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From: Hospice & Palliative Care Today Newsletter
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Sent: Monday, July 22, 2024 4:00 AM
To: Cordt Kassner
Subject: Your Hospice & Palliative Care Today Newsletter for 07/22/24



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Contents

Hospice Provider News

- [1. Why are some people happy when they are dying?](#)
- [2. More people are dying at home. Is that a good thing?](#)
- [3. Hospice care provider embroiled in federal health care fraud allegations](#)
- [4. Hospice El Paso celebrates new center for care with ribbon cutting ceremony](#)
- [5. 7 arrested in Arizona on hospice, behavioral health fraud charges](#)
- [6. Celebrating growth: NPHI welcomes new members to its mission-driven family](#)
- [7. Top Projects of 2023: Our Lady of Peace](#)
- [8. Tips to secure hospice volunteers through engagement, education](#)

Palliative Care Provider News

- [9. End-of-life care is a profound and essential aspect of medical practice](#)

Clinical News

10. Pain patients aren't 'drug users': Exposing a dangerous myth

Regulatory News

11. Does Medicare pay for dementia care? Here's what coverage you can expect for treatments and therapies

Post-Acute Care News

12. Data-backed talent management: How 1 health system is streamlining operations + reducing costs

13. Innovative program for veterans aims to combat dementia and feelings of social isolation and loneliness by distributing animatronic pets nationwide

Today's Encouragement

14. Today's Encouragement: You don't need ...

Hospice Provider News

Why are some people happy when they are dying?

StudyFinds; by The Conversation, Mattias Tranberg, Lund University; 7/18/24

Simon Boas, who wrote a candid account of living with cancer, passed away on July 15 at the age of 47. In a recent BBC interview, the former aid worker told the reporter: "My pain is under control and I'm terribly happy – it sounds weird to say, but I'm as happy as I've ever been in my life." It may seem odd that a person could be happy as the end draws near, but in my experience as a clinical psychologist working with people at the end of their lives, it's not that uncommon. There is quite a lot of research suggesting that fear of death is at the unconscious center of being human. William James, an American philosopher, called the knowledge that we must die "the worm at the core" of the human condition. But a study in *Psychological Science* shows that people nearing death use more positive language to describe their experience than those who just imagine death. This suggests that the experience of dying is more pleasant – or, at least, less unpleasant – than we might picture it.

*Editor's Note: [Click here for the study](#), Goranson, A., Ritter, R. S., Waytz, A., Norton, M. I., & Gray, K. (2017). Dying Is Unexpectedly Positive. *Psychological Science*, 28(7), 988–999. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/44577785>.*

More people are dying at home. Is that a good thing?

The Wall Street Journal; by Suniat Puri; 7/11/24

New research classifies the rise in home deaths as progress, but we need to look

closely at what these death look like. In photos taken a year before we met, my patient smiled widely, flashing a peace sign, her feet planted in the damp sand of a local beach. "Mom was a firecracker," her daughter told me. My patient, who now slurred her sentences, was dying of cirrhosis. Her jaundiced skin was golden, the corners of her pale lips crusted with dried blood. She wanted to die at home, according to her daughter, who had been estranged but re-entered her mother's life to care for her. I was still in my training in palliative medicine and, like my patient's daughter, I believed that a "good death" took place at home, surrounded by family. I shared her view that a hospital death was a failure, painful and undignified. I was glad to help her leave behind uncomfortable tubes and noisy machines for a death I presumed would be more peaceful. *[Subscription may be required to continue reading.]*

Hospice care provider embroiled in federal health care fraud allegations

MarketBeat; by Due.com; 7/18/24

A hospice care provider has been at the center of allegations that it may have defrauded federal health care programs. According to court documents, Kindred at Home was accused of knowingly defrauding the U.S. government. The umbrella organization operated out of Atlanta and had multiple splinter branches, including Avalon, Kindred, SouthernCare, and SouthernCare New Beacon. Kindred at Home has now agreed to quash the allegations. The federal watchdogs' grilling resulted in a financial penalty and closed nine separate lawsuits. ... Kindred has agreed to pay \$19.428 million to resolve allegations. The federal government will receive \$18,956,151.32, the State of Tennessee will receive \$448,800 and the State of Ohio will receive \$23,618.68.

