

## Cordt Kassner

---

**From:** Hospice & Palliative Care Today Newsletter  
<subscriptions@hospicepalliativecaretoday.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, May 10, 2024 4:00 AM  
**To:** Cordt Kassner  
**Subject:** Your Hospice & Palliative Care Today Newsletter for 05/10/24



**HOSPICE &  
PALLIATIVE CARE  
TODAY**

OUR SPONSORS

[CHAP](#)

[TCG](#)

[LMHPCO](#)

[Composing Life](#)

[Hospice Analytics](#)

[CCCC Webinar](#)

**May 10th, 2024**

### Contents

- [1. Van Dyne, Blumenauer, 38 lawmakers push CMS on hospice integrity](#)
- [2. Ascension health care network disrupted by cyberattack, interrupting clinical operations](#)
- [3. Amedisys to sell 100 locations to advance UnitedHealth group deal](#)
- [4. \[Honoring Nurses Week\] Too many nurses are being assaulted. Some say they are being blamed for the attacks.](#)
- [5. Teeing it up for Hospice of the Valley: Over \\$53k raised](#)
- [6. Action is key to continue to break down barriers for equitable cancer care](#)
- [7. Paris in spring, Bali in winter. How 'bucket lists' help cancer patients handle life and death](#)
- [8. Meet the death doulas who bring comfort to people at the end of their lives](#)

9. [New dementia guide provides best Standards of Care from 100+ not-for-profit hospice, palliative and advanced illness organizations](#)
10. [Addus HomeCare expects 2024 acquisitions](#)
11. [Enhabit concludes review of strategic alternatives](#)
12. [Financial strain on nursing homes sparks buying binge](#)
13. [The Check-Up: How seniors can better take care of their mental health](#)
14. [It's 'unbelievable' Walmart couldn't figure out how to operate primary care clinics profitably, expert says](#)
15. [Major corporate, foundation, and institutional partners join in support of caregiving, the PBS documentary and engagement project from executive producer Bradley Cooper](#)
16. [2024 Hastings Center Cunniff-Dixon Physician Awards announced](#)
17. [SXSW 2024: 'Flipping the Script on End of Life'](#)
18. [In what countries is assisted dying legal or in consideration for being made legal?](#)
19. [Hike For Hospice surpasses expectations: Brings in over \\$167k](#)
20. [Other Business Headlines of Interest, updated 5/9/24 per nasdaq.com](#)
21. [Executive Personnel Changes - 5/10/24](#)
22. [Today's Encouragement: For Mother's Day, "I wonder ..."](#)

## Headlines

### **[Van Duyne, Blumenauer, 38 lawmakers push CMS on hospice integrity](#)**

*VanDuyne.house.gov; Press Release; 5/8/24*

Today, Congresswoman Beth Van Duyne (R-TX) and Congressman Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) led a bipartisan group of 38 lawmakers demanding answers from Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) on the implementation of recent reforms aimed at combatting hospice fraud and abuse.

"When electing to receive hospice care, individuals and their families must be confident the provider is committed to delivering individualized, compassionate care that optimizes quality of life; however, we continue to hear about instances of pervasive fraud and abuse," the lawmakers wrote. ... To better understand the steps CMS has taken to increase program integrity, the lawmakers continued the letter with detailed questions on the implementation of reforms. Read the full letter [here](#). ...

"Thank you, Representatives Blumenauer and Van Duyne, for your leadership in holding CMS accountable and safeguarding hospice patients and families from

fraudulent activities," said Ben Marcantonio, Interim CEO of the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization. "Preserving the integrity of the Medicare Hospice Benefit is paramount to ensure high-quality care for Americans with serious illness and end-of-life care needs."

