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August 16th, 2024

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Headlines

[Biden administration says Medicare negotiated price discounts on 10 prescription drugs](#)

USA Today; by Ken Alltucker; 8/15/24

... The Biden administration announced Thursday that Medicare had negotiated discounts with pharmaceutical companies on 10 drugs prescribed to treat blood clots, cancer, heart disease and diabetes. The drugs are Eliquis, Jardiance, Xarelto, Januvia, Farxiga, Entresto, Enbrel, Imbruvica, Stelara, and the insulins Fiasp and NovoLog. The discounts will range from 38% to 79% when the negotiated prices take effect in 2026. The bargaining will save Medicare \$6 billion when the price cuts are re implemented in two years, according to U.S. Department of Health and Human Services estimates.

Hospice Provider News

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

Hospice & Palliative Nurses Association (HPNA); August 2024 newsletter, with webpage posted 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. ... Sandra served as the director of credentialing of the Hospice and Palliative Credentialing Center from 2004 until her sudden passing in 2018.

Health group expands to Presque Isle

The County, Presque Isle, ME; 8/14/24

Andwell Health Partners (formerly Androscoggin Home Healthcare + Hospice) has expanded its hospice services to Aroostook County. “As Maine’s largest non-profit home and community-based healthcare and care management organization, we are driven to meet the growing and evolving needs of individuals and families,” said Ken Albert, president and CEO, Andwell Health Partners, who has deep family roots in Aroostook County. ... Serving all ages of hospice patients, from infancy to those who have lived full lives, Andwell’s hospice services are available to individuals regardless of ability to pay.

Hospice of Greater Cleveland: A new partnership between Judson and McGregor Senior Living Communities

Morningstar, Cleveland, OH; by PR Newswire; 8/15/24

For Judson and McGregor Senior Living Communities, organizational aspirations have always been to provide continuity of care and quality service through our dedicated teams. ... We are pleased to announce that the two organizations have embarked on a new joint venture. ... This strategic partnership, built on the strengths of both organizations, is designed to provide the utmost comfort, dignity, and support to our hospice residents during their end-of-life journey,

ensuring a seamless and enhanced experience for all. ... Hospice of Greater Cleveland will begin its work on August 15, 2024. This partnership reflects the ongoing support of our collective organization and the missions that drive our commitment to seniors in Northeast Ohio.

Palliative Care Provider News

Capitalizing palliative care startups

Hospice News; by Jesse Floyd; 8/14/24

As a sector, most standalone palliative care providers are still maturing from startups into long-term, sustainable businesses. ... This means gathering the necessary startup capital to take a new palliative care provider from idea to execution is often the first tangible goal for hopeful entrants into the space. When Jonathan Fluhart and Tiffany Hughes set about getting PalliCare, their Texarkana, Texas-based palliative care provider from theory to reality, they ran headlong into this obstacle. ... "Initially, what we thought we would do is build a palliative program that would nest between the home health and hospice," Fluhart said. "We started to go into the community to talk with facilities and places that we felt would benefit from our services. Once they learned that we were tied to a home health provider, especially a hospice, it turned them off." They decided the answer was two-fold: Sever ties with the hospice care provider they worked for; then start casting about for investors. ...

Clinical News

8-year-old boy's dream of skydiving finally comes true after lazy eye led to terminal cancer diagnosis (exclusive)

People; by Angela Andoloro; 8/14/24

"In those moments, he's not a cancer kid," mom Amanda tells PEOPLE of Paxton's big adventures. ... Faced with limited time, Paxton's family are helping make his bucket list dreams, like skydiving, come true and tell PEOPLE about what it means to be able to do so. ... [Click on the title's link to see photos and read more.]

Person-centered, goal-oriented care helped my patients improve their quality of life

Journal of the American Board of Family Medicine; by Lee A. Jennings and James W.

