

## Cordt Kassner

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TODAY**

## May 30th, 2024

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## Headlines

### **Hospice CAHPS scores updated 5/22/24**

*CMS CAHPS® website; multiple updates posted 5/22/24*

CMS has posted numerous CAHPS® Hospice Survey updates. Click on the title's link to access the CMS site. Click on "Care Compare Reporting Updates" or the following 5/22/24 updates:

- CAHPS Hospice Survey Response Rate
- Case-Mix Adjustment Methods for CAHPS Hospice Survey Measures Document Posted
- CAHPS Hospice Survey State Scores Posted
- CAHPS Hospice Survey National Percentiles Posted

### **NAHC, NHPCO to merge, Dombi to retire**

*McKnights Home Care; by Adam Healy; 5/23/24*

The National Association for Home Care & Hospice and the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization are on track to begin merging by July. In a related development, NAHC's president William Dombi disclosed that he intends to retire by the end of 2024. "Both boards have authorized an affiliation agreement; it's fully drafted," Ken Albert, chair of NAHC's board of directors, told *McKnight's Home Care Daily Pulse* in an interview. "We're looking to transition July 1 of this year. The transition board has been selected. I'll serve as chair of that transition board; [NHPCO board chair] Melinda Gruber will serve as vice chair. Board members have been identified, and then that next six months from July to December will kind of be the operational integration. We're in the process of recruiting a new CEO right now, and then all the tech-side, the backend, office-end, that's going on right now." Albert added that neither Bill Dombi or Ben Marcantonio, NHPCO's chief executive officer, would be eligible to lead the new organization.

## Hospice Provider News

## **NHPCO speaks out on 2025 Proposed Medicare Hospice Rates**

*Hospice News; by Jim Parker; 5/28/24*

The proposed 2.6% payment increase for hospices is insufficient in today's economic climate, the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO) indicated in comments on the 2025 proposed payment rule. ... [Read more for multiple issues addressed.] ... For 2025, the hospice industry group also asked CMS to reconsider the proposed payment rate based on more recent data. ... "It is important to note that hospices, unlike certain other provider types, are at the mercy of these rate updates with no means to address inaccuracies in the market basket forecast. This results in payment rates that are not accurately aligned with the costs faced by hospice providers," NHPCO indicated.



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## **Early talks about governance essential for nonprofit hospice affiliations**

*Hospice News, by Jim Parker; 5/28/24*

Nonprofit hospices can combine their businesses in a number of ways, including traditional acquisitions, board member substitutions and other types of affiliations. However, member substitutions are becoming more common, according to Meg Pekarske, partner at the law firm Husch Blackwell. While this model offers benefits it can also become a political minefield that can sink an affiliation. ...

## **Golfers swing for a cause raising \$15,000 for local nonprofit**

*Avow Cares; press release by Renee Stoll; 5/28/24*

Hadinger Flooring hosted its 17th Annual Classic Golf Tournament on May 9, 2024, at Tiburon Golf Club, raising \$15,000 for local nonprofit Avow. ... The event hosted 150 golfers from various regions around the United States. ... Avow is a nonprofit provider of hospice, palliative care and grief support services.

## **Palliative Care Provider News**

## How palliative care is changing in today's health care environment

*Hospice News; by Molly Bookner; 5/29/24*

As the palliative care field continues to grow and transform, understanding the current trends, outlook, relevant challenges and necessary skills for future leaders is critical. Two significant trends impacting the field of palliative care currently, according to experts, are the expansion of services and the integration of technology, particularly artificial intelligence (AI). Dr. Vicki Jackson, board president of the American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine (AAHPM), noted that palliative care has demonstrated a positive impact on patient-reported outcomes across various illnesses, including cancer, heart, liver, kidney disease and dementia.



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## Clinical News

### The real cost of cancer: 49% of patients carry \$5K+ in medical debt

*Becker's Hospital Review; by Ashleigh Hollowell; 5/28/24*

... Now, 47% of cancer patients accumulate debt as a result of their medical needs, *The Wall Street Journal* reported May 28. ... Some Americans are facing \$38,000 or even more in medical debt, the *Journal* found. Additionally, more cancer patients are filing for bankruptcy, which one study linked to an 80% increased risk of dying. ... A 2024 survey of 1,284 cancer patients and survivors led by the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network also found that: ...

