

## Cordt Kassner

---

**From:** Hospice & Palliative Care Today Newsletter  
<subscriptions@hospicepalliativecaretoday.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 30, 2024 4:00 AM  
**To:** Cordt Kassner  
**Subject:** Your Hospice & Palliative Care Today Newsletter for 04/30/24

OUR SPONSORS

[CHAP](#)

[TCG](#)

[LMHPCO](#)

[Composing Life](#)

[Hospice Analytics](#)



**HOSPICE &  
PALLIATIVE CARE  
TODAY**

## April 30th, 2024

### Contents

- [1. How to overcome the disruptive forces that can impede high-value innovation](#)
- [2. 'Why we need to talk about dying!': Thames Hospice and the reality of palliative care](#)
- [3. Hospice Ball raises money for health care in the Northern Hills](#)
- [4. Drug discount program is exploiting poor patients while corporate giants profit](#)
- [5. Letter: Volunteers make a difference in community](#)
- [6. Sharp decline in early outpatient palliative care despite HMP workforce growth](#)
- [7. Attitudes and beliefs regarding Pain Medicine: results of a national palliative physician survey](#)
- [8. How Avow Hospice used triage to boost quality, reduce turnover](#)
- [9. Understanding is better than criticism](#)
- [10. University of Texas club puts life's memories into book for people receiving hospice care](#)

11. [Federal Court halts lawsuit over Medicare home health payments](#)
12. [Congresswoman Kat Cammack introduces legislation to block 80-20 Rule](#)
13. [Kansas won't have legal medical pot or expand Medicaid for at least another year](#)
14. [University of Kentucky moves ahead with acquisition of St. Claire HealthCare](#)
15. [Understanding the scope of aggressive incidents in hospitals | Safer Hospitals](#)
16. [Cleveland Clinic eHospital expands to monitor 300,000 patients](#)
17. [Optum shutting down telehealth business](#)
18. [Lindon woman's dream of having her music on the radio comes true](#)
19. [How leaders are building the healthcare workforce pipeline](#)
20. [Today's Encouragement: Those who can ...](#)

## Hospice Provider News

### **[How to overcome the disruptive forces that can impede high-value innovation](#)**

*Healthcare Financial Management Association (hfma.org); by Liz DeForest; 4/28/24*  
... Healthcare is full of what we call “missing innovations” — good ideas that never go beyond promising pilot tests or, like EHRs, are adopted so slowly that their progress is measured in decades, even though other industries were adopting digital solutions very rapidly. Switchover disruptions are among the reasons for these missing innovations. ... [The author interviewed authors of *Why not better and cheaper?* (Oxford University Press, June 2023), written by industry analysts and twin brothers James B. and Robert S. Rebitzer about their observations of health system action and inaction. James Rebitzer is the Peter and Deborah Wexler Professor at Boston University's Questrom School of Business. Robert Rebitzer is a national adviser at the consulting firm Manatt Health.]

### **['Why we need to talk about dying': Thames Hospice and the reality of palliative care](#)**

*Maidenhead Advertiser; by Sam Leech; 4/27/24*  
*What is your understanding of what a hospice does? Many would suggest it is a place where people go to die – but there is much, much more to the journey of patients and loved ones at Thames Hospice [United Kingdom]. ... Catherine McLaughlin, the hospice's chief executive, said: “This is a place where – yes, death is a big part – but it's*

*about how do you make memories? How do you give hope at a time when there might not be much of that? Those final days in somebody's life is a very important time and the lasting memories are important to those who are left behind."*

*Editor's Note: Too often--in order to make hospice palatable to another's "sign-on-the-dotted-line-so-we-can-admit-you"--marketing professionals overtly deny that hospice is about "dying," "death," or "grief." Take note from this CEO who sensitively weaves in death, dying and bereavement for not only hospice, but also for "palliative care" with gentle, authentic conversation and questions to the public.*

### **Hospice Ball raises money for health care in the Northern Hills**

*Black Hills Pioneer (Spearfish, South Dakota); by Pioneer Staff Reports; 4/26/24*

*Nearly \$110,000 was raised during the 27th annual Northern Hills Hospice Ball held on April 6. Monument Health hosts the annual event to help raise awareness and support for hospice patients and their families. Proceeds from this year's event supported hospice care in the Northern Hills and a fund-a-mission portion of the event supported the expansion of the Monument Health Spearfish Hospital. "On April 6 we yet again witnessed the Northern Hills community showing up to help uphold the dignity and support of our local Hospice patients," said Hans Nelson, Director of the Monument Health Foundation.*

*[Access to the source article may be limited by a paywall.]*



*Sponsor of Hospice & Palliative Care Today*

### **Drug discount program is exploiting poor patients while corporate giants profit**

*Minnesota Reformer; by David Balto; 4/26/24*

*... The federal 340B drug discount program was created three decades ago to help economically vulnerable Americans access affordable prescription medications and providers in underserved areas expand and improve services. Under the program, drug companies participating in Medicaid — known in Minnesota as Medical Assistance — provide sizeable discounts as high as 50% to these 'safety net' health care facilities. ... Unfortunately, over time, the tens of billions of dollars flowing through this program have proven irresistible to for-profit corporate entities,*

including giant health systems and big box chain pharmacies — and there is no guarantee those discounts are reaching patients.

