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**HOSPICE &
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TODAY**

May 20th, 2024

Contents

- [1. 'Cuddle therapy' ponies help bring joy to patients and staff at local hospice](#)
- [2. Connecticut hospices obtain carveout from sweeping safety bill](#)
- [3. Addus CEO: Hospice headwinds starting to abate](#)
- [4. Compassus taps Fresenius veteran Michael Asselta as next CEO](#)
- [5. Teleios recognized as one of the best places to work in healthcare in 2024](#)
- [6. Big Bend Hospice, Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare plan to build value-based network, offer palliative care](#)
- [7. 'Great Resignation' becomes 'Great Reshuffle' of American jobs](#)
- [8. 'Bodacious' mentorship, honesty needed to retain LTC leaders of tomorrow, experts say](#)

9. [Old but important news] Consumer alerts added to the Nursing Home Compare website and the Five Star Quality Rating System
10. Surging hospital prices are helping keep inflation high
11. The private-equity deal that flattened a hospital chain and its landlord
12. Hospitals are refusing to do surgeries unless you pay in full first
13. I kept crying
14. Caring for young caregivers, a hidden population
15. Today's Encouragement

Hospice Provider News



'Cuddle therapy' ponies help bring joy to patients and staff at local hospice

[London] Bedford Independent; by Emily Moriarty-Jones; 5/18/24

The patients and staff of Sue Ryder St John's Hospice in Moggerhanger were excited to be greeted by two very special guests recently, when Teddy and Mouse, a pair of 'cuddle therapy ponies' came for a visit. Those being cared for at the hospice, as well as their families and Sue Ryder staff were given the chance to pet, brush and interact with the placid pair.

Connecticut hospices obtain carveout from sweeping safety bill

McKnight's Home Care; by Adam Healy; 5/15/24

Grassroots advocacy paid off for Connecticut's hospice providers. Last week, they

successfully obtained a carveout from Senate Bill 1, which requires home-based healthcare providers to run background checks on all potential clients. “It was basically a total victory,” Barbara Pearce, chief executive officer of The Connecticut Hospice and the main proponent calling for a carveout, told McKnight’s Home Care Daily Pulse. “You’re never going to defeat Senate Bill One, because they said - in naming it - it’s their top priority. We just tried to take hospice off, and we did.” ... The bill would have unintentionally limited patients’ access to hospice care, Pearce said. By the time a background check could be conducted on a client, it may be too late to provide effective care for the patient. Furthermore, current staffing challenges hospices face would make compliance even harder, she noted.

Addus CEO: Hospice headwinds starting to abate

Hospice News; by Jim Parker; 5/16/24

Addus Homecare Corp. (NASDAQ: ADUS) is seeing constrictions on growth start to ease in its hospice business. Many of those headwinds were associated with lingering effects of the pandemic. Like many hospice providers, Addus has faced COVID-19 challenges that include reduced patient volumes and shorter length of stays. Now, the company’s hospice rebound is starting to accelerate, CEO Dirk Allison said during the Bank of America Securities Health Care Conference.



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Compassus taps Fresenius veteran Michael Asselta as next CEO

Home Health Care News; by Joyce Famakinwa; 5/7/24

There’s a new leader at the helm of Compassus. The company’s board of directors has named Michael J. Asselta as CEO. Compassus is one of the largest home-based care providers in the country. The Brentwood, Tennessee-based company provides home health, hospice, palliative and home infusion services across more than 270 locations in 30 states.

Teleios recognized as one of the best places to work in healthcare in 2024

Press release; by Claudia Polancich; 5/14/24

Hendersonville, NC May 14, 2024: Teleios Collaborative Network (TCN) has been selected by Modern Healthcare as one of the 2024 Best Places to Work in Healthcare. The complete list of this year's winners, in alphabetical order, is available at ModernHealthcare.com/BestPlacesList.

Palliative Care Provider News

Big Bend Hospice, Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare plan to build value-based network, offer palliative care

Hospice News; by Jim Parker; 5/14/24

A new collaboration for transitional care between Florida-based Big Bend Hospice (BBH) and the Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare (TMH) system has more going on behind the scenes. Big Bend, a nonprofit provider, in 2021 formed a new parent company called Seven Oaks Health. TMH has entered into an affiliation agreement with Seven Oaks Health, as the new organization works over the next five years to build a larger value-based network to provide transitional and palliative care, social determinants support, as well as care navigation and other services. Looking to the future, the organizations' plans to engage in value-based care could manifest through participation in the Accountable Care Organization Realizing Equity, Access and Community Health (ACO REACH) model.



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Post-Acute Care News

'Great Resignation' becomes 'Great Reshuffle' of American jobs

McKnight's Senior Living; by Kathleen Steele Gaivin; 5/16/24

After a record number of workers left their jobs in the early part of the decade in what was known as the "Great Resignation," the American workforce has entered a period now dubbed the "Great Reshuffle," according to the World Economic

Forum. "While quit rates remain high, hiring rates continue to outpace them as many workers have been transitioning to other jobs in search of an improved work-life balance and flexibility, increased compensation, or a strong company culture," the US Chamber of Commerce reported.

'Bodacious' mentorship, honesty needed to retain LTC leaders of tomorrow, experts say

McKnight's Long-Term Care News; by Josh Henreckson; 5/17/24

Cultivating mentorships in long-term care is vital to bringing up and retaining the next generation of sector leaders, a group of six prominent women leaders said this week at a McKnight's Women of Distinction Forum panel. The speakers ... repeatedly emphasized the core needs of honesty, humility and an ongoing commitment to learning for successful mentors.