Editor's Note: This Kindred news story is flooding news circuits, due to the scope and significance of its impact. While we reported this on 7/19/24, we will provide occasional variations, keeping it in your awareness.



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Hospice El Paso celebrates new center for care with ribbon cutting ceremony

ABC KVIA TV-7, El Paso, TX; by Valeria Medina; 7/18/24

Hospice El Paso has announced its new Center for Compassionate Care (CCC). Hospice El Paso celebrated the new center with a ribbon cutting ceremony held July 18th. Hospice El Paso says the new center is state-of-the-art and includes pain and anxiety management care. The facility offers 24-hour short-term hospitalized care for the needs of their patients. The CCC is also opening a pediatric unit that will be utilized to care for terminally-ill children and their families.

7 arrested in Arizona on hospice, behavioral health fraud charges

Hospice News; by Jim Parker; 7/19/24

Seven individuals in Arizona face federal charges for their alleged roles in defrauding Medicare out of hundreds of millions of dollars in total. The charges for the most part stem from submitting Medicare claims for patients who were not eligible for hospice care, as well as fraud related to behavioral health services. The arrests were the result of a two-week nationwide federal law enforcement action that resulted in criminal charges for 193 individuals for a total of more than \$2.75 billion in alleged false claims, as well as opioid abuse schemes. ... "These cases involve not just massive fraud to steal public funds, but also exploitation of vulnerable victims and the misappropriation of resources earmarked for Native American communities," said U.S. Attorney Restaino, in a statement. "The U.S. Attorney's Office and our investigative partners will pursue justice against those who perpetrate these sorts of schemes with the utmost vigor."

Celebrating growth: NPHI welcomes new members to its mission-driven family

NPHI, Washington, DC; 7/15/24

The National Partnership for Healthcare and Hospice Innovation (NPHI), the national voice for not-for-profit hospice and palliative care providers, is thrilled to announce the addition of several not-for-profit hospice organizations to its ever-growing community. Over the past year, the organization has experienced remarkable growth, underscoring its collective commitment and mission to providing the highest quality end-of-life care. ... [These include:] Byt The Bay

Health; Blue Ridge Hospice; Center For Hospice Care; Community Nursing Services; Harry Hynes Memorial Hospice; Hospice Austin; Hospice of Northwest Ohio; Hospice & Palliative Care Association of New York State (HPCANYS); Hudson Valley Hospice; Hudson Valley Hospice; Kaua'i Hospice; Midland Care Connection; Navian Hawaii (formerly Hospice Hawaii); Sutter Care at Home; Tillery Compassionate Care.

Notable Mentions: Tom Koutsoumpas, CEO of NPHI and Carole Fisher, President of NPHI



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Top Projects of 2023: Our Lady of Peace

Finance & Commerce, Minnesota Business; by Kate Leibsle; 7/19/24

Jamey Flannery and her team at Flannery Construction took seriously their obligation not just to their client, Our Lady of Peace, but to the patients, their families, and staff to make the construction project at the hospice center as smooth and transparent as possible. Limiting disruptions when you are renovating or adding on to an existing, occupied building is always important, but when the facility you are working on is a hospice center, it becomes paramount. ... The project turned the facility's 21 double-occupancy rooms into private suites. Each room now is big enough for family and friends to gather in a living area, have a TV and offer more privacy, Flannery said.

Tips to secure hospice volunteers through engagement, education

Home Health Line; by Mary Kent Wolff; 7/18/24

Many hospice providers are struggling to find volunteers and maintain Medicare compliance after the pandemic. Providers that strengthen training programs and

consider participant and patient needs and interests could see an increase in long-term volunteers. *[Additional subscription may be required.]*

Palliative Care Provider News

End-of-life care is a profound and essential aspect of medical practice

Market.US Media, New York; by Samruddhi Yardi; 7/19/24

According to [End-of-Life Care Statistics](#), End-of-life care, also known as palliative care, refers to the comprehensive medical, emotional, and psychological support provided to individuals who are nearing the end of their lives, often due to terminal illnesses or conditions. [This article includes data on the following:]

- Distribution of Adults in Need of Palliative Care at the End of Life ...
- Prevalence of End-of-Life Care Needs Statistics ...
- Age Distribution of Individuals Receiving End-of-Life Care ...
- Common Illnesses and Conditions Requiring End-of-Life Care ...
- Pain Management and Symptom Control in End-of-Life Care ...



