

## Cordt Kassner

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TODAY**

## July 10th, 2024

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## Headlines

### **A little help from your friends... Jennifer Hale, MSN, RN, CHPN, CPHQ**

*A little help from your friends* is a memorial fund set up for Jennifer Hale's family. If interested, you can [read more about it and donate here](#). Donations accepted 6/30/24 - 7/15/24. ... We recently [announc ed](#) Jennifer Hale unexpectedly died Friday, 6/21/24. Vice President of Quality and Standards at Compassus, former Vice President Clinical Services at Optum Palliative Care and Hospice, and former Executive Director of the Georgia Hospice & Palliative Care Organization, Jennifer was widely known, respected, and loved in the hospice community. We share our condolences with her family, friends, and colleagues. Her obituary is posted [here](#).

### **New ER program helped more patients get needed hospice care**

*U.S. News & World Report; by Carole Tanzer Miller, HelathDay Reporter; 7/9/24*

One hospital's push to transition patients who are nearing the end of life from the emergency room to hospice care appears to be working. After the program went into effect, 54% of ER patients at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston transitioned to hospice care within 96 hours. That compared to 22% before the program began in 2021. Their findings suggest that such programs may help

adults who present at the ER near the end of life avoid delayed or missed hospice care. "When patients come to an emergency room near end of life, the default is typically to admit them to the hospital, engage them in conversations about goals and end-of-life care and potentially move them into hospice care," said first study author Dr. Christopher Baugh, an emergency department physician at Brigham and Women's. "However, this lengthy process can take longer than the patient has left to live." He said the new program helps doctors quickly identify patients who are eligible for hospice care and get them there quicker. In hospice care, attempts to cure a person's illness are stopped and the focus shifts to comfort care and family support. ... The findings were reported July 8 in the journal *JAMA Network Open*.

**The Physician-Focused Payment Model Technical Advisory Committee (PTAC) listening session 2: Complex chronic conditions [including Ira Byock, MD, FAAHPM, and Betty Ferrell, RN, PhD]**

*Press release; 7/4/24*

PTAC held a 2-day meeting on Addressing the Needs of Patients with Complex Chronic Conditions or Serious Illnesses in Population-Based Total Cost of Care (PB\_TOC) Models. [Presentations include Ira Byock, MD, FAAHPM: Patient perspectives & doctors' roles in caring well through the end of life (timestamp 33:53) and Betty Ferrell, RN, PhD: Optimizing the mix of palliative care and end-of-life care in PB-TCOC Models (timestamp 48:32).]



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## Hospice Provider News

**Treasure Coast Hospice celebrates Great Place to Work Certification: Recognition marks fifth year in a row**

*Cision PR Web, Stuart, FL; by Treasure Coast Hospice; 7/8/24*

For the fifth consecutive year, Great Place to Work Institute and its senior care partner Activated Insights have recognized Treasure Coast Hospice with certification as a Great Place to Work. The certification process involved surveying 100% of employees from across the organization and evaluating more than 60 elements of team members' experience on the job. These included employee pride in the organization's community impact, belief that their work makes a difference, and feeling their work has special meaning. Rankings are based on employees' experiences, no matter who they are or what they do. "Being recognized as a Great Place to Work for the fifth consecutive year is an incredible honor," said Treasure Coast Hospice President and CEO Jackie Kendrick, CHPCA. "This achievement is a testament to our team's commitment to our mission, our patients and families, and each other, and it underscores the importance Treasure Coast Hospice places on fostering a supportive and collaborative environment for our staff."

### **Hospice patient's wish fulfilled with playing the blues, family, and his favorite pizza**

*ABC 13 On Your Side YouTube, Grand Rapids Township, MI; by Jeremiah Brown; 7/5/24*

Coming from a family of musicians, Peter's family believes music has helped save him, as they gathered from throughout the country to listen to his blues. In the audience were his five older siblings, and other family members who had come from throughout the country for "Peterpalooza." "He would play his harmonica, and we would just jam together," said Peter's music therapist Miranda Eden from [Emmanuel Hospice](#) which organized the event. "He talked about how musical his family is, and how much he enjoyed spending time with his family, and he also mentioned how much he loves pizza from Lou Malnati's in Chicago, so I thought, well, we need to make this happen."