[Old but important news] **Consumer alerts added to the Nursing Home Compare website and the Five Star Quality Rating System**

CMS; 10/7/19


Adding an "abuse icon" to facilities cited for abuse: Every nursing home resident deserves be treated with respect at all times. Abuse is never acceptable and CMS is very concerned about incidents related to abuse (including neglect and exploitation) in nursing homes. ... As part of this strategy, we want to make it easier for consumers to identify facilities with instances of non-compliance related to abuse. To do this, in October 2019, we are adding an icon to highlight facilities that meet the following criteria: 1) Facilities cited for abuse where residents were found to be harmed (Scope/Severity of G or higher) on the most recent standard survey, or on a complaint survey within the past 12 months; or 2) Facilities cited for abuse where residents were found to be potentially harmed (Scope/Severity of D or higher) on the most recent standard survey or a complaint survey within the past 12 months, and on the previous (i.e., second most recent) standard survey or on a complaint survey in the prior 12 months (i.e., from 24 months ago to 12 months ago).

Publisher's Note: With apologies for "old news", this was "new news" to me - i.e., that Care Compare for Nursing Facilities includes a "red stop hand" and a "yellow triangle warning" to warn consumers of poor performers. When might this be added to Care Compare for Hospice, and what criteria might be used?



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Surging hospital prices are helping keep inflation high

Wall Street Journal; by Melanie Evans; 5/16/24

A 7.7% increase in prices at hospitals last month was the highest in 13 years. ... Hospitals didn't raise prices as early in the pandemic as supermarkets, retailers and restaurants. But they have been making up ground since then. Their increases have contributed to stubbornly high inflation readings from the consumer-price index, which in April increased 3.4% from a year ago. Hospital prices specifically jumped 7.7% last month from a year ago, the highest increase in any month since October 2010, the Labor Department said Wednesday. ... Hospitals sat out the first waves of inflation that swept through the economy in recent years, though not by choice. Their prices were locked in under contracts with health insurers, for more than a year in some cases. As hospitals have renegotiated prices, inflation has taken hold.

The private-equity deal that flattened a hospital chain and its landlord

Wall Street Journal; by Jonathan WeilFollow; 5/7/24

Cerberus made a big profit, but Steward went bankrupt and its landlord suffered big losses. In the spring of 2020, Cerberus Capital Management was faced with a tricky financial situation. It owned a struggling hospital chain that needed \$400 million to dig out of a deep financial hole, but Cerberus wanted to sell rather

than invest more. The deal helped shape much of what followed for Steward Health Care System over the next four years, culminating this week in the Chapter 11 filing of Steward, one of the biggest hospital bankruptcies in U.S. history. ... The 2020 deal paved the way for Cerberus to sell its majority stake in Steward to the hospital chain's chief executive and others and lock in an eventual \$800 million profit. It bought time for the CEO and new majority owner, Dr. Ralph de la Torre, who received a big cash payout himself the next year.

Hospitals are refusing to do surgeries unless you pay in full first

Wall Street Journal; by Melanie Evans; 5/9/24

Now, more hospitals and surgery centers are demanding patients pay in advance. Advance billing helps the facilities avoid hounding patients to settle up. Yet it is distressing patients who must come up with thousands of dollars while struggling with serious conditions. Heather Miconi has seven weeks to come up with \$2,000 to pay for surgery her daughter needs to breathe more easily. Merritt Island Surgery Center in Merritt Island, Fla., billed Miconi in advance of the adenoid and tonsil surgery. If she can't pay for the surgery before it is scheduled to take place next month, the procedure will be put off. Miconi, whose insurance won't cover the cost because she has a high deductible, works three jobs and doesn't have savings to cover the cost. She is now appealing to strangers through a GoFundMe campaign for help. For years, hospitals and surgery centers waited to perform procedures before sending bills to patients. That often left them chasing after patients for payment, repeatedly sending invoices and enlisting debt collectors. Those who can't come up with the sums have been forced to put off procedures. Some who paid up discovered later they were overcharged, then had to fight for refunds. Among the procedures that hospitals and surgery centers are seeking prepayments for are knee replacements, CT scans and births.



General News

I kept crying

JAMA Network; by Alexis Harmon; 4/15

[Opinion] "The patient is a 31-week infant born via crash C-section in the setting of placental abruption." How many times have I said that sentence as a physician? It seems like a million, or at least enough times that it became routine. At one point during my intern year, my colleagues and I cared for 3 sets of twin neonates all born between 30 and 31 weeks' gestation. I remember finishing that rotation and feeling like caring for this population no longer felt "scary." As pediatric residents, we knew how to prepare for these newborns and fully expected that they would have excellent outcomes medically. All this changed when I was curled in the fetal position, midcontraction, my thigh throbbing from a betamethasone injection and my spine burning from a lidocaine injection...

Publisher's Note: A reminder that personal experience changes everything...

Caring for young caregivers, a hidden population

STAT; by Kimia Heydari, Romila Santra; 5/9/24

Of the estimated 48 million caregivers in the U.S., an estimated 14 million are under the age of 24. The growing burden of unpaid caregiving is increasingly falling on young people.

Today's Encouragement

If you get up in the morning and think the future is going to be better, it is a bright day. Otherwise it is not. ~ Elon Musk



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