Mold; originally posted 5/24 issue, again on 8/15/24

When the goal is to help patients improve their quality of life, it makes sense to focus directly on the activities and relationships that are most important to each patient. This can be accomplished most effectively by following a three-step process that includes 1) connecting with the patient around what matters to them, 2) co-creating a goal-oriented plan, and 3) collaborating with patient, family, team members, and consultants to increase the probability of success. Once this approach has been mastered and the necessary systems, processes, and relationships are in place, this should not take more time than a problem-oriented approach, and it will almost certainly be more satisfying for both physician and patient.

Editor's Note: Simple. Effective. Meaningful.

Factors associated with Do Not Resuscitate status and palliative care in hospitalized patients: A national inpatient sample analysis

Palliative Medicine Reports; by Jean-Sebastien Rachoin, Nicole Debski, Krystal Hunter, Elizabeth Cerceo; 8/5/24

In the United States, the proportion of hospitalized patients with DNR, PC, and DNR with PC increased from 2016 to 2019. Overall, inpatient mortality and LOS fell, but hospital charges per patient increased. Significant gender and ethnic differences emerged. Black patients and males were less likely to have DNR status and had higher inpatient mortality, LOS, and hospital charges.

Commentary: Prognostication in Alzheimer's disease and related dementias

Journal of the American Geriatrics Society / Early View; by Natalie C. Ernecoff PhD, MPH, Kathryn L. Wessell MPH, Laura C. Hanson MD, MPH; 8/8/24

... Hospice provides comfort-oriented care, emphasizing patient-tailored elements of quality of life, including time with family, access to nature, and music. In late-stage ADRD, studies show that a majority of families prioritize comfort-oriented treatment, and understanding prognosis may help them align treatments accordingly. Yet, only 15% of people enrolled in hospice with a primary diagnosis of ADRD. This is due to difficulty estimating 6-month prognosis required for hospice eligibility—ADRD carries a prognosis of 12–18 months in the latest stage. While low rates of live discharges from hospice are a regulatory

requirement for hospices, people who are increasingly experiencing ADRD progression lose access to those beneficial hospice services. ...

Navigating end-stage blood cancer: When there are no more options

Medscape Medical News; by Randy Dotinga; 8/14/24

Blood cancer death rates have dipped in recent decades, dramatically boosting 5-year survival rates in leukemia, lymphoma, and myeloma. Still, the three diseases were expected to kill more than 57,000 people in the United States in 2023 — almost 10% of all cancer deaths. ... Here are five things to understand about navigating end-of-life care in blood cancer.

1. It's Harder to Know When the End Is Near ...
2. Hematologists Treat Terminal Patients More Aggressively ...
3. Start End-of-Life Discussions Early ...
4. Patients Priorities Differ and 'Brutal' Honesty Matters ...
5. Patients May Fear Losing the Connection to Your Team ...

Regulatory News

Staff education an anchor amid widespread hospice audits

Hospice News; by Holly Vossel; 8/14/24

... More than half of hospice providers reported having multiple types of audits within a six-month span in a [survey](#) earlier this year. ... Supplemental Medical Review Contractor (SMRC) and Targeted Probe and Educate (TPE) audits are among the most common types of audits that hospices undergo simultaneously alongside others. ... Staff need a firm understanding around the potential red flags on regulators' radars and how to avoid common compliance errors in their roles, ... Compliance training should be focused on staff's overall responsibilities alongside the larger bottom line of quality, she said.

...

Notable mentions: Jason Bring, co-chair of post-acute and long-term care at the law firm Arnall Golden Gregory LLP (AGG); Megan Turby, vice president of quality and compliance at Gulfside Healthcare Services; Dr. Lisa Barker, chief medical officer at Gulfside Healthcare Services

Mergers & Acquisition News

On-demand talent can push key objectives forward amid an increase in M&A deals

Forbes; by Sunny Ackerman; 8/14/24

As we settle into the latter half of 2024, mergers and acquisitions and other business transformation initiatives are likely to be top of mind for many business leaders. Consider EY's May 2024 "[Deal Barometer](#)," which predicts that in the United States, "corporate M&A deal volume will increase 20%." The firm also estimated that M&A deal volume will increase by 16% in the private equity world. ... Given the projected increase in M&A deal activity, I expect to see an increased need for on-demand talent in 2024 and beyond to push key objectives forward, executing strategic goals to close deals and facilitate seamless transitions post-closure. ...