### **Ascension health care network disrupted by cyberattack, interrupting clinical operations**

*CBS Chicago News; by Adam Harrington and Matthew Cramer; 5/9/24*

The Ascension health care network announced Wednesday that its clinical operations have been disrupted by a cyberattack. In a news release, Ascension said it responded immediately, and access to some systems has been interrupted with remediation efforts in progress. "Our care teams are trained for these kinds of disruptions and have initiated procedures to ensure patient care delivery continues to be safe and as minimally impacted as possible," Ascension said in a news release. "There has been a disruption to clinical operations, and we continue to assess the impact and duration of the disruption."

### **Amedisys to sell 100 locations to advance UnitedHealth group deal**

*Hospice News; by Holly Vossel; 5/8/24*

Amedisys Inc. has agreed to divest upwards of 100 home health and hospice locations to an undisclosed private equity buyer as the company addresses regulators' antitrust concerns in its pending acquisition by the UnitedHealth Group's (UNH) health care services arm Optum. The news came in a recent social media post from The Capitol Forum. Selling off some of Amedisys' locations in overlapping markets within Optum's service region may help push the transaction forward amid mounting regulatory concerns. The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) is mulling a possible lawsuit to block the acquisition, citing potential antitrust issues related to the deal. The concerns center around the ability for other providers to compete if Optum and Amedisys combine their geographic footprints.



*Sponsor of Hospice & Palliative Care Today*

## **[Honoring Nurses Week] Too many nurses are being assaulted. Some say they are being blamed for the attacks.**

*Chief Healthcare Executive; by Ron Southwick; 5/9/24*

With disturbing regularity, nurses in hospitals and other healthcare settings are being physically assaulted and verbally harassed. More than half of emergency nurses say they've been assaulted or threatened within the past 30 days, according to the Emergency Nurses Association. In a separate study, researchers found that healthcare workers faced at least one violent or aggressive incident for every 40 hours worked, according to findings published by The Joint Commission Journal on Quality and Patient Safety. With the observance of National Nursing Week, the increased violence in healthcare can't be ignored. Nursing leaders say the regular exposure to violence or threatening behavior is one factor adding to stress and burnout of nurses and, in some cases, spurring them to seek new jobs.

## **Hospice Provider News**

### **Teeing it up for Hospice of the Valley: Over \$53k raised**

*City Sun Times; by Lin Sue Flood; 5/6/24*

It was a picture-perfect day out at Grayhawk Golf Club for Hospice of the Valley's 2024 Pro-Am Golf Tournament, presented by Cigna Healthcare. The March 28 event in Scottsdale raised over \$53,000 for the nonprofit's charity care programs. "It's a tournament that is meaningful for all players," said sponsor Tim Louis, who competes every year with wife Amy in memory of his parents. ... Volunteer tournament chairman Jay Hoselton started the event in 1998, raising more than \$1 million in the years since to help provide compassionate care to thousands of patients and families in need.

## **Clinical News**

### **Action is key to continue to break down barriers for equitable cancer care**

*OncoLive; by Ryan Scott; 5/8/24*

Experts from the University of Wisconsin (UW) School of Medicine and Public Health, including Catherine Zhang, MD, MPH, ... Monica Patel, MD, ... Janelle N. Sobecki, MD, ... and Loyda Braithwaite, NP ... participated in an interview with *OncoLive*® on disparities in cancer care. In [this] interview, these experts

addressed significant barriers to equitable cancer treatment and highlighted challenges for rural communities to access specialized oncologic care. Furthermore, they emphasized financial limitations affecting treatment access, specifically for marginalized groups, and the need to push for health policy changes. ...



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

*Sponsor of Hospice & Palliative Care Today*

## **Paris in spring, Bali in winter. How 'bucket lists' help cancer patients handle life and death**

*The Conversation; by Vivian Lam; 5/8/24*

In the 2007 film *The Bucket List* Jack Nicholson and Morgan Freeman play two main characters who respond to their terminal cancer diagnoses by rejecting experimental treatment. Instead, they go on a range of energetic, overseas escapades. Since then, the term "bucket list" – a list of experiences or achievements to complete before you "kick the bucket" or die – has become common. ... But there is a more serious side to the idea behind bucket lists. One of the key forms of suffering at the end of life is regret for things left unsaid or undone. So bucket lists can serve as a form of insurance against this potential regret. The bucket-list search for adventure, memories and meaning takes on a life of its own with a diagnosis of life-limiting illness.

