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August 5th, 2024

Contents

Headlines

1. [Teleios' Clinically Integrated Network sets benchmark for healthcare excellence](#)

Hospice Provider News

2. [NAHC & NHPCO leaders say united organization already at work](#)
3. [LMHPCO Standards of Excellence winners](#)
4. [Want more effective hospice nurses? Overhaul your onboarding](#)
5. [How the Hospice CARE Act could change respite services](#)
6. [Bluegrass Care Navigators receives grant to care for veterans](#)

7. Florida Blue boosts local bereavement support with donation
8. Valley Health, Blue Ridge hospice collaborate to expand care in Luray

Clinical News

9. Providers, patients would benefit from hospice telehealth extension, doc offers

Regulatory News

10. Hospice Coalition Questions and Answers: June 20, 2024
11. PharMerica reaches \$100 million settlement over alleged SNF pharmacy kickbacks

Post-Acute Care News

12. Home care workforce drops by 3,500 in June, BLS reports

General News

13. National plan on aging 'essential' to addressing key issues: AARP
14. 10 tips for working with the media

Non-print News

15. Prognosis superspecial: A podcast with Kara Bischoff, James Deardorff, and Elizabeth Lilley

International News

16. World Hospice and Palliative Care Day (WHPCD) Resource Toolkit

Today's Encouragement

17. Today's Encouragement

Headlines

Teleios' Clinically Integrated Network sets benchmark for healthcare excellence

Teleios press release; 7/31/24

Teleios Collaborative Network (TCN) recently announced that its Clinically Integrated Network (CIN) is setting the benchmark for healthcare excellence in the serious illness space. The data from the most recent reporting period again demonstrates that the members of the CIN are delivering exceptional patient care. One hundred percent of the CIN members achieved a 4- or 5-star rating on the CAHPS Hospice Survey Star Ratings by CMS. In addition, all the members identified and documented a healthcare surrogate for hospice within the first 5 days after admission at least 90% of the time with the network average being 97% and upon the time of admission for Palliative Care patients with the average being 99.8% of the time. This was the result of the members reviewing and

revising their processes to ensure that a healthcare surrogate was identified and documented.

Publisher's note: We appreciate Teleios being a newsletter sponsor and their work setting a high quality bar for their members!

Hospice Provider News

NAHC & NHPCO leaders say united organization already at work

HomeCare; 8/1/24

The new group formed by the recent merger of the National Association for Homecare and Hospice (NAHC) and the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO) has already gotten to work advocating in the industry—even though it doesn't yet have a name or CEO. That's what leaders said in a town hall meeting to discuss the progress of the alliance, which, for now, is being called "the alliance" as a sort of shorthand. "The work of the organizations doesn't stop because of the merger," said Ken Albert, chair of the group's transition board, told more than 230 attendees for the online town hall on Thursday, July 31. "We're continuing to serve members in all ways." The two groups officially merged July 1 and hoped to have a name ready for the launch but encountered hurdles regarding trademark, said.

LMHPCO Standards of Excellence winners

Louisiana ~ Mississippi Hospice & Palliative Care Organization Conference; 7/25/24

Congratulations to the following hospices earning the LMHPCO Standards of Excellence certification in Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging:

- Audubon Hospice
- Haydel Memorial Hospice
- Hospice of Acadiana
- Hospice of Light
- Sanctuary Hospice

Publisher's Note: We appreciate LMHPCO sponsoring Hospice & Palliative Care Today and congratulate these hospices.

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Want more effective hospice nurses? Overhaul your onboarding

McKnight's Home Care; by Raianne Melton; 7/18/24

The benefits of a comprehensive onboarding program are undeniable. Companies that prioritize onboarding see a median revenue increase of 49% per employee compared to those that don't. Employees who undergo a successful onboarding process are 69% more likely to remain with a company for three years or more.