**Letter: Volunteers make a difference in community**

*The Meadville Tribune - Meadville, PA; by Melissa Swartwood; 4/27/24*

*Our community is at its best when we come together to help others in a time of need. At Hospice of Crawford County, trained volunteers give their time, attention and compassion to help people and families facing the end of life to live as fully as possible. ... Our volunteers specialize in various areas of service, [many examples given]... As we wrap up Volunteer Month ... Hospice of Crawford County would like to show appreciation for our volunteer team. ... Across the United States, more than 430,000 hospice volunteers give over 19 million hours of service every year. Every single volunteer deserves our appreciation and grateful acknowledgement.*

*Editor's Note: We highlight this example of both thanking hospice volunteers and raising community awareness about hospice volunteer opportunities. From Hospice & Palliative Care Today to your organization, we celebrate and thank **your** volunteers!*

**Palliative Care Provider News**

**Sharp decline in early outpatient palliative care despite HMP workforce growth**

*Clinical Pain Advisor; by Lisa Kuhn, PhD; 4/26/24*

*While the number of US Medicare hospice and palliative medicine (HPM) physicians has increased sharply from 2008 to 2020, early outpatient access to specialized care declined significantly during this period, with care concentrated in metropolitan and inpatient settings, according to study results published in the Journal of Pain and Symptom Management. Between 2010 and 2020, the number of HPM fellows increased from 141 to 401. However, recent estimates suggest insufficient capacity to meet the demand for palliative care and hospice needs.*



**Accelerate Impact**  
**Accelerate Influence**  
**Accelerate Innovation**

*Sponsor of Hospice & Palliative Care Today*

**Clinical News**

## ***Attitudes and beliefs regarding Pain Medicine: results of a national palliative physician survey***

*Journal of Pain and Symptom Management; by Daniel K Partain, Wil L Santivasi, Mihir M Kamdar, Susan M Moeschler, Jon C Tilburt, Karen M Fischer, Jacob J Strand; 4/25/24 online ahead of print*

*Objectives: To evaluate referral rates, co-management strategies, and beliefs of palliative physicians about the value of Pain Medicine specialists in patients with serious illness.*

*Conclusion: This study shows that Palliative Care physicians have highly positive attitudes toward Pain Medicine specialists, but referrals remain low. Facilitating professional collaboration via joint educational/clinical sessions is one possible solution to drive ongoing interprofessional care in patients with complex pain.*

## ***How Avow Hospice used triage to boost quality, reduce turnover***

*Hospice News; by Jim Parker; 4/26/24*

*Avow Hospice has implemented a triage system that has resulted in improved quality scores and reduced turnover. The Florida-based provider uses an acuity system that draws data from its electronic medical record (EMR) system to help stratify patients based on their most likely immediate needs. To complement these efforts, Avow also revamped its approach to night time and weekend visits, Rebecca Gatian, COO of Avow Hospice, said at the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization's Virtual Interdisciplinary Conference.*

## ***Understanding is better than criticism***

*The Pike County News Watchman; by Loren Hardin; 4/26/24*

*The first time I met Glenn was at his brother, Kenny's, and sister-in-law, Tressie's wedding anniversary party. ... Glenn walked into the party with a swagger, was wearing dark tinted sunglasses, grabbed his belt, pulled up his pants, stuck out his chest and sat down at the kitchen table. I thought, "Who is this guy wearing dark sunglasses on an overcast day?" To be honest, I thought, "This guy is kind of cocky acting". Little did I know that in the not-too-distant future, I would become Glenn's hospice social worker, nor did he? ... [Click on the title's link to read more of this insightful, inspirational story.]*



## **University of Texas club puts life's memories into book for people receiving hospice care**

*Austin American-Statesman; by Nicole Villalpando; 4/27/24*

*"What would you like your legacy to be?" Galilea Dupree asks Bob Bell, as she and two other University of Texas students gather around the dining room in Bell's North Austin home. ... Bob, 92, has congestive heart failure. After three strokes and two heart attacks, he began receiving services with Hospice Austin in November. He is one of nine people in hospice who are having their stories told by UT students as part of the Last Writers club. The club works with Hospice Austin and Compassus hospice to identify people who would like to have their stories told.*

## **Regulatory News**

### **Federal Court halts lawsuit over Medicare home health payments**

*Bloomberg Law; by Tony Pugh; 4/28/24*

*A federal court in Washington DC tossed a lawsuit against HHS over a disputed payment system that has slashed reimbursements for thousands of home health agencies since it was implemented in 2020. The US District Court for the District of Columbia ruled in a memorandum opinion on April 26 that plaintiffs in the suit by the National Association for Home Care & Hospice (NAHC) failed to exhaust their administrative remedies because they "skipped the agency's process for seeking expedited judicial review." Because of that, the court "will grant the federal government's motion for summary judgment." [Additional content may require subscription.]*