- Nearly 98% were insured when they acquired the debt related to their cancer. ...
- At least 25 patients of the 1,284 surveyed said they delayed or skipped treatments to avoid going into more medical debt. ...
- [Click the title's link for more data]

*Editor's Note: Executive leaders and clinical managers, be aware that your interdisciplinary team members walk into patients' homes and hospital/nursing*

*facility rooms with these financial stressors for the patient, caregiver, and family. The person with cancer may feel guilt. Family conflict about care decisions can erupt, especially if Advance Directives are not in place. While hospice does not solve previous debt from cancer care, awareness of this factor can provide another layer of empathic support for the patient and caregiver/family. Additionally, through ongoing battles about Medical Aid in Dying (MAiD), many persons seeking MAiD often voice fears of being a financial burden to the family. Pair this with another article in today's newsletter, **"56 percent willing to dip into retirement savings to be family caregiver: survey."***

### **56 percent willing to dip into retirement savings to be family caregiver: survey**

*McKnights Senior Living; by Kathleen Steele Gaivin; 5/23/24*

Fifty-six percent of Americans participating in a new survey said they would be willing to take a loan from their own retirement fund to become a caregiver for someone else. Results of the Nationwide Retirement Institute 2024 Long-Term Care Survey were released Tuesday. The research, conducted online March 12 through April 2 by The Harris Poll on behalf of Nationwide, surveyed 1,334 adults aged 28 or more years who had household incomes of at least \$75,000. Dipping into retirement savings can make a serious dent into long-term finances. Forty-two percent of the respondents said they believe that being a family caregiver likely will use up the money they had planned for the future, and 43% of the total said that they are afraid that caregiving expenses will keep them from ever retiring.

*Editor's Note: Pair this with another article in today's newsletter, **"The real cost of cancer: 49% of patients carry \$5K+ in medical debt."***

## **Regulatory News**

### **To guard themselves from sanctions, home health agencies need to invest in QAPI programs, NAHC experts say**

*McKnights Home Care; by Adam Healy; 5/22/24*

To protect themselves against the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' compliance enforcement mechanisms, home care providers must focus on quality assessment and performance improvement (QAPI) programs, experts at the National Association for Home Care & Hospice said during a webinar.

... Earlier this month, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services [released updates](#) to its enforcement remedies and alternative sanctions for home health and hospice agencies. These remedies and sanctions may be imposed in lieu of termination for providers with condition-level deficiencies. They include civil money penalties, payment suspensions, temporarily-appointed management, directed plans of correction or in-service training.



## Mergers & Acquisition News

### **[PACS Group subsidiaries to acquire 53 long-term care properties across 8 states](#)**

*McKnights Senior Living; by Kathleen Steele Gaivin; 5/24/24*

PACS Group is on an accelerated growth trajectory since [going public](#) earlier this month. ... The Farmington, UT-based holding company announced plans Thursday for subsidiaries to acquire the operations of 53 skilled nursing facilities and senior living communities across eight western states. The properties currently are being operated by Prestige Care or Prestige Senior Living. The company anticipates that the transactions will close in the third quarter. PACS Group already is one of the country's largest nursing home operators. Founded in 2013, the company's portfolio includes more than 200 facilities, mostly SNFs but also some assisted living communities.

## Technology / Innovations News

### **Newsweek's 24 best digital health records companies in the US**

*Becker's Health IT; by Laura Dyra; 5/24/24*

*Newsweek* honored 24 health records companies among the top digital health companies in the U.S. for 2024. The publication worked with Statista to identify more than 400 companies worldwide to honor among the best digital health companies of the year. Companies were evaluated by financial performance, web and app traffic data and the impact of their product or service. [[Click here for](#)] the 24 health records companies *Newsweek* honored as part of the inaugural World's Best Digital Health Companies 2024 list.

### **7 health systems hit by cybersecurity incidents in May**

*Becker's Health IT; by Naomi Diaz; 5/24/24*

Several hospitals and health systems have reported cybersecurity incidents that have led to compromised patient data and IT systems during May. Here are seven cybersecurity incidents as reported by *Becker's* during May. [[Click on the title's link for details.](#)]

1. Winter Haven Hospital [Florida] ...
2. CentroMed [Texas] ...
3. Trego County Lemke Memorial Hospital [Kansas] ...
4. Allina Health [Minnesota] ...
5. Ascension [Missouri] ....
6. Palomar Health Medical Group [California] ...
7. MedStar Health [Maryland] ...





## **Healthcare rethinks cybersecurity staffing as threats rise**

*Modern Healthcare; by Gabriel Perna; 5/28/24*

... Health systems and insurers are dealing with the aftermath of the industry's latest large-scale ransomware attacks, ... Conversations are happening over whether organizations should be bringing in outside consultants or hiring more employees, executives say. ... In 2023, a record 133 million individuals were potentially affected by healthcare data breaches, according to the Health and Human Services Department's Office for Civil Rights breach portal. ... One of the biggest challenges healthcare organizations face in dealing with these threats is hiring qualified talent, according to a survey of cybersecurity professionals within the industry the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society published in March.

## **General News**

### **22 top hospitals and systems, 15K+ open jobs**

*Becker's Hospital Review; by Kelly Gooch; 5/24/24*

Hospitals and health systems continue to grapple with workforce challenges, including recruiting top talent in a competitive environment. Below are the number of job openings at hospitals and health systems that are among those named to the *U.S. News & World Report's* 2023-24 [Best Hospitals Honor Roll](#). ... The numbers are from job boards as of May 24. [Click on the title's link for this list.]

## **Today's Encouragement**

**I can't change you and you can't change me, but together we can work to change the world! – Germany Kent**





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