How the Hospice CARE Act could change respite services

Hospice News; by Jim Parker; 8/1/24

The Hospice Care Accountability, Reform, and Enforcement (Hospice CARE) Act, if enacted, would make changes to the ways hospices provide respite care. Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-Oregon) is in the process of drafting the bill that would represent the most significant reforms to date for hospice payment and oversight. The legislation is currently in a discussion draft phase, which has been circulated among the nation's major industry trade associations and their members for feedback. ... "There's evidence that people who take advantage of hospice care delivered properly, actually have a higher quality of life. Oftentimes, they live longer," Blumenauer said at Elevate. "This is an opportunity to do something in this Congress that is concrete, specific, that will save money and improve the quality of care for some of our most vulnerable people."

Bluegrass Care Navigators receives grant to care for veterans

The Anderson News, Lawrenceburg, KY; 8/1/24

Bluegrass Care Navigators (BCN) is honored to announce it has received a grant

from the Disabled Veterans National Foundation (DVNF) for \$18,000 which will allow us to focus our Integrative Medicine therapies on serving more of our veteran patients across our service lines. “Thank you, DVNF, for your generous support,” Liz Fowler, President and CEO of BCN, said. “This grant empowers us to continue serving our veteran patients with integrative medicine therapies like art, music, and massage sessions. Your kindness ensures that all veterans, regardless of financial means, receive the holistic care they deserve.”



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Florida Blue boosts local bereavement support with donation

Avow Hospice press release; 7/18/24

In May 2024, Florida Blue Foundation announced a \$20,000 grant in support of Avow’s bereavement programs, which are available at no cost to individuals of all ages. With this grant, Avow is able to pursue its mission of providing compassionate care through life’s hardest transitions. Florida Blue awarded this grant on the basis of promoting mental well-being for all individuals, one of the foundation’s strategic pillars, as grief counseling is essential for maintaining and advancing the mental well-being of individuals and families.

Valley Health, Blue Ridge hospice collaborate to expand care in Luray

WHSV 3, Luray, VA; by Michael Russo; 8/1/24

Health systems in the Valley are joining together to expand their offerings for hospice care. Page Memorial Hospital in Luray will benefit from the collaboration between Valley Health and Blue Ridge Hospice and the pair’s Hospice in the Hospital Program. Valley Health and Blue Ridge Hospice signed an agreement July 15 to allow BRH’s staff to work with Valley Health’s team to provide “supplemental comfort care services” to ensure patients receive comprehensive care throughout and following their stay in the hospital.

Clinical News

Providers, patients would benefit from hospice telehealth extension, doc offers

McKnights Senior Living; by Rachael Zimlich; 7/31/24

The COVID-19 pandemic triggered many changes in healthcare, and not all were bad. In the years since the coronavirus forced worldwide lockdowns and limited access to care, the healthcare industry increasingly has embraced measures such as remote care and telehealth. One surprising area that has benefitted from those changes is hospice care. Hospice care by telehealth provides an obvious convenience for patients, but [Sean Oser, MD, MPH] shared his surprise at how much the increased frequency and ease of visits — plus better insight into the patient’s home environment — could improve his own experience as the provider. ... The latest extension of rules to allow hospice provided via telehealth to be paid through Medicare will end in December. ... Representatives called out the need to extend the hospital-at-home waiver, which is set to expire at the end of 2024.



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Regulatory News

Hospice Coalition Questions and Answers: June 20, 2024

Palmetto GBA; 7/15/2024

Meeting Q&A and these attachments: Attachment A: Hospice Appeals Report 2024; Attachment B: Hospice CAP Updates.

PharMerica reaches \$100 million settlement over alleged SNF pharmacy kickbacks

McKnight's Long-Term Care News; by Josh Henreckson; 7/18/24

One of the nation’s leading pharmacy companies has agreed to pay \$100 million to resolve allegations of false claims and kickbacks in its dealings with long-term care providers. The legal claims against PharMerica have been ongoing in the

District Court of New Jersey since 2011, when whistleblower Marc Silver accused the company of undercharging skilled nursing facilities for their Medicare Part A patients in order to secure more lucrative Medicare Part D and Medicaid contracts.

