

## Cordt Kassner

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**HOSPICE &  
PALLIATIVE CARE  
TODAY**

## July 24th, 2024

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## Headlines

### **Homecare Homebase opens nominations for 2024 Home Care Aide Scholarship Program**

*PRNewswire-PRWeb; 7/23/24*

Homecare Homebase (HCHB) ... and the National Association for Home Care & Hospice (NAHC) are proud to announce the opening of nominations for the 2024 Home Care Aide Scholarship Program. This annual program awards \$1,000 scholarships to 15 deserving home care aides across the country, recognizing their dedication to providing exceptional care and supporting their professional development. The scholarship program helps address the growing need for aides in the home care workforce, enabling these essential workers to pursue further education and advance their careers. ... Nominations for the 2024 Home Care Aide Scholarship Program are [now open](#) and will be accepted through September 30th, 2024.

*Editor's Note: Pair this with the next article in today's newsletter, [These are the most](#)*

*common jobs in each state in the US, in which home health aides (including hospice) tie for the top 3 jobs in the nation.*

## **Celebrating the life and legacy of Marion Keenan**

Coastal Hospice press release; 7/23/24

Salisbury, MD – Coastal Hospice announced today with profound sadness the passing of its inaugural President, Marion Keenan and extend heartfelt condolences to her family and friends. “On behalf of Coastal Hospice, I would like to express our sadness in the passing of our founder and former President, Marion Keenan. Marion was part of a committee of innovators that brought hospice care to our community over 44 years ago,” said Ann Lovely, Interim President and CEO of Coastal Hospice. “Her leadership and spirit of service made a profound impact in our organization and those we cared for during her tenure. Marion will forever be missed as we continue to carry on her vision.” Marion's obituary is posted [here](#).

## **Hospice Provider News**

### **These are the most common jobs in each state in the US**

*USA Today; by Sara Chernikoff; 7/22/24*

The most common job in the U.S. is a three-way tie, [according to data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics](#). Home health care and personal aides, retail workers and fast food counter workers ranked at the top of the list with 3.6 million workers in each occupation. ... The desire for home health and personal care aides is on the rise as the share of the elderly U.S. population grows exponentially. This occupation is the fastest growing among most states, news outlet [Stacker, reported](#). ... Home health care aides typically assist people living with disabilities or with chronic illness. Personal care aides are often hired to care for people in hospice care, according to BLS. Advanced degrees are not required for most home health aides, rather those employed by home health or hospice agencies may need to complete formal training or pass a standardized test.

*Editor's Note: (1) Federal requirements for nursing aides in hospice care are defined in the CMS Hospice of Conditions Participation §418.76 and for home health in the CMS Home Health Conditions of Participation §484.80. Additionally, extensive state laws exist, with differences between states. (2) Pair this with the previous article in today's*

newsletter, *Homecare Homebase* opens nominations for 2024 Home Care Aide Scholarship Program.



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## **Salvation Army in Lufkin, Harbor Hospice, and other businesses hold 'Beat the Heat' fan drive**

*ABC KTRE TV9, Lufkin, TX; by Vanessa Johnson; 7/21/24*

"We have a fan drive going on right now from July 1st to July the 31st," Amy Allen, the director of nursing with Harbor Hospice in Lufkin, said. The fan drive is for those in both Angelina and Nacogdoches counties that need one but do not have the means to get one. ... "They have no resources, they have no money, they have no way to get this. During the hurricane I know we all suffered from the heat, and we felt what they feel like daily," Jenny Wright, the volunteer coordinator at Harbor Hospice, said.

## **Clinical News**

### **New medication, staging criteria signal a potential shift in Alzheimer's care**

*Psychiatric News; by Linda M. Richmond; 7/12/24*

The latest antibody treatment for Alzheimer's disease may prompt the industry toward the use of biomarkers--rather than traditional cognitive and functional testing--for diagnosis and staging. Will the new drug make a meaningful difference in patients' lives despite its risks and hefty price tag?

