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**HOSPICE &
PALLIATIVE CARE
TODAY**

July 29th, 2024

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Hospice Provider News

Hospice of the Ozarks accepting submissions for Pet Peace of Mind Calendar Contest

KTLO.com; by Staff; 7/27/24

Hospice of the Ozarks is holding its annual contest to benefit the program supporting the bond between hospice patients and their pets. There is still time to enter a photo submission for the Pet Peace of Mind Calendar Contest. ...Pet Peace of Mind is a national program the staff at Hospice of the Ozarks has been proud to be associated with for more than 10 years. ... Calendars are expected to be available in October. The cost for the 2025 calendar will be \$10.

Editor's Note: Typically, we do not post hospice fundraisers until results are complete. (Typically, you--our readers--will not be attend or contribute to events in process.) However, we post this fundraiser as an example of exceptionally creative, fun,

meaningful initiative that focuses on the organization's patients, families, and community. These photo calendars are sure to be keepsakes for years ahead. [Click here for Hospice of the Ozarks' 2025 Calendar Contest information.](#) [Click here for Pet Peace of Mind.](#)

Hospices strategize sustainable growth for Veteran Programs

Hospice News; by Holly Vossel; 7/26/24

Hospices combat both operational and financial challenges as they seek to grow and evolve their veteran programs around the diverse and complex needs of patients and their families. Some of the largest expenses associated with offering veteran services include staffing and training costs ... In addition to staff training, this includes having ways to honor veterans for their service, assess the social determinant of health resources they may need and identify gaps of caregiver support. ... Forming community collaborations with organizations such as We Honor Veterans [NHPCO], Wounded Warriors or the Veteran Affairs' (VA) Pet Partners therapy program can be beneficial to having a more inclusive care delivery approach.

Editor's Note: Notable mentions include Carlos Graveran, executive director at Maryland-based Frederick Health Hospice; Sherri Bickley, vice president of patient support services at Oklahoma-based Crossroads Hospice & Palliative Care; and Carla Creegan, PACE director of clinical services and director of adult day services at Empath Health.

Palliative Care Provider News

Practicing proactive palliative care in COPD management

Medscape - "In Discussion"; podcast by Leah J. Witt, MD and Anand S. Iyer, MD, MSPH; 7/25/24

Let's start talking COPD. Today, we're going to keep talking about Mr Rivera, a case we've been following all season. He's a 78-year-old man with COPD, and we're talking to you about palliative care and symptom management. He has group E COPD. He really has a lot of symptoms and frequent exacerbations.



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Clinical News

Caregivers of end-of-life patients reveal the last words they hear most often and the most common regrets from patients

WhatsNew2Day; by Alexander; 7/27/24

... While each person's final moments are different, chaplains and palliative care nurses have said most people approach their death with "radical acceptance." People who are actively dying also often have a new sense of clarity about the universe and may even have a temporary burst of energy or sudden moments of clarity if they have dementia. The last words patients usually say to their families are to tell them they love them... [Often, people] who are in the midst of dying want to be surrounded by their loved ones and pets. Their final words are often words of love and pleas for forgiveness, as well as expressions of regret, ... [Another described that people show] "a desire for connection" with loved ones and faith.

Editor's Note: This article provides a balanced scope of descriptions from several professionals, notably Catherine Duncan, Annemarie Switchulis, Neal Shah, and Zackary Price. In this day of social media, some hospice professionals (past or present) tout definitive, authoritative descriptions of what all dying persons experience, with too many assumptions and generalizations. Beware what you read and distribute, especially if the tone and language (of other articles) are sensationalized in a way to garner social media "expertise," followers and Shares--at the expense of more balanced, sensitive, diverse, personalized experiences.

Regulatory News

HIMSSCast: Improving patient safety and employee retention with best incident reporting practices

Healthcare IT News; by Andrea Fox; 7/26/24

By modernizing systems and improving leadership and culture to embrace

reporting, healthcare organizations can better address the top 10 patient safety concerns for 2024, says Heidi Raines, founder and CEO of Performance Health Partners. Ultimately improving the quality of care healthcare systems deliver and preventing harm requires a degree of self-reflection. Along with digital transformation, putting an easy-to-use incident reporting system in place can help healthcare organizations address today's chief patient safety concerns, including medication errors, care delays, workplace violence and preventing patient falls, said Raines.