*Editor's Note: Health acuity (especially for hospice patients), finances, and other practical factors can prevent actualization of the person's bucket list wishes. Yes, fulfilling items can happen! And when not possible (perhaps the most common response), the clinician's sensitive presence, validation of the person's hope, and gentle exploration of why it matters can bring relevant, meaningful support. Involving family members (with the patient's permission) can inspire other generations to fulfill the person's wish, bringing new purpose to mourning and grief-restoration processes ahead.*

## **Meet the death doulas who bring comfort to people at the end of their lives**

*Fortune Well; by Liz Seegert; 5/7/24*

... "The essence of doula care is to provide non-judgmental support and guidance to individuals and families through times of critical, transformative life change," according to the National End of Life Doula Alliance (NEDA), a member-based nonprofit that offers trainings and directories. Their role complements that of other services, such as hospice or palliative care, with physical, emotional, spiritual, and practical support. That can include holding someone's hand or listening as a patient reminisces, or simply being a calming presence during the dying process. On the practical side, a doula might help the patient draft advance directives or family members with tasks like care coordination, vigil planning, respite care, and bereavement support.

### **New dementia guide provides best Standards of Care from 100+ not-for-profit hospice, palliative and advanced illness organizations**

*PR Newswire; by National Partnership for Healthcare and Hospice Innovation (NPHI); 5/9/24*

The National Partnership for Healthcare and Hospice Innovation (NPHI), the national voice for not-for-profit hospice care, in collaboration with Aliviado Health and the Center to Advance Palliative Care (CAPC), announces today the release of the NPHI "Dementia Care Resources Provider Guide." The new guide aims to improve the quality of life for patients with dementia, reducing hospitalizations, and easing the burden of advanced illness for families and caregivers. A dementia diagnosis poses substantial challenges for both patients and their families, impacting millions of Americans nationwide. Shockingly, the Alzheimer's Association reports that an estimated 6.7 million individuals in the U.S. currently live with dementia.



*Sponsor of Hospice & Palliative Care Today*

## **Mergers & Aquisition News**

### **Addus HomeCare expects 2024 acquisitions**

*Hospice News; by Jim Parker; 5/7/24*

Addus HomeCare Corp. is poised for further acquisitions, potentially including some hospice deals. The company is seeking to pair its clinical services with its

personal business in its existing markets. This is a cornerstone of its acquisition strategy. But Addus Chairman and CEO Dirk Allison does not rule out the possibility of moving into new markets if circumstances are right. ... When examining new markets, Addus focuses on regions where they can quickly become the largest or second-largest provider by market share, according to CFO Brian Poff. ... Addus' roughly 33,000 employees provide hospice, home health and private duty nursing services across more than 200 locations in 22 states.

### **Enhabit concludes review of strategic alternatives**

*Valdosta Daily Times; Press Release; 5/8/24*

Enhabit, Inc., a leading home health and hospice provider, today announced Enhabit's Board of Directors (the "Board") has concluded the Company's strategic review process, announced in August 2023, which was overseen by the Board with assistance from its financial and legal advisors, Goldman Sachs and Sidley Austin, respectively. After evaluating a full range of strategic alternatives, including a potential sale, merger or other transaction, the Board unanimously determined that continuing to execute on the Company's strategic plan as an independent, public company is in the best interests of the Company and its shareholders at this time.