### **Navigating legal and ethical issues: Nurses' role in accessing and using the Death Master File**

*Daily Nurse; by Maya Payne; 7/22/24*

Nurses have a great deal of responsibility when managing sensitive information, including access to the Death Master File (DMF), because they are healthcare professionals entrusted with patient care. This article explores the moral and legal issues that help nurses use the DMF in their practice in a morally

responsible manner. ... Explore this detailed resource on DMF guidelines for further insights into responsibly using the [Death Master File](#) in healthcare settings.

*Editor's Note: About 10 years ago, the Social Security Office declared me as "dead." Yes. This affected everything financial and legal in my life. My husband even received standardized condolences from business databases that had his name as my key contact. Clean up? A mess. Cause? The best that the Social Security Office could discern was that someone, somewhere had entered a clerical mistake. I will never know. The impact of how this Death Master File is used--legally, ethically, and otherwise--cannot be overstated.*

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## **Factors affecting palliative care collaboration with pain medicine specialists**

*Hematology Advisor; by James Maitlall, MD; 7/22/24*

Structured collaboration between physicians working in palliative care (PC) and pain medicine (PM) may increase PC physician referral of seriously ill patients to PM specialists and potentially optimize their care, according to study results published in the *Journal of Pain and Symptom Management*. ... The investigators concluded, "Although we found that PC physicians have highly positive attitudes about the value of PM specialists, referral rates remain low, even for IDDS implantation, which has perhaps the largest body of evidence for patients with complex cancer-associated pain." They added, "Facilitating professional collaboration via joint educational/clinical sessions is one possible solution to drive ongoing interprofessional care in patients with complex pain.

## **Positive aging: Can a broken heart kill you?**

*ArcaMax; by Marilyn Murray Willison; 7/19/24*

I had never heard of what is officially labeled "broken heart syndrome" until a friend of mine collapsed five weeks after her long-term sweetheart died. She was rushed to the emergency room and admitted into the hospital, but within 36 hours, she, too, was dead. When 92-year-old former first lady Barbara Bush died in 2018, her husband -- of 73 years -- was admitted to the hospital the day after her funeral. He recovered and was able to return home, but many observers worried that he would develop takotsubo cardiomyopathy, which often claims the lives of brokenhearted survivors. ... According to Dr. Marc Wilkinson, a MercyCare physician in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, the syndrome really can reflect sorrow and distress. "It really is a broken heart. The stress of a spouse dying is one of the top stressors that anyone can face." And although it's not particularly common, it is "more common than people realize."

## **Regulatory News**

### **Local whistleblowers help in federal hospice investigation**

*CBS WKBN-27, Austintown, OH; by Patty Collier; 7/22/24*

The parent company that operates a hospice provider in Austintown has agreed to a settlement in a federal lawsuit alleging that the local location, along with others in the southern part of the country, defrauded the government, according to federal prosecutors. Gentiva, formerly known as Kindred at Home, has agreed to pay \$19 million to resolve allegations that it and other entities of Gentiva knowingly submitted, or caused to be submitted, false claims for hospice services provided to patients who were ineligible for hospice benefits under Medicare and other federal health care programs because the patients were not terminally ill, according to Department of Justice. ... The Employment Law Group said in a news release that there were 20 whistleblowers in the case, including two from the Youngstown area involving SouthernCare, who helped to recover about \$2.13 million in alleged fraudulent billing.



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## **Vital Signs: Digital Health Law Update | Spring 2024**

*JD Supra, Jones Day - Vital Signs; by Sarah Gaskell, Alexis Gilroy, Dr. Jörg Hladjk, Ann Hollenbeck, Carl Kukkonen III, Benjamin Lang, Michael McFerran, Gurneet Singh, Cristiana Spontoni, Maxine Thomas; July 2024*

Welcome to *Vital Signs*, a curated compilation of the latest legal and regulatory developments in digital health. [Topics include the following:]

