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**HOSPICE &
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TODAY**

June 7th, 2024

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Headlines

[NAHC President Bill Dombi reflects on tenure: We Went 'To War' on behalf of our providers](#)

Home Health News; by Joyce Famakinwa; 6/4/24

For more than 40 years, William A. Dombi has been one of home-based care's fiercest advocates. He became the National Association for Home Care & Hospice's (NAHC) vice president for law in 1987, and has been a key player in many of the advancements and milestones that have moved the industry forward. Those include the growth of the home health benefit under Medicare, the implementation of the home health prospective payment system in 2000 and much, much more. ... Home Health Care News recently caught up with Dombi to look back at his time at NAHC, and on what he believes to be the biggest accomplishments during his tenure.

[It pays to know: What 100 looks like!](#)

Rafu Shimpo; by Judd Matsunaga, Esq; 6/5/24

Not too long ago, seeing a person 100 years of age was a rare thing. Now, they're becoming more commonplace. There are an estimated 90,000 centenarians living in the U.S. It's still a small percentage of the population, but it's a number that's expected to keep increasing. By 2060, there could be about 600,000 people who are 100 or older, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Is there a secret recipe for a longer life? What's it take to get there? That's a question geriatrician Thomas Perls, M.D., has been investigating for decades with the New England Centenarian Study. ...

1. ... Choose the right life partner. ...
2. ... Do what you love. ...
3. ... Don't neglect your education. ...
4. ... Learn tolerance. ...
5. ... Cherish your friendships. ...
6. ... Think positive. ...
7. ... Learn from your elders. ...
8. ... Believe in your own potential. ...
9. ... Be kind. ...
10. ... Keep moving. ...

Editor's Note: Enjoy this article's great, life-affirming wisdom!

Registration open for 2024 Home Health and Hospice Medicare Administrative Collaborative Summit

Palmetto email; 6/6/24

Registration is now open for the 2024 Home Health and Hospice (HHH) Medicare Administrative Contractor (MAC) Collaborative Summit! This national Medicare event includes all three HHH MACs, more than 40 live speakers, presenting a rigorous, three-day comprehensive conference. This event is being held live, in-person at the Flamingo Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas, Nevada, on October 2-4, 2024. Please review this announcement and share it with your staff.



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Hospice Provider News

Montana system cuts services (including an inpatient hospice facility), reduces workforce by 9%

Becker's Post-Acute Report; by Mariah Taylor; 5/30/24

Billings, Mont.-based RiverStone Health is closing two facilities, reducing other services and cutting nearly 9% of its workforce, KFF Health News reported May 30. The hospital is shuttering an inpatient hospice facility, closing a center for

patients managing high blood pressure, reducing the clinic's behavioral healthcare team, removing a nurse who worked within rural schools and reducing the number of staff focused on serving patients without housing. Among the staff layoffs are several senior leadership and management roles, according to a May 10 system news release. The cuts come after a \$3 million loss in Medicaid revenue this fiscal year.

Collaboration looks to fill void left by closure of Hiland Cottage Hospice

Harbor Light; by Harbor Light News Staff; 6/5/24

When McLaren Northern Michigan closed the Hiland Cottage Hospice House in March of this year, the future of trusted end-of-life residential care in this community became uncertain. In an effort to ensure this essential service is still provided, Bay Bluffs, the Emmet County Medical Care Facility, has stepped up to lead a collaborative effort to fill this void. "We are deeply committed to supporting our community through this transition," said Lisa Ashley, Bay Bluffs administrator in announcing the partnership with Friends of Hiland Cottage, area hospice services, and other local end-of-life providers.

Forcura and HealthRev Partners announce Ecosystem Partnership

Business Wire; 6/4/24

Forcura, a healthcare workflow management company, announces a strategic ecosystem partnership with HealthRev Partners, a prominent provider of revenue cycle management services for the home health, hospice, and palliative care sectors. This collaboration focuses on enhancing the referral process for agencies operating in these critical healthcare segments.