### **3 pillars of effective hospice sales**

*Hospice News; by Jim Parker; 7/8/24*

Hospices seeking to grow should consider building a culture of compliance driven by data, effective system design and accountability, including for its sales force. Compliance and sales should walk hand-in-hand, according to a recent report from the Transcend Strategy Group. This can help prevent sales staff from running afoul of regulations inadvertently as well as support

sustainable growth, according to Tony Kudner, chief strategy officer for Transcend. ... “[Without] understanding of what the rules of the road are, you’re going to run into trouble,” he said. “Though no one-size-fits-all approach exists, providers can adapt three overarching strategies to support this kind of culture.”

- Data ...
- Design ...
- Accountability ...



## **CMS Innovation Center launches Guiding an Improved Dementia Experience [GUIDE] Model, announces participants**

*CMS press release; 7/8/24*

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is pleased to announce the launch of the [Guiding an Improved Dementia Experience \(GUIDE\) Model](#), with almost 400 participating organizations building Dementia Care Programs (DCPs) serving hundreds of thousands of Medicare beneficiaries nationwide.

*Publisher's Note: Downloadable participant list [here](#). By my brief estimate, approximately 10% of current participants are hospices. Who's participating in your state?*

## **Palliative Care Provider News**

### **[Palliative Care Leader Amy Abernethy appointed] Duke University names five new Trustees**

*Press Release; 7/2/24*

Five new members joined the Duke University Board of Trustees on July 1, university officials announced Tuesday. The new trustees are Amy Abernethy, Melissa Bernstein, Michael Stone, Andrew Greene, and Rickard Stureborg... Abernethy M.D.'94, HS'94-'01 is co-founder of Highlander Health, an organization focused on advancing evidence generation for the new era of medical innovation. An internationally known oncologist, health data expert, and digital health leader, Abernethy is a champion for accelerating the pace at which safe and effective treatments reach patients. She is the former principal deputy commissioner of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, where she led initiatives in advancing clinical evidence generation and personalized health care and served as the agency's acting chief information officer. More recently, Abernethy served as chief medical officer and president of product development at Verily, Alphabet's precision health business. Earlier she was Flatiron Health's first chief medical officer and chief scientific officer. She was also previously professor of medicine at the Duke University School of Medicine and director of the Center for Learning Health Care in the Duke Clinical Research Institute and the Duke Cancer Care Research Program in the Duke Cancer Institute. A hematologist/oncologist, palliative medicine physician, and recipient of the 2021 Distinguished Alumna Award from Duke University School of Medicine, Abernethy has authored more than 500 publications.

*Publisher's Note: Congratulations Amy!*

## **Clinical News**

### ***Hospice and Palliative Nurses Foundation receives \$1.2 million impact grant***

*Cision PR Newswire; by Hospice and Palliative Nurses Foundation; 7/8/24*

*The Hospice and Palliative Nurses Foundation (HPNF) is thrilled to announce that it has been awarded a transformative \$1.2 million impact grant from the Hospice and Palliative Credentialing Center (HPCC). The Sandra Lee Schafer Impact Grant, given in memory of the late Sandra Lee Schafer, MN, RN, AOCN®, will empower HPNF to create a legacy of sustainable giving, which will impact the hospice and palliative care community for years to come. "We are deeply honored and grateful to receive this impact grant from HPCC, given in tribute of Sandy," said Virginia (Ginger) Marshall, MSN, ACNP-BC, ACHPN®, FPCN, chief executive officer of HPNF. ... Sandra was an unwavering advocate of specialty nursing certification. Following a stellar nursing*



career, Sandra served as the director of credentialing of the Hospice and Palliative Credentialing Center from 2004 until her sudden passing in 2018.



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**Accelerate Innovation**

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### ***[Consumer Reports] The last goodbye: How to plan a funeral***

*Consumer Reports; by Janet Siroto; 7/7/24*

*A complete guide to giving loved ones the right send-off--from traditional services to new green burials. Six years ago, Kelly Avery and Kristin Harper, sisters from Birmingham, Ala., gathered their families by the sky-blue ocean waters of Destin, Fla., to memorialize their mother, Barbara Harper. ... They shared funny stories and music, and shed some tears as they spread their mother's ashes from the deck of a large boat. ... The experience not only gave the family a meaningful way to pay tribute to Barbara but also got the sisters thinking about their own memorials. The key is making some choices well beforehand, which more people appear to be doing. For instance, according to an April 2024 Consumer Reports nationally representative survey (PDF) of 2,042 adults in the U.S., 50 percent said they planned or intended to plan ahead either for their own funeral or for someone else's. Read on for a rundown of possibilities and costs. ... (Prices for the traditional burial and cremation packages ... are from the 2023 National Funeral Directors Association's Member General Price List Study.) [Click on the title's link for the full article.]*

