffing envelopes and labeling meal bags, to working directly with hospice patients and bereaved children, and delivering the meals. Maria Galka, Director of Development for VNA Hospice, said that the organization's volunteers outnumber its staff by about five to one.

Editor's Note: April's Volunteer Appreciation Month is still underway. Learn from this superb article, posted on an online community site. VNA Hospice NWI's astonishing volunteer program bears repeating: "... the organization's volunteers outnumber its staff by about five to one."

Today's Encouragement

The best portion of a good person's life are the little, nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and of love. ~adapted from William Wordsworth



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