Post-Acute Care News

Empath Health, Trustbridge leaders are setting home health sights high after integration

Home Health Care News; by Joyce Famakinwa; 7/26/24

Empath Health is a company in transition. In the spring, it completed an affiliation process with Trustbridge, which formed the largest nonprofit post-acute provider organization in the state of Florida. ... Since completion of the affiliation process, the company has focused on integration, synergistic opportunities and determining how best to deliver care to the communities it serves. One of the people at the helm of this transition is Tarrah Lowry, Empath Health's chief operating officer and Trustbridge's interim president. *[Click on the title's link to read the recent interview by Home Health Care News' with Tarrah Lowry.]*



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Advance care questions to ask your loved one

Parkview Health; 7/27/24

... To ease into a conversation about decisions and scenarios, we can start with questions that are easier to answer, like: What does a good day look like? If you got to spend the day with your favorite people doing your favorite things, what would you be doing? With whom? ... From there, we can talk about more specifics related to healthcare decisions, such as: If your heart and breathing stop suddenly, would you want to have **CPR** (cardiopulmonary resuscitation), which can include pushing on your chest, breathing support, medications, and electrical shocks? ... If you knew that death was likely to happen in a brief period of time, would you want to be in the hospital, in a nursing care facility or at home? ...

Editor's Note: The wording, sequencing, and open-ended format of these questions gently open the door for the person to reflect on and describe one's wishes, in contrast to some advance care planning questions that focus on filling out a form. Yes, Advance Directives forms are crucial. However, the forms are a tool for now and for needs ahead. The focus is the person, while building a context of relationship and trust.

No One Dies Alone: a movement against isolation and loneliness in the final hours

The Optimist Daily; by The Optimist Daily Editorial Team; 7/27/24

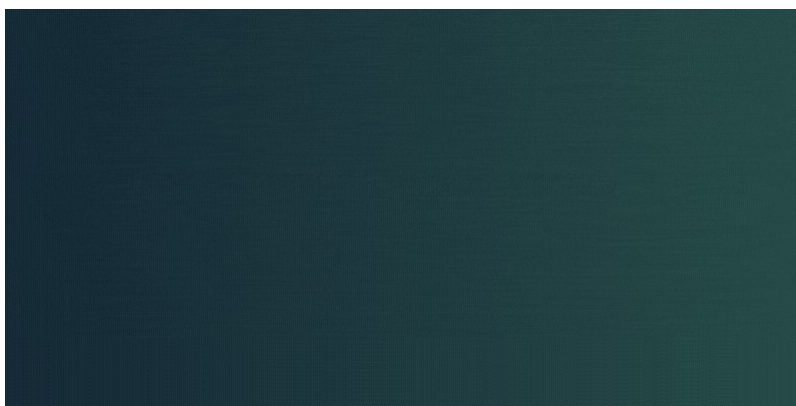
The fear of dying alone is one of the most powerful and agonizing feelings that many harbor, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. For some, this fear sadly becomes a reality. To address this issue, the No One Dies Alone (NODA) initiative trains and supports volunteers who provide companionship to people in their final hours. ... The NODA concept began in 1986 in Oregon, United States [by] Sandra Clarke, a nurse. ... [Alison] Bunce founded Compassionate Inverclyde (CI) in 2016 as an Ardgowan Hospice-funded project, where she worked as director of care. Starting with 20 volunteers, CI sought to sit with people who were dying alone, initially in hospices and local hospitals before extending to private homes. Today, CI has grown substantially, with over 100 volunteers available to provide companionship at a moment's notice.