## **Public Policy News**

### **Congresswoman Kat Cammack introduces legislation to block 80-20 Rule**

*Home Health Care News; by Joyce Famakinwa; 4/26/24*

*... On Thursday, Congresswoman Kat Cammack (R-Fla.) introduced a bill to block the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) from finalizing the 80-20 provision. Additionally, the legislation would also block HHS from implementing any similar rules that place a minimum requirement for how much of Medicaid spending on HCBS goes towards direct workers' wages. Cammack's reason for introducing this*



*legislation is her belief that the 80-20 provision will severely limit access to care at a time when providers are already struggling to serve patients.*



## ***Kansas won't have legal medical pot or expand Medicaid for at least another year***

*Newsday; by The Associated Press; 4/26/24*

*Kansas will remain among the handful of states that haven't legalized the medical use of marijuana or expanded their Medicaid programs for at least another year.*

*Republican state senators on Friday blocked efforts to force debates on both issues before the GOP-controlled Legislature's scheduled adjournment for the year Tuesday. Supporters of each measure fell short of the 24 of 40 votes required to pull a bill on each subject out of committee.*

## **Mergers & Aquisition News**

### ***University of Kentucky moves ahead with acquisition of St. Claire HealthCare***

*Spectrum News 1; by Chris Hughes; 4/26/24*

*The University of Kentucky Board of Trustees approved plans to move ahead with the acquisition of St. Claire HealthCare in Morehead, expanding its footprint in the eastern part of the state. ... The two institutions are eyeing a targeted closing date of July 1. St. Claire HealthCare is one of the largest employers in the greater Morehead region, with over 1,300 employees, including over 50 physicians and nearly 50 advanced practice professionals representing more than 20 medical specialties. ... St. Claire also provides home health and hospice services in eight counties.*

## **Post-Acute Care News**

## ***Understanding the scope of aggressive incidents in hospitals | Safer Hospitals***

*Chief Healthcare Executive; by Ron Southwick; 4/26/24*

*Researchers found healthcare workers are facing a verbal or physical incident at least once for every 40 hours worked. Joanne De Santo Iannaco of Yale University talks about protecting staff. Even with more attention being placed on violence in hospitals and health systems, healthcare leaders say many incidents don't come to light.*

*... Much attention has been focused on incidents involving healthcare workers that have resulted in physical injuries, but she says that fails to capture the hostility healthcare workers routinely encounter, she says.*



TURNING DATA INTO INFORMATION – TO IMPROVE PATIENT CARE

*Sponsor of Hospice & Palliative Care Today*

## ***Technology / Innovations News***

### ***Cleveland Clinic eHospital expands to monitor 300,000 patients***

*Becker's Health IT; by Naomi Diaz; 4/24/24*

*Cleveland Clinic's eHospital program has expanded and now monitors 248 patient beds in ICUs and other units across the organization's network. The eHospital program **launched** in 2014 as a pilot in one intensive care unit. ... The program has enabled more patients to receive care at community hospitals, reducing the need for transfers to the main campus, according to Cleveland Clinic. It has also helped decrease ICU lengths of stay and minimize the volume of calls received at night.*

### ***Optum shutting down telehealth business***

*Becker's Health IT; by Jakob Emerson; 4/25/24*

*UnitedHealth Group's Optum Virtual Care is shutting down, Endpoints News reported April 24. News of the closure of the company's telehealth business came shortly after Optum employees took to social media beginning April 18 regarding a reduction in force they say occurred across the organization.*



## General News

### ***Lindon woman's dream of having her music on the radio comes true***

*KSLTV 5, Salt Lake City, Utah; by Alex Cabrero; 4/26/24*

*With weeks left to live, a Lindon woman's dream of her music airing on the radio is becoming a reality. "They are experiences I have had, but there are no words ever that will describe my journey," Gracelyn Wilkinson said. Gracelyn Wilkinson's music, specifically the words to her songs, is about as remarkable as it gets. While she is only 19 years old, she has had the kind of life experiences many people will fortunately never have. ... Gracelyn Wilkinson is now home in Lindon on hospice, where precious time is now measured in days.*

## Education

### ***How leaders are building the healthcare workforce pipeline***

*Becker's Hospital Review; by Kelly Gooch; 4/24/24*

*The workforce is top of mind for hospitals and health systems, and executives are investing in retention and upskilling to address shortages and reduce reliance on contract labor. ... "We've got to start thinking about it differently and probably getting to people a lot earlier than we do now," Laura Hurst, administrator for Cooper Green Mercy Health Services Authority, an affiliate of Birmingham, Ala.-based UAB Health System, told Becker's. ... These strategies include working more closely with high schools, community colleges and other schools to help provide instruction and support and highlight the benefits of working in healthcare.*

## Today's Encouragement

***Those who can, do. Those who can do more, volunteer - Author Unknown***

***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.