- *Traditional Burial ...*
- *Cremation ...*
- *4 More Ways to Go ...*
- *Should You Put Aside Funeral Funds Now?*
- *How to Make Your Wishes Known ...*

*Editor's Note: This excellent article from the reputable Consumer Reports provides concise, relevant information which impacts each hospice patient who dies. Do these core decisions need to be made before the death? Yes. Ask your clinicians: What happened when they attended a death and a funeral home had not been chosen? Or*

*decisions had not been made and family members were extremely conflicted about embalming/viewing versus cremation asap? It happens. Planning can prevent problems, or at least mitigate damage at this most vulnerable time of death.*

## **Regulatory News**

### ***Long-term care providers among 193 criminally charged, \$2.75 billion in fraud recoveries so far in 2024***

*McKnight's Senior Living; by Kathleen Steele Gaivin; 7/1/24*

*The Justice Department has recovered more than \$2.75 billion in false claims against healthcare providers and charged 193 defendants so far this year in criminal cases through its 2024 National Health Care Fraud Enforcement Action, and many of the cases involve nursing homes, home health or hospice agencies, and assisted living providers, according to a Thursday report from the department's criminal division.*

### ***Home health providers to pay \$4.5M to resolve alleged false claims act liability for providing kickbacks to assisted living facilities and doctors***

*DOJ press release; 7/1/24*


*Guardian Health Care Inc., Gem City Home Care LLC and Care Connection of Cincinnati LLC, home health agencies operating in Texas, Ohio and Indiana, along with their owner Evolution Health LLC, have agreed to pay \$4,496,330 to resolve allegations that they violated the False Claims Act by knowingly providing illegal kickbacks to assisted living facilities and physicians in exchange for Medicare referrals.*





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## **Post-Acute Care News**

### ***CMS to post more nursing home ownership data, facility health data for first time when it unfreezes star ratings this month***

*McKnight's Long-term Care News; by James M. Berklan; 7/1/24*

*The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services announced Monday that it will begin posting certain nursing home ownership information, as well as aggregated MDS data for all residents at a facility, both for the first time, and issue new guides for consumers, on the Nursing Home Compare website.*

*Publisher's Note: Ownership data is a recurring theme. When will hospices experience more impact?*

### ***A professional's perspective: Ageism within the healthcare system; does it exist?***

*Northern Kentucky Tribune; by Jeff Rubin; 7/6/24*

*A friend of mine named Dee recently shared with me a particularly unpleasant experience she had with a young hospital discharge planner regarding her 97-year-old mom in California. It appears Dee had a heck of a time trying to get her mom discharged to home health care rather than hospice, even though the particular care she needed could have been better delivered at home. A geriatrician by training, Dee ... recognized the invaluable role of hospice in providing end-of-life care. However, the*

situation she found herself in was less a question of end-of-life and more of palliative care. ... A recent study in the US sampling 2,035 individuals between 50 and 80 years of age revealed that 93.4% experienced ageism firsthand. Their perception extended to professionals like doctors, nurses, therapists, social workers, and psychologists whose services included working with older people. [Click on the title's link for significant data, descriptions, and resources.]

## **International News**

### **Americans focus on a good life. But what about a good death?**

WBUR Radio, Boston's NPR; by Here & Now host Deepa Fernandez; 7/5/24  
Americans spend a lot of time thinking about what it means to live a good life. But what about a good death? In 2022 researchers at the Duke University Global Health Institute ranked countries by the quality of their end-of-life care, and the United States ranked only 43, just below Colombia, Romania, Nigeria and Guatemala. So what does this country need to do? Recent Middlebury College graduate Samara Gordon Wexler is thinking about that question. The 22-year-old winner of a prestigious Watson Fellowship is about to embark on a five-continent journey. She'll visit, work and train with end-of-life practitioners from Ghanaian coffin artists to Indian trekkers to find out what it means to die a good death and how to make it happen here.



## **Today's Encouragement**

**Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results. ~ Albert Einstein**



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