Post-Acute Care News

Home care workforce drops by 3,500 in June, BLS reports

McKnight's Home Care; by Adam Healy; 7/8/24

The exit of several thousand from the home care workforce last month partially contributed to slower-than-average job growth across all healthcare-related segments in June, according to the latest [employment report](#) by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Employment in home healthcare services, which includes home health and personal care aides, dropped by roughly 3,500 in June, the report, released Friday, found. The BLS estimated there to be roughly 1,751,500 home healthcare services workers as of June 2024, which is roughly 0.2% fewer than there were in May 2024, and almost 8% more than there were in June 2023. This decline in home care workers contrasts with recent workforce gains. The sector added nearly 20,000 jobs from April to May, BLS reported last month.



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General News

National plan on aging 'essential' to addressing key issues: AARP

McKnight's Senior Living; by Kimberly Bonvissuto; 7/18/24

Aging, itself, isn't a challenge - but being unprepared for aging is, according to AARP, which on Wednesday released a white paper that lays out a [blueprint](#) for developing a national plan on aging. The paper marks the launch of the organization's Aging Well in America Initiative, for which the AARP took best practices from federal, state and local initiatives to create a blueprint for the development of a "robust" national plan to foster the well-being, quality of life and dignity of older Americans.

10 tips for working with the media

McKnight's Senior Living; by Lois A. Bowers; 7/15/24

1. Saying “no comment” or not returning a reporter’s phone call or email doesn’t mean that the media outlet won’t do a story.
2. Ensure that your website includes contact information.
3. Make sure whoever answers your phone and emails knows how to respond if a request from the media comes in.
4. Do not delay.
5. If you anticipate that you may get media inquiries about a specific event, prepare a response(s) in advance so that you’re ready to comment.
6. Respond to all major inquiries.
7. For major stories, consider posting a statement on your website and/or social media, and updating it as needed.
8. You may be limited in how you can respond to a media inquiry, but you probably can say something.
9. Don’t put out a press release and assume people will see it.
10. When you’re speaking with a member of the media, understand that person’s understanding of on the record, off the record, and background.

Publisher's Note: Mark Cohen, Publisher of Hospice News Today, has also discussed several of these points on TNCTalks podcasts. Please see full article for additional detail.

Non-print News

Prognosis superspecial: A podcast with Kara Bischoff, James Deardorff, and Elizabeth Lilley

GeriPal Podcast; by Alex Smith, Eric Widera, Kara Bischoff, James Deardorff, Elizabeth Lilley; 7/25/24

We are dusting off our crystal balls today with three amazing guests who have all recently published an article on prognosis over the last couple months: Kara Bischoff, James Deardorff, and Elizabeth Lilley. To start us off we talk with Kara Bischoff about the article she just published in JAMA Network on a re-validation of the Palliative Performance Scale (PPS) in a modern day palliative care setting... Next, we talk with James Deardorff about whether we can accurately predict nursing home level of care in community-dwelling older adults with dementia...

Lastly, we invite Liz Lilley to talk about her paper in Annals of Surgery about prognostic alignment, including why as palliative care and geriatrics teams we need to take time to ensure that all disciplines and specialties are prognostically aligned before a family meeting.



International News

World Hospice and Palliative Care Day (WHPCD) Resource Toolkit

Worldwide Hospice and Palliative Care Alliance (WHPCA); 8/1/24

WHPCA celebrates 10 years since the World Health Assembly (WHO's Governing Body) passed the only stand-alone resolution on palliative care, calling for all countries to "strengthen palliative care as a component of comprehensive care throughout the life course..." [They have made a free Resource Toolkit available.]

Today's Encouragement

Pickleball is a lot like life. The one who serves most usually wins...



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