

## Cordt Kassner

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## August 18th, 2024

*Sunday newsletters focus on headlines and top read stories of the last week (in order) - enjoy!*

## Contents

### Headlines

- [1. Violent dementia patients leave nursing home staffers and residents 'scared to death'](#)
- [2. Rescue from above: How drones may narrow emergency response times](#)
- [3. Home Instead Totton launches expedited home care service to meet growing needs](#)

4. Fearless hospice patient takes joyride
5. Palliative care is important in managing cardiovascular disease
6. Pennant's home health, hospice growth 'significantly ahead' of prior expectations
7. Enhabit walks away from UnitedHealthcare after '9 months of unsuccessful negotiations'
8. Today's Heartwarming Story [MHPCA Hospice in Corrections]
9. Making your Customer Experience [CX] investment strategy work
10. AI and health insurance prior authorization: Regulators need to step up oversight
11. Four years and more than 200,000 deaths later: Lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic in US nursing homes

### Today's Encouragement

12. Today's Encouragement

## Headlines

### **Violent dementia patients leave nursing home staffers and residents 'scared to death'**

*KFF Health News; by Jordan Rau; 8/9/24*

Violent altercations between residents in long-term care facilities are alarmingly common. Across the country, residents in nursing homes or assisted living centers have been killed by other residents who weaponized a bedrail, shoved pillow stuffing into a person's mouth, or removed an oxygen mask. A recent [study](#) in JAMA Network Open of 14 New York assisted living homes found that, within one month, 15% of residents experienced verbal, physical, or sexual resident-on-resident aggression. Another [study](#) found nearly 8% of assisted living residents engaged in physical aggression or abuse toward residents or staff members within one month. Dementia residents are especially likely to be involved in altercations because the disease damages the parts of the brain affecting memory, language, reasoning, and social behavior.

### **Rescue from above: How drones may narrow emergency response times**

*KFF Health News; by Michelle Andrews; 7/22/24*

Starting in September, if someone in Clemmons, North Carolina, calls 911 to report a cardiac arrest, the first responder on the scene may be a drone carrying an automated external defibrillator, or AED. "The idea is for the drone to get there several minutes before first responders," such as an emergency medical technician or an ambulance, said Daniel Crews, a spokesperson for the sheriff's

office in Forsyth County, where Clemmons is located. The sheriff's office is partnering on the project with local emergency services, the Clinical Research Institute at Duke University, and the drone consulting firm Hovecon. "The ultimate goal is to save lives and improve life expectancy for someone experiencing a cardiac episode," Crews said.

*Publisher's note: As with all things tech, when and how might drones be used in hospice?*

## **Home Instead Totton launches expedited home care service to meet growing needs**

*KMLK (AR) press release; 8/7/24*

Home Instead Totton has announced the launch of its new expedited home care service... This new service aims to cut down waiting times, helping clients get the care and support they need quickly and efficiently. The service is designed to meet various needs of the local community, offering a wide range of home care options. These include home visits, specialised care, health care, and live-in care. Each service is designed to address specific client needs, from daily activities to complex health conditions.

*Publisher's note: Is there need / opportunity for "expedited" hospice care?*



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## **Fearless hospice patient takes joyride**

*West Valley View (AZ); by Lin Sue Flood; 8/7/24*

Don Tamuty, a beloved former Madison Unified School District teacher, had one thing left on his bucket list. The 95-year-old shared with his hospice nurse, Monisha Roe, that he would love to ride in a driverless car. Monisha and the rest of Don's Hospice of the Valley care team knew exactly how to fulfill that wish! They booked a driverless cruise on Waymo One to take Don out to a nice restaurant.

## Palliative care is important in managing cardiovascular disease

*NJToday; 8/8/24*

Implementing patient-centered palliative care therapies, including prescribing, adjusting or discontinuing medications as needed, may help control symptoms and improve quality of life for people with heart disease, according to “[Palliative Pharmacotherapy for Cardiovascular Disease](#),” a new scientific statement from the American Heart Association, published in the journal, *Circulation: Cardiovascular Quality and Outcomes*.

## Pennant’s home health, hospice growth ‘significantly ahead’ of prior expectations

*Home Health Care News; by Audrie Martin; 8/7/24*

The Pennant Group Inc. (Nasdaq: PNTG) leaders highlighted the company’s significant home health growth Tuesday. They also teased continued expansion in the East Coast and elsewhere. “We are thrilled to report record-breaking second quarter results as we continue to experience momentum across all our service lines and create meaningful growth opportunities for local leaders and teams,” Pennant CEO Brent Guerisoli said during the company’s second-quarter earnings call. “Our financial performance and growth trajectory reflect the consistent efforts we have applied to every aspect of our business through our five key focus areas: leadership development, clinical excellence, employee engagement, margin and growth.” The Pennant Group is a holding company based in Eagle, Idaho, with independent operating subsidiaries that provide health care services through 117 home health and hospice agencies and 54 senior living communities across 13 states.