Post-Acute Care News

Franciscan Health opens new senior wellness center in Greenwood [PACE]

Daily Journal; by Ryan Trares; 8/12/24

The Franciscan Senior Health & Wellness Center, part of the Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly, also known as PACE, is a newly opened facility in Greenwood [IN] focused on providing older adults with all-encompassing care. ... Exercise bikes, balance bars and massage tables fill a spacious fitness area. A primary care clinic is available in case seniors need to meet with a physician for medical conditions. Camaraderie and friendship is forged with daily activities, music, games and more inside a spacious day center.

Technology / Innovations News

Study: AI adoption spends jump among enterprises as eliminating data privacy concerns remains a foremost opportunity for driving long-term growth and ROI

BusinessWire, San Francisco, CA; by Kayla Spiess; 8/14/24

Searce, a modern technology consulting firm that empowers businesses to be future-ready, today released its State of AI 2024 report. Polling 300 C-suite and senior technology executives – including Chief AI Officers, Chief Data & Analytics Officers, Chief Transformation Officers, and Chief Digital Officers – from organizations across the US and UK with at least \$500 million in revenue,

the report examines some of the biggest trends, successes and challenges facing businesses in their decision-making, strategy and execution as they try to unlock AI growth. [Key takeaways:]

- Success for AI initiatives remains spotty yet spends continue to grow
- Data privacy concerns, legacy tech and talent shortage present leading limitations for businesses adopting AI
- GenAI remains top-of-mind
- Over 60% of businesses purchase AI solutions vs. build them internally
[Note: the businesses interviewed have at least \$500 million in revenue]

General News

15 Employee engagement examples to inspire you in 2024

Academy to Innovate HR (AIHR); by Andrea Boatman; 8/14/24

Employers should heed Apple's former Senior VP Angela Ahrendts' words: "Everyone talks about building a relationship with your customer. I think you build one with your employees first." But how can HR help foster this relationship? ... Incorporate the examples in this article into your company's employee engagement plan for positive long-term results. ...

1. Flexible work arrangements ...
2. Employee recognition programs ...
3. Professional development programs ...
4. Wellness programs ...
5. Open communication channels ...
6. Team-building activities ...
7. Inclusive company culture ...
8. Employee autonomy [vs. micromanagement] ...
9. Strategic direction ...
10. Defined values and ethics ...
11. Functional change management ...
12. Competitive pay and benefits ...
13. Optimized work processes ...
14. Maximized employee engagement feedback ...
15. Useful resources and managerial support ...

Editor's Note: These positive employee engagement solutions are consistent with the negative employee problems that have led to the increase of healthcare unions and strikes (per numerous nation-wide articles previously published in this newsletter).



Aligning local marketing strategies with organizational vision

Forbes; by Emily Burroughs; 8/15/24

... In today's interconnected world, achieving a cohesive and impactful narrative requires that local marketing strategies align with the organization's broader vision. However, silos within a company can complicate this process, impeding clarity and effectiveness. Here's how to bridge these gaps and foster a unified message.

- The Power of Purpose-Driven Storytelling ...
 - Silos: Defining and Recognizing ...
 - Uniqueness to Markets ...
- Tools for Breaking Down Silos ...
 - Communication: The ADKAR Model ...
 - Generational Marketing: Understanding Diverse Workforces ...
 - Empowerment Dynamic: Shifting Mindsets ...
 - Teamwork: Stages of Team Development ...

Today's Encouragement

Back to school continued: Let us remember - One book, one pen, one child, and one teacher can change the world. ~ Malala Yousafzai

Editor's Note: Who was that key, change-teacher for you, in your world? If still living, reach out and voice your thanks! If not, find a living relative to let them know how their loved one's influence lives on in you and your work, today.



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