

Cordt Kassner

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<subscriptions@hospicepalliativecaretoday.com>
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**HOSPICE &
PALLIATIVE CARE
TODAY**

June 21st, 2024

Contents

1. [NAHC, NHPCO ink deal completing affiliation](#)
2. [Hospice of Marion County trains first responders to care for dementia patients](#)
3. [How Coastal Hospice improved clinical outcomes with AI](#)
4. [Our Hospice collects food in employee-led drive](#)
5. [Boy, 7, takes on 145-mile challenge for hospice](#)
6. [Circle of Life Hospice opens guest house](#)
7. [Top oncologists say everyone with advanced cancer needs early palliative care. Here are 6 things to know](#)
8. [Mercy Medical Center unveils Andy Yee Memorial Palliative Care Unit](#)
9. [Alzheimer's history on maternal side linked to higher disease risk, study finds](#)
10. [Pennant and Hartford HealthCare partner to transform home care services](#)
11. [Mass General Brigham union could shape hospital-at-home's future](#)

12. [University Hospitals to cut more than 300 positions](#)
13. [Rendever and Lenovo collaborate to bring virtual reality experiences to Carolina Caring seniors](#)
14. [Children's hospices risk being 'hugely reduced' due to funding and cost issues](#)
15. [Other Business Headlines of Interest, updated 6/20/24 per nasdaq.com](#)
16. [Today's Encouragement: Ah, summer ...](#)

Headlines

[NAHC, NHPCO ink deal completing affiliation](#)

Hospice News; by Holly Vossel; 6/18/24

The National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO) and the National Association for Home Care & Hospice (NAHC) have announced the completion of their affiliation agreement. The affiliation joins two of the largest organizations representing, educating and advocating for home health and hospice providers that serve millions of disabled, elderly and dying Americans across the country. Board chairs and c-suite executives at NAHC and NHPCO recently met in Washington D.C. to ink the deal. The affiliation is rooted in a shared belief that unification will benefit their respective members and ultimately the patients and families they serve, according to NAHC President and CEO William Dombi.

Hospice Provider News

[Hospice of Marion County trains first responders to care for dementia patients](#)

Hospice News; by Jim Parker; 6/18/24

Florida-based Hospice of Marion County, an affiliate of Empath Health, is training first responders in its community on how to treat dementia patients. For several years, the nonprofit hospice has been educating family caregivers and others in their community about the experiences of dementia patients and how to better interact with them. More recently, Hospice of Marion County [Ocala, Florida] has been expanding that training to include local law enforcement and fire departments, as well as medical students and staff at assisted living facilities, among others. The training uses a series of tools to simulate symptoms of dementia, related to visual, tactile, auditory senses, their ability to process information and perform certain tasks. The education helps first responders

address the unique challenges associated with caring for dementia patients, according to Dr. Mery Lossada, chief medical officer of Hospice of Marion County.

Editor's Note: Bravo, Hospice of Marion County! Click on the article's title to learn more about this innovative community education.

How Coastal Hospice improved clinical outcomes with AI

Hospice News; by Holly Vossel; 3/6/24

Coastal Hospice & Palliative Care recently began exploring ways to improve clinical outcomes during the last days of life, an important quality measure in end-of-life care. The organization has found success utilizing an AI program that analyzes patient data using a palliative performance scale (PPS) indicator, according to Monica Escalante, president and CEO at Coastal Hospice. This window into a patient's conditions has helped hospice teams better assess approaches to care delivery, Escalante said.

Publisher's Note: I recently came across this article from a couple months ago and wanted to share it. An interesting article with impressive outcomes, I've also had positive experience with the PPS. Is your hospice using it?

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Our Hospice collects food in employee-led drive

The Republic; by Staff Reports; 6/20/24

Our Hospice (OHSCI) and Palliative Care collected 500 pounds of food for patients and families in need in an employee-led food drive. “The efforts, enthusiasm, and passion displayed by everyone at Our Hospice is truly astonishing!” said Chealsy Parr, a social worker who led the food drive. “Thanks

to the participation of teammates from Greensburg, Columbus, the Hospice Center, Palliative Care, and North Vernon, we've significantly impacted those facing food insecurity." "The employee - led food donations will go a long way to support those in our care who are in need," said Steph Cain, president, Our Hospice and Palliative Care. [Located in Indiana]

Editor's Note: Congratulations to Our Hospice and Palliative Care, with a call-out to Chealsy Parr, "a social worker who led the food drive." Hospice leaders, how might you replicate this with your employees and volunteers, for the patients you serve? Forward this to the right person who can take this great initiative and activate it for your organization.