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Clinical News

Pain patients aren't 'drug users': Exposing a dangerous myth

American Council on Science and Health; by Cameron English; 7/18/24

Chronic pain patients who take opioids under medical supervision are fundamentally different from recreational users who take drugs to get high. In their bid to destigmatize and legalize drugs, some drug policy reformers have attempted to blur this clear distinction. *[Read case study of a hospice patient who was denied pain meds for longterm conditions, and was put on an opioid for which she had informed the hospice that she could not tolerate. Access to talking with her*

physician was denied. Result: She changed to a different hospice.] ... America's drug policies are shifting from prohibition to normalization, one extreme to the other, while inexplicably neglecting pain patients. ... We should give legitimate pain patients access to prescription opioids and discourage recreational users and addicts from consuming illicit drugs—even if legalization is the goal.

Regulatory News

Does Medicare pay for dementia care? Here's what coverage you can expect for treatments and therapies

Aol - Fortune; by Margie Zable Fisher; 7/18/24

Age-related memory loss is common, but more serious memory problems may be a sign of [dementia](#), which is not a normal part of aging. ... Dementia patients have a variety of medical issues. "In addition to symptoms related to dementia, the overwhelming majority of dementia patients have one or more chronic health conditions," says Matthew Baumgart, Vice President of Health Policy, at the Alzheimer's Association. Medicare (and Medicare Advantage) provide some coverage for dementia, beginning with the diagnosis, says Baumgart. *[Click on the title's link for practical, user-friendly information about what Medicare provides arose the trajectory of dementia's progression. CMS's new GUIDE pilot program is described.]*

Post-Acute Care News

Data-backed talent management: How 1 health system is streamlining operations + reducing costs

Becker's Hospital Review; by Becker's in collaboration with AMN Healthcare; 7/17/24

Healthcare talent acquisition and management face persistent challenges in today's labor market. How organizations confront these barriers, however, can serve as a key differentiator and lever for improvements in costs and recruits. Springfield, Ill.-based Hospital Sisters Health System (HSHS), a multi-institutional healthcare system that cares for patients across 15 communities in Illinois and Wisconsin, partnered with AMN Healthcare and successfully implemented a new contingent labor strategy to stabilize rates and improve the quality of candidates. Here are four underpinnings that form the foundation of HSHS' and AMN Healthcare's partnership:

1. HSHS lacked visibility across its core, flexible and contingent workforce, which led to siloed decision-making ...
2. To streamline operations and update processes, HSHS sought a partnership focused on change management and developing a unified future state ...
3. AMN Healthcare established a single Managed Services and Analytics Provider (MSAP) program ...
4. Time to fill open positions and labor costs have decreased dramatically ...



Innovative program for veterans aims to combat dementia and feelings of social isolation and loneliness by distributing animatronic pets nationwide

Cision PRWeb; by Capital Caring Health; 7/18/24

Capital Caring Health, part of the nation's largest not-for-profit advanced illness care and hospice provider—Chapters Health System, and Ageless Innovation, the makers of the award-winning Joy for All™ Companion Pets, are distributing companion pets to Veterans with dementia, and those suffering from feelings of social isolation and loneliness as part of their innovative "Pets for Vets" program. ... To date, Capital Caring Health's "Pets for Vets" program has distributed more than 3,000 robotic companion pets – which provide joy, companionship,

emotional support, and more to Veterans, will expand to deliver 1,000+ companion pets to Veterans living in Long-Term Care Centers across the nation.

Today's Encouragement

You don't need a New Year to make a change. You only need a Monday. ~ Anonymous



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