### **Financial strain on nursing homes sparks buying binge**

*Modern Healthcare; by Diane Eastabrook; 5/8/24*

Skilled nursing facility deals increased more than 80% in the first quarter of 2024 compared with the same period in 2023. There were 57 nursing home acquisitions valued at nearly \$1.4 billion in the first quarter of this year compared with 31 deals valued at \$448 million during the same period last year, according to Levin Associates, which tracks healthcare mergers and acquisitions. ... Last year was the worst year for healthcare bankruptcies in five years, according to restructuring and consulting firm [Gibbins Advisors](#). Senior living and pharmaceuticals accounted for half of the 79 Chapter 11 filings in healthcare in 2023, the company said. It predicted continued distress for the senior care industry this year in a January research report.



## General News

### **The Check-Up: How seniors can better take care of their mental health**

*The Keene Sentinel; by Olivia Belanger Sentinel Staff; 5/8/24*

My generation talks about mental health a lot. In our late 20s, my friends and I routinely check in to see how we're feeling, reschedule plans because we're in a mental funk or talk about how we can help support each other when we're not feeling mentally healthy. ... But I know that for older generations, this can be hard to come by. ... [Older] adults are more likely to experience life changes — like coping with a serious illness or losing a loved one — which can lead to feelings of grief, social isolation or loneliness, according to the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH). Loneliness in particular is one of the biggest threats to seniors, especially those who live in rural areas like the Monadnock Region where reliable transportation is limited. Research shows loneliness is as bad for people's health as smoking 15 cigarettes per day, according to the U.S. Surgeon General. Signs that you may need to help your mental health, NIMH says, include: ...

### **It's 'unbelievable' Walmart couldn't figure out how to operate primary care clinics profitably, expert says**

*Healthcare Brew; by Maia Anderson; 5/7/24*

Walmart's decision to shutter its Walmart Health initiative at the end of April left some healthcare industry experts wondering: If Walmart—the largest company in the world by revenue—can't profitably operate primary care clinics, who can? Given the retailer's enormous scale, it's more likely Walmart simply decided to focus on more profitable aspects of healthcare, one expert told Healthcare Brew.



## **Major corporate, foundation, and institutional partners join in support of caregiving, the PBS documentary and engagement project from executive producer Bradley Cooper**

*WETA; Press Release by Project Partners on National Engagement Initiative include Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregivers, Milken Institute for the Future of Aging, Grantmakers In Aging, Global Coalition on Aging, and National Alliance for Caregiving; 5/8/24*

WETA President and Chief Executive Officer Sharon Percy Rockefeller today announced the shared commitment from a slate of major funders and partners to support the documentary and engagement campaign for the new project Caregiving, currently in production. Bradley Cooper is an executive producer of the two-hour documentary slated to premiere on PBS in Spring 2025. Funders for this ambitious project include Otsuka America Pharmaceutical Inc.; Evelyn Y. Davis Foundation; Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation, Care.com; and the National Alliance on Mental Illness. Support for the engagement and outreach for Caregiving is made possible by The John A. Hartford Foundation.



## **2024 Hastings Center Cunniff-Dixon Physician Awards announced**

*The Hastings Center email; 5/9/24*

The Hastings Center and The Cunniff-Dixon Foundation are pleased to announce six recipients of awards that honor physicians for providing exemplary care to patients nearing the end of life. The awards are based on technical competence, personal integrity, empathic dialogue with patients, active engagement with the family and loved ones, practical and heartfelt communication regarding advance directives, and compassionate alleviation of suffering. Congratulations:

- **Dr. Richard Payne Leadership Award: Hunter Groninger, MD, FAAHPM,** Director of the Section of Palliative Care, MedStar Washington Hospital

Center; Scientific Director for Palliative Care, MedStar Health Research Institute; and Professor of Medicine, Georgetown University.

- **Senior Physician Award: Julie Hauer, MD, FAAHPM**, Division of General Pediatrics, Boston Children’s Hospital; Assistant Professor, Harvard Medical School.
- **Mid-Career Physician Award: Lynn Flint, MD**, Clinical Professor in the Division of Geriatrics, University of California, San Francisco.
- **Early-Career Physician Awards: Andre M. Cipta, MD, FAAHPM**, Assistant Professor of Clinical Science, Kaiser Permanente Bernard J. Tyson School of Medicine.
- **Early-Career Physician Awards: Richard Leiter, MD, MA**, Assistant Professor of Medicine, Harvard Medical School.
- **Early-Career Physician Awards: Tyler Tate, MD**, Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, Oregon Health and Science University (OHSU).