Boy, 7, takes on 145-mile challenge for hospice

BBC News, Peterborough, United Kingdom; by Shariqua Ahmed; 6/15/24

A seven-year-old boy has taken on a mythical-themed challenge to raise funds for a hospice. Isaac Yates from King's Cliffe in Northamptonshire is scooting, walking and cycling 145 miles (233km) through a Lord of the Rings Virtual Conqueror Challenge for Sue Ryder Thorpe Hall Hospice in Peterborough [United Kingdom]. His mum, Zoë Hopkinson, works as a physiotherapist at the hospice which inspired Isaac's mission as he wants to "help people who are suffering and dying."

Circle of Life Hospice opens guest house

ABC KOLO 8 NewsNow, Reno, Nevada; by Emily Benito; 6/19/24

The Circle of Life Hospice Foundation has just opened their first hospice care guest house for those that cannot afford room or board or end of life care. President of The Circle of Life Hospice Foundation Michelle Cagle says that if they had 10 to 15 beds in the house, they could help around 271 patients a year. The guest house currently has three beds for patients but with more land to build on, there are plans to build a second guest house on the property. "Whether they are homeless or just elderly or their wife can't take care of them or they're just not able to afford it or they don't have any family or children, that's what we do and opened this house to care for those people."



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Palliative Care Provider News

Top oncologists say everyone with advanced cancer needs early palliative care. Here are 6 things to know

ABC News, New York; by Lindsey Ulin, MD; 6/20/24

This year, the American Society of Clinical Oncology — the world’s leading oncology organization — recommended palliative care for everyone with advanced cancer at the time of diagnosis and while receiving treatment. ... By next year, 693,000 people in the United States will have advanced breast, prostate, lung, colorectal, bladder, or skin cancer. ... “What I’m really excited to see is that these guidelines are taking a step back and thinking about [palliative care] from the time of diagnosis,” Dr. Arif Kamal, chief patient officer for the American Cancer Society and an associate professor at Duke University specializing in oncology and palliative care, told ABC News. “It should particularly be used in areas to help people stay on treatment, such as in clinical trials or hematologic malignancies.” Here are six things to know about palliative care:

- Palliative care can help you live better and longer
- Palliative care puts you in control of your care
- Palliative care supports you and those who matter most
- Palliative care increases your time at home or where you want to be
- Palliative care isn't just for people with cancer

Editor's Note: These six bullet points provide expert, user-friendly talking points for you to use with referral sources, with patients and families, care partners, and your community. Examine the palliative care services your organization provides. Of these six principles, which ones are implemented by your organization? Or not? Medical experts include:

- *The American Society of Clinical Oncology*

- *Dr. Arif Kamal, chief patient officer for the American Cancer Society and an associate professor at Duke University specializing in oncology and palliative care*
- *Dr. Allison Chang, an oncologist at the Dana Farber Cancer Institute*
- *Dr. Anthony Back, a professor of medicine at the University of Washington's Division of Oncology*
- *Lindsey Ulin, MD, an internal medicine resident at Brigham and Women's Hospital and a member of the ABC News Medical Unit*

Mercy Medical Center unveils Andy Yee Memorial Palliative Care Unit

WWLP 22 News, Springfield, MA; 6/18/24

Springfield city officials joined Mercy Medical Center for a tour of the upcoming Andy Yee Memorial Palliative Care Unit. Patients who are severely sick or coming to their last days will now have another space to get the care that they need. The work for the Andy Yee Memorial Palliative Care Unit is underway at Mercy Medical Center. This new space on the 5th floor of the facility will help to enhance patient care. ... In the next phase comes the renovation and remodeling of eight patient rooms. This new unit will help Mercy Medical providers care for about 300 patients a year.

Clinical News

Alzheimer's history on maternal side linked to higher disease risk, study finds


McKnights Long-Term Care News; by Kristen Fischer; 6/17/24

People with a history of Alzheimer's disease on their mother's side or both parents' sides of the family had higher levels of amyloid plaques in their brains compared to those with fathers who had the disease, according to a study published Monday in *JAMA Neurology*. Increased amyloid, a biomarker for Alzheimer's disease, was also found in those whose fathers had early onset of symptoms. But it wasn't as high as in people who had higher amyloid on their mothers' side of the family, the data showed. Mass General Brigham researchers used amyloid imaging on 4,413 cognitively unimpaired adults who were between 65 and 85.