Technology / Innovations News

Baptist Health taps 3 vendors to build a population health system that works

Healthcare IT News; by Bill Siwicki; 7/26/24

With help from Oracle, Innovaccer and Salesforce, the South Florida provider is scoring big population health wins, including a 7% increase in coding gap closure rate and a 17% increase in annual wellness visit completion rates. Baptist Health South Florida operates a network of 11 hospitals covering four counties. It also includes numerous ambulatory facilities, urgent care centers and emergency departments to provide comprehensive healthcare services across the region. ... "One of our primary issues was the fragmented nature of patient data across multiple provider organizations and electronic health record systems," said Milady Cervera, vice president, population health and physician integrated networks, at Baptist Health South Florida. "This lack of interoperability made it difficult to gain a comprehensive view of our patients' health status, care history and ongoing needs. ..."



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What would make AI voice in health care ethical and trustworthy?

The Hastings Center; 7/25/24

Voice as a health biomarker using artificial intelligence is gaining momentum in research, but it's a challenge to develop diverse AI-ready voice datasets that are free from bias. A first-of-its kind study, published in Digital Health and co-authored by Hastings Center President Vardit Ravitsky, aims to better understand the perspectives of voice AI experts, clinicians, patients, and other

stakeholders regarding ethical and trustworthy voice AI. The results will support technological innovation informed by ethical inquiry.

Ethics

Youngstown hospice nurses help alert feds on alleged insurance fraud; company pays settlement

Mahoning Matters; by Erina Anwar; 7/26/24

... The U.S. Department of Justice announced on July 17 that federal prosecutors had settled with Gentiva, formerly known as Kindred at Home, after more than 20 whistleblowers — including two hospice nurses from Youngstown, Ohio — alerted the government for alleged fraud. The [Youngstown] nurses, Jason Medved and Anthony Donnadio, will receive a portion of the payout for reporting the fraud at a Youngstown hospice via a lawsuit they filed in 2023 under the federal False Claims Act (FCA). “As registered nurses, Jason and Anthony owed a duty to their hospice patients first and foremost,” Janel Quinn, a principal of The Employment Law Group said. “They were advocates for ethical medicine, even when it wasn’t easy. This settlement is a fitting recognition of their professionalism and their bravery.”

Cultivating humility, making connections in a contentious world


Tallahassee Democrat; by Rev. Candace McKibben; 7/27/24

The first time I remember hearing about “cultural humility” was some years ago when I served as a member of the Diversity and Inclusion Team at Big Bend Hospice. I recall reading an article by Silvia Austerlic, a Bereavement Manager and Hospice Latino community liaison, at Hospice of Santa Cruz County. She explained what is required to relate in the best interests of patients and families is not “cultural competence,” which is where our team had been focused, but “cultural humility.” “Cultural competence,” while it may be well-meaning, is a framework to help providers understand, appreciate, and work with individuals from diverse cultures. It is focused on gaining knowledge. “Cultural humility,” on the other hand, is focused on relationships. ... Yet another form of humility that seems critically important to me in our time is “religious humility.” This form of humility involves celebrating the inherent dignity of every individual, regardless of their religious affiliation.



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General News

[Community & Caregivers] Stay ahead of Medicare fraudsters

The NB Xpress, North Baltimore, OH; by Sue Miklovic; 7/26/24

Every day, criminals target older Americans with one goal – to steal their Medicare numbers and other protected health information. To fraudsters, this information is just as valuable as credit card information. These criminals steal Medicare numbers and unlawfully bill Medicare for medical services that were never provided to the patient or overbill for provided services. ... Consider these tips to help protect yourself against Medicare fraud and stay one step ahead of fraudsters: ...

International News

Assisted dying bill introduced in Parliament

BBC News; 7/26/24

A bill which would allow terminally ill adults with six months or fewer to live to get medical help to end their own lives has been introduced in the House of Lords, by former Labour Justice Secretary Lord Falconer. He told the BBC his bill would apply only to people "mentally able to make the decision." Their choice would also need to be approved by two doctors and the high court. Private

members' bills introduced in the Lords rarely become law. However, Lord Falconer says he hopes a backbench MP will introduce a similar bill in the Commons, where it will have a greater chance of success.

Today's Encouragement

Passion is a huge prerequisite to winning. It makes you willing to jump through hoops, go through all the ups and downs and everything in between to reach your goal. ~ Kerri Walsh, American beach volleyball player and three-time gold medalist



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