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Lightways Hospice and Serious Illness Care grieves the death of hospice leader

The Times Weekly; by Times Weekly Staff; 6/6/24

One of the former CEOs of Joliet Area Community Hospice, now known as

Lightways Hospice and Serious Illness Care, has died. Duane Krieger was instrumental in the efforts to acquire land and build the first hospice residence in Illinois. Until this time, hospice care in this state was provided in patients' homes and facilities. "Duane's passion and dedication to building a free-standing hospice facility in Joliet was unwavering, said Mary Kay Sheehan, CEO of Lightways Hospice and Serious Illness Care. "Duane understood the need and knew who to talk to, in both the private and public sector, to secure funding and pass the regulations to build this hospice home and elevate the level of and access to hospice care. Duane always went above and beyond to ensure the residents of Joliet and the surrounding area had access to the care they needed. He was an inspiration and a true leader who will be missed."

Palliative Care Provider News

Disparities identified in palliative care use among men with prostate cancer

Renal + Urology News; by Natasha Persaud; 6/4/24

Palliative care utilization among men with prostate cancer is suboptimal but improving, investigators reported at the 2024 ASCO annual meeting in Chicago, Illinois. Stanley Ozogbo, MBBS, MPH, of St Elizabeth Youngstown Hospital in Ohio, and colleagues studied over 2 million prostate cancer hospital admissions using the 2010-2019 US Nationwide Inpatient Sample. They found an overall prevalence of palliative utilization of 5.3% even though palliative care consultations significantly improved by an average of 7.7% per year over the study period. Utilization improved from 2010 through 2016, but then began to decline from 2017-2019. The study identified disparities in palliative utilization. Black patients were 7% less likely than White patients to receive palliative care services, Dr Ozogbo's team reported. Compared with Medicare recipients, patients with Medicaid, private insurance, or other insurance types had significant 1.5-, 1.3-, and 2.2-fold increased odds of palliative care utilization, respectively. Patients aged 70 years or older were a significant 6% more likely to receive palliative care compared with younger patients. Palliative care use was a significant 9% and 40% more likely for patients admitted to urban vs rural hospitals and teaching vs non-teaching hospitals, respectively, the investigators reported. Hospitals in the Northeast were 1.4- and 1.5-fold more likely to refer to palliative care compared with hospitals in the South or West, respectively.

Clinical News

The latest research indicates massage therapy has benefits from birth to end of life

Cision PR Newswire; by American Massage Therapy Association; 6/5/24


The American Massage Therapy Association (AMTA) is sharing recent research on how massage therapy can provide benefits from infancy through end of life. Across all ages, massage therapy can be a therapeutic approach to enhancing physical and emotional well-being. Explore the latest studies on how massage therapy can help improve the quality of life for infants, middle-aged individuals, and older adults. ... A nationwide survey of physicians, physician assistants, and nurse practitioners in palliative care documented recommendation rates of integrative therapies to target symptoms of palliative care patients. The survey found that massage therapy was the third most recommended integrative care modality behind mind-body interventions like meditation and biofeedback. The integrative therapies aimed to reduce pain, anxiety, mood disturbances, and distress.

*Editor's Note: While hiring a professional massage therapist might not be practical for your budget, explore contracting with a massage therapist who is **trained in working with medically-fragile persons** to provide simple trainings for your nurses and nurse aides. Additionally, professionally trained massage therapists might be interested in volunteering their services, within appropriate parameters.*



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Regulatory News

Kickbacks and medically unnecessary treatments: Five major qui tam settlements from May 2024

JD Supra; by Geoff Schweller; 6/5/24

Under the FCA's *qui tam* provisions, a crucial tool in combating healthcare fraud, whistleblowers have the power to file suits on behalf of the federal government if they possess the knowledge of an individual or company defrauding the government. The government may choose to intervene and take over the suit, but if a *qui tam* lawsuit results in a successful settlement, the whistleblower is eligible to receive between 15-30% of the monies collected. The settlements announced in May cover a wide range of alleged misconduct that violates the FCA, including cases concerning [kickbacks](#) and [the billing of federal healthcare programs](#) for medically unnecessary treatments. Each settlement represents a victory in the ongoing battle against fraud. ... [Non-hospice examples followed by this hospice case] \$4.2 Million Settlement with Elara Claring for Allegedly Billing Medicare for Ineligible Hospice Patients ...