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Mergers & Acquisition News

[Pennant and Hartford HealthCare partner to transform home care services](#)

CBS News 13, Eagle, Idaho; by Pennant Group, Inc.; 6/18/24

The Pennant Group, Inc., the parent company of the Pennant group of affiliated home health, hospice and senior living companies, announced today that it has entered into a management and consulting services agreement to provide operational support to Hartford HealthCare at Home (HHCAH), the home health and hospice business of Hartford HealthCare. Hartford HealthCare is the highest ranking in quality, comprehensive non-profit integrated health system in Connecticut, and HHCAH's home-based care spans the state, with eight locations, more than 1,000 employees, and more than 33,000 home health admissions and approximately 4,000 hospice admissions over the trailing 12 months. Hartford HealthCare has provided home-based care for over a century, and this engagement of Pennant reflects its continued commitment to home-based care as an essential and growing part of the care continuum and a central component of Hartford HealthCare's future. Hartford HealthCare at Home remains owned by Hartford HealthCare and is a critical part of Hartford HealthCare's ecosystem of care.

Post-Acute Care News

Mass General Brigham union could shape hospital-at-home's future

Modern Healthcare; by Diane Eastabrook; 6/17/24

Nurses at one of the nation's largest hospital-at-home programs have unionized, a move they hope could influence the future of in-home acute care and encourage more people working in home healthcare to join unions. The union vote at Boston's Mass General Brigham comes as hospitals push aggressively to [expand care](#) outside of their walls, while a worker shortage and increased demand for healthcare contribute to rising [labor strife](#) among caregivers. Approximately 80 Mass General Brigham home hospital nurses voted overwhelmingly on May 16 to join the Massachusetts Nurse Association. The National Labor Relations Board certified the union to represent the nurses on May 24 and they are in the midst of selecting a bargaining team that will begin negotiating a contract with the hospital system within the next few months. ... The hospital system is set to expand the number of patients the program can accommodate from 50 patients a day to 200 over the next few years.

University Hospitals to cut more than 300 positions

Modern Healthcare; by Paige Bennett; 6/19/24

University Hospitals is eliminating more than 300 positions amid challenges in the healthcare industry. The health system announced Wednesday, June 19, that it was reducing its leadership structure by more than 10% as part of an organizational reset. The move comes at a time when healthcare systems across the U.S. are grappling with rising costs and labor shortages. UH Chief Operating Officer Dr. Paul Hinchey said in a phone interview with Crain's that the cuts focused on leadership and support services, not frontline workers. Affected employees began being notified by the health system on Monday, he said. The health system said the vast majority of the cuts were non-clinical and will not impact patient care. The move "complements a plan over the past three years to increase efficiency, consolidate service lines and close hospitals in Bedford and Richmond Heights," according to UH.



Technology / Innovations News

Rendever and Lenovo collaborate to bring virtual reality experiences to Carolina Caring seniors

Fox 8, Boston, MA; by Rendever; 6/19/24

Rendever, the Boston-based company pioneering the future of aging through virtual reality (VR), announces the deployment of its virtual reality platform with Lenovo to Carolina Caring patients. The rollout allows clinicians and caregivers to bring expansive, once-in-a-lifetime VR experiences to older patients whose worlds have become limited. Over the last year, Rendever and Lenovo combined their products into a joint solution that senior living providers can easily adopt to improve the quality of life for older adults through positive shared experiences. Rendever's award-winning virtual reality solution delivered on Lenovo's ThinkReality VRX headset provides an all-in-one standalone solution that meets the evolving needs of enterprises with modern virtual reality with six degrees of freedom, full color, and high-resolution experiences. Rendever is deployed in over 700 communities nationwide and looks to further expand with the addition of Carolina Caring in collaboration with Lenovo.

International News

Children's hospices risk being 'hugely reduced' due to funding and cost issues

Jersey Evening Post - UK News; by UK News; 6/19/24

Children's hospice services are at risk of being "hugely reduced" amid a lack of long-term sustainable funding and rising costs, a charity has warned. ... Some 66.7% of children's hospices said this was due to a hike in energy bills, while 86.1% said it was due to higher costs associated with recruiting and retaining

staff. According to the report, some 54% of children's hospices in the UK ended the 2023/24 financial year in a net deficit. Together for Short Lives extrapolated the figure across all 39 hospice organisations to estimate a total shortfall of £8.5 million.

Other News

Other Business Headlines of Interest, updated 6/20/24 per nasdaq.com

- Adus HomeCare (ADUS: \$118.34)
- Amedisys (AMED: \$91.70)

- BrightSpring Health (BTSG: \$10.52)
- Encompass (EHC: \$85.04)
- Enhabit (EHAB: \$8.66)
- Ensign Group (ENSG: \$121.40)
- HCA Healthcare (HCA: \$338.10)
- Humana (HUM: \$353.83)
- Pennant Group (PNTG: \$22.61)

- Vitas / Chemed Corp (CHE: \$538.24)



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Today's Encouragement

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