### **SXSW 2024: ‘Flipping the Script on End of Life’**

*The Michigan Daily; by Olivai Tarling; 5/7/24*

If you asked me to describe a Hollywood death scene, I’m pretty sure I could do it perfectly. ... This panel discussed the taboo topic of death and the dangers of its inaccurate portrayals on screen. Panel members included Zoanne Clack (“Grey’s Anatomy”), doctor-turned executive-producer, screenwriter Scott Z. Burns (“Contagion”) and Julie McFadden, hospice nurse and social media personality, as they discussed the taboo topic of death and the dangers of its inaccurate portrayals on screen.

## **International News**

### **In what countries is assisted dying legal or in consideration for being made legal?**

*The Week; by Devika Rao; 5/8/24*

A handful of countries have opted to allow assisted dying, while others are discussing its legalization. ... The practice is hotly contested and is still illegal in most of the world. However, a handful of countries have opted to allow the practice and others are discussing its legalization. ... [Click on the title's link for descriptions in different countries.]

## Recognizing and Responding to Mental Health Issues in Palliative Care

*With Nathan Fairman, MD, MPH*

Wednesday, May 15, 2024 | Noon-1:00 (PDT)

1.0 CE available for nurses, social workers, and MFTs

*Interesting education opportunity*

### **Hike For Hospice surpasses expectations: Brings in over \$167k**

*CKXS, 99.1, Chatham-Kent & Lambton County (Southwest Ontario, Canada); 5/7/24*

An annual walk in support of end-of-life care in Chatham-Kent has smashed its fundraising record. More than 500 people took part in the eighth annual Hike for Hospice event on Sunday at John McGregor Secondary School and Mud Creek Trail. The Chatham-Kent Hospice Foundation surpassed its \$140,000 fundraising goal, bringing in \$167,500 through pledges collected by hikers and sponsors. "It was so touching to see so many people walking together on the trail and all the memorial signs are just a reminder of the impact Hospice has made in our community," said Event Co-Chair Ginny Hawken in a news release.

## Other News

### **Other Business Headlines of Interest, updated 5/9/24 per nasdaq.com**

- Adus HomeCare (ADUS: \$105.71)
- Amedisys (AMED: \$94.00)
  
- BrightSpring Health (BTSG: \$11.45)
- Encompass (EHC: \$85.84)
- Enhabit (EHAB: \$8.31)
- Ensign Group (ENSG: \$117.15)
- HCA Healthcare (HCA: \$317.33)
- Humana (HUM: \$330.30)
- Pennant Group (PNTG: \$21.83)
  
- Vitas / Chemed Corp (CHE: \$575.76)

## Executive Personnel Changes - 5/10/24

- Agrace hires Dr. Hilary Bingo as Vice President of Medical Services
- Brigham and Women's Hospital appointed Julia mason, DNP, RN as Chief Nursing Officer and Senior Vice President of Patient Care Services, effective June 11
- Colorado PACE, an affiliate of Care Synergy, appointed Emily Dawson Petersen as Executive Director, in advance of its anticipated Q4 2024 launch in the Denver Metro area
- CommonSpirit Health named Anthony Houston, EdD as President, Arizona Market
- Southwest Medical Hospice and Optum Palliative Care promotes Brian Greenless to Executive Director

## Today's Encouragement

"I wonder if my first breath was as soul-stirring to my mother as her last breath was to me." -

Lisa Goich-Andreadis, *14 Days: A Mother, A Daughter, A Two-Week Goodbye*

*Editor's Note: We wish you a wonder-filled Mother's Day Weekend! Remembering my mom, Jane ...*

***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.