How fraudulent hospices evade regulators

Hospice News; by Jim Parker; 6/5/24

A slew of fraudulent hospices in California are dodging consequences by

shuffling patients around between provider numbers. That's according to multiple sources who spoke with Hospice News, expressing their concerns about patterns of fraud continuing even as government regulators crack down on the sector. Since 2021, numerous media and government reports have emerged of unethical or illegal practices among hundreds of newly licensed hospices, particularly among new companies popping up in California, Texas, Nevada and Arizona. Despite the best efforts of regulators and law enforcement, hospice leaders are concerned that many bad actors are slipping through the cracks. ...

Mergers & Acquisition News

Dover Health acquires Chicago-area hospice, home health agencies

Hospice News; by Jim Parker; 6/6/24

St. Louis-based Dover Health has expanded into the Chicago region with the purchase of Centered Care Hospice and Palliative Care and Cornerstone Home Health. With this deal, Dover expands to nine Illinois counties to complement its five-county footprint in Missouri. The transaction will enable Dover Health to expand its scale and offer enhanced benefits and technology to clinical staff and patients, according to a press release. "We are committed to giving our caregiving team the time and resources needed to truly engage with each patient," said Steven Burghart, president of Dover Health, in a statement. "Our mission is to help every senior and their family thrive through personalized, holistic health and wellness."



Technology / Innovations News

Leading healthcare transformation: Strategic growth through generative AI

Forbes; by Ashu Goel; 6/5/24

When ChatGPT was launched in November 2022, most of us experienced a “wow” moment. Its capabilities seemed magical. Generative AI (GenAI), led by ChatGPT, has taken the industry by storm, emerging as one of the most disruptive technologies of our era. Given the widespread discussion around GenAI, it's clear that its impact is profound and far-reaching. Yet, adopting generative AI has been a significant challenge for many organizations. Gartner's insight highlights this struggle, predicting that at least 30% of generative AI projects will be abandoned throughout the next year due to issues like poor data quality and unclear business value. This prediction alone paints a picture of the adoption hurdles. ...

Editor's Note: This is not not a black and white right-wrong, good-bad conflict. Notice in numerous articles we post the valid concerns expressed by hospice and palliative clinical professionals. For example, the effect of duplicating a live person on the other end, vs. an AI voice. Practical, effective implementation must reconcile these differences with the empathic, personalized care that is core to the hospice and palliative mission and vision.

40 changes to earn better results, per health IT and finance leaders

Becker's Hospital Review; by Randi Haseman; 6/4/24

Running a successful healthcare organization requires constant innovation and adaptability. Forty healthcare leaders shared their best change in the past two years to attain amazing results. ...

Question: What is one change you made in the last two years that yielded the best results? ...

General News

The Aging Revolution: Growing old in America becoming more dignified, but with senior population booming, is nation's health system prepared?

BusinessWire; 6/4/24

A half-century after renowned gerontologist, psychiatrist and author [Dr. Robert Butler](#) ridiculed the nation's medical establishment for ignoring the suffering of older Americans, [Northwell Health](#) today announced the publication of [The Aging Revolution: The History of Geriatric Health Care and What Really Matters to Older](#)

Adults, which chronicles the significant advancements made in improving the physical and emotional health of the nation's rapidly aging population.



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Other News

Other Business Headlines of Interest, updated 6/6/24 per nasdaq.com

- Adus HomeCare (ADUS: \$116.59)
- Amedisys (AMED: \$91.45)

- BrightSpring Health (BTSG: \$11.79)
- Encompass (EHC: \$85.27)
- Enhabit (EHAB: \$9.16)
- Ensign Group (ENSG: \$118.82)
- HCA Healthcare (HCA: \$336.82)
- Humana (HUM: \$345.43)
- Pennant Group (PNTG: \$22.74)

- Vitas / Chemed Corp (CHE: \$544.17)

Today's Encouragement

No duty is more urgent than that of returning thanks. - James Allen

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