- Recent Developments in FDA's Regulatory Framework for Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning
- DOJ Continues to Prosecute Alleged Telemedicine Schemes, With a Focus on DME and Prescription Medication
- HHS Opens Investigation Into Change Healthcare Cyberattack
- HHS and NIST Release New Guidance on HIPAA and Health Care Cybersecurity
- U.S. Congress Reintroduces New Comprehensive Federal Privacy Law
- Multiple state-specific updates
- More

## **Mergers & Acquisition News**

### **Guest column: Private equity poses threat to home health care**

*The Gardner News; by Jane Pike-Benton. Worcester Telegram & Gazette; 7/21/24*

Health care observers across the commonwealth are focusing their attention on a bankruptcy court in Houston to learn the fate of eight Massachusetts hospitals being sold at auction by Steward Health Care. Steward's financial collapse has unsurprisingly brought scrutiny on private equity in care delivery to a crescendo. ... Nationally, the number of hospice agencies owned by private equity



nearly [quadrupled](#) from 2011 to 2019. Seventy-two percent of those acquired hospices were previously nonprofits. As policymakers work to stabilize a health care capacity crisis pushed to the brink by Steward, they cannot afford to lose sight of home health and hospice providers in the shuffle. Organizations like ours, many of which were founded with nonprofit missions well over a century ago, are essential to hospitals desperately looking to discharge patients.

## Post-Acute Care News

### **Nursing homes 'can't escape' need for increased palliative care access: researchers**

*McKnights Long-Term Care News; by Josh Henreckson; 7/17/24*

Nursing home residents could greatly benefit from expanded access to palliative care, but providers need more access to standardized tools, staff education and relationships with clinicians to make informed decisions about care, specialists say. ... Several key “themes” could be the foundation for a more formalized method of identifying palliative care needs for nursing home patients, researchers found. They included factors such as patients with uncontrolled symptoms and otherwise serious illnesses, as well as patients with indicators of significant decline such as frequent rehospitalizations.



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## **Millions burdened by the cost of long-term care**

*AHCJ - Association of Health Care Journalists; by Breanna Reeves; 7/18/24*

... [Robert] Ingenito shared the mounting costs of caring for his father, who became really sick in 2023. During the panel, Ingenito shared the estimated total cost of caring for his father for just a few months: \$57,000. ... [In the U.S.] 8 million people over age 65 need long-term care services, but 3 million were not receiving them. ... Most people in the U.S. are cared for by unpaid caregivers, which are oftentimes spouses and daughters who have no prior experience in caregiving.

## **General News**

### **Asheville nurse strike? Mission/HCA 'gave some ground'; groups support nurses with fund**

*Asheville Citizen Times; by Joel Burgess; 7/22/24*

A nurse union negotiator has said HCA HealthCare, the owner of Mission Health, has "given some ground" on key issues — but nurses are still preparing for a potential strike over staffing numbers at Western North Carolina's biggest hospital. Local activists including WNC Workers Assembly, meanwhile, are rallying residents and raising money to help nurses in case of a strike. Mission nurses unionized in 2020, a year after HCA — a for-profit Tennessee corporation and the biggest hospital company in the country — bought the nonprofit Mission for \$1.9 billion.

*Editor's Note: Mission/HCA provides hospice, palliative, and PACE care. On 4/11/24 we reported, "[HCA Healthcare faces more Mission Health-related allegations.](#)"*

### **Hospital CEOs solve an old problem with new ideas**

*Becker's Hospital Review; by Laura Dyrda; 7/15/24*

A persistent problem for health system CEOs is emerging as the most important challenge to solve this year: work/life balance. Work/life balance isn't just a "nice to have" as a "thank you" to clinicians who spent thousands of extra hours during the pandemic in a stressful workplace; it's a business imperative. And many organizations haven't invested in it enough. *[Click on the title's link to continue reading identification of problems and new solutions by multiple health system CEOs.]*

*Editor's Note: Work/life balance continues to be a frequent theme in healthcare strikes, occurring throughout the nation.*



## Today's Encouragement

**I am building a fire, and every day I train, I add more fuel. At just the right moment, I light the match. Mia Hamm, American soccer player and two-time Olympic gold medalist, 1996 and 2004**



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