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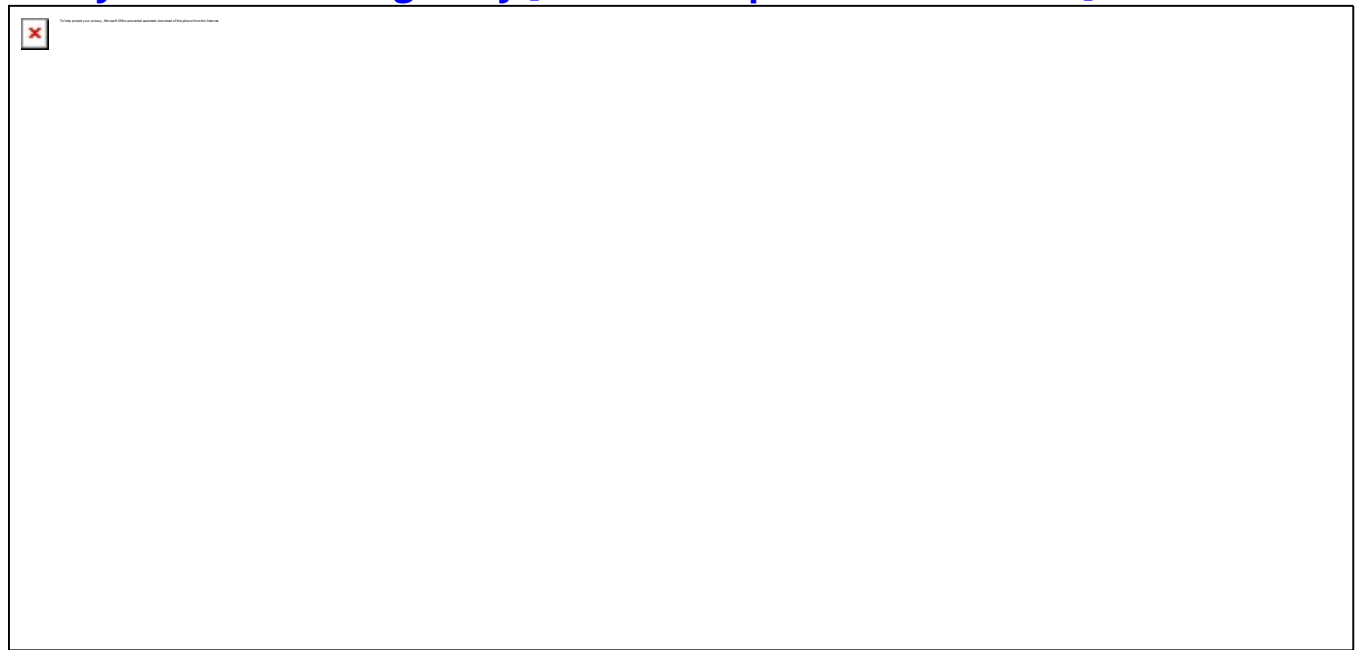
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## **Enhabit walks away from UnitedHealthcare after '9 months of unsuccessful negotiations'**

*Home Health Care News; by Joyce Famakinwa; 8/7/24*

Staying on course with its payer innovation strategy, Enhabit Inc. (NYSE: EHAB) has decided to walk away from certain Medicare Advantage (MA) payers – and namely UnitedHealth Group's (NYSE: UNH) UnitedHealthcare. That decision, and the recent home health proposed payment rule, were top of mind for Enhabit leaders on Tuesday.

## **Today's Heartwarming Story [MHPCA Hospice in Corrections]**



Per Facebook post: Over the past decade, the [Missouri Hospice and Palliative Care Association](#) has trained hundreds of residents of Missouri state prisons to become hospice volunteers, providing comfort and companionship to terminally ill peers. The newest group recently completed training at [Farmington Correctional Center](#). Volunteers develop skills in helping with daily activities, practicing empathy and active listening, and learning to recognize and respond to patients' spiritual and emotional needs.

## **Making your Customer Experience [CX] investment strategy work**

*CMSWire [not to be confused with CMS=Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services]; by Jeb Dasteel, Amir Hartman, Brian P. O'Neill and Marc Madigan; 8/12/24*

Uncover the key elements of a successful customer experience strategy, from capability planning to aligning with core business objectives. ... Investing in a

customer experience strategy is fraught with complications and feelings. Most of us in the world of CX are here because we believe that thoughtful CX spending will make an impact on the performance of our company.

*Editor's Note: This article is for a much larger scope than our hospice and palliative readership. However, it highlights the importance of tying "customers' experiences" to the company/organization's core goals and business objectives. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' CAHPS Hospice Compare Scores [not to be confused with this CMSWire source] reflect the hospice "customer experience," from the perspective of the bereaved caregiver. While the [CMS Hospice Compare site](#) sorts these public information scores alphabetically (per location and organization), our newsletter's sponsor [Hospice Analytics' National Hospice Locator](#) sorts this same data by highest scores, for the purpose of helping the public "consumer" find the hospice that will provide them with the best "customer experience."*



## **AI and health insurance prior authorization: Regulators need to step up oversight**

*Health Affairs; by Carmel Shachar Amy Killelea Sara Gerke; 7/24*

Artificial intelligence (AI)—a machine or computer's ability to perform cognitive functions—is quickly changing many facets of American life, including how we interact with health insurance. AI is increasingly being used by health insurers to automate a host of functions, including processing prior authorization (PA) requests, managing other plan utilization management techniques, and adjudicating claims. In contrast to the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA's) increasing attention to algorithms used to guide clinical decision making, there is relatively little state or federal oversight of both the development and use of algorithms by health insurers.

## **Four years and more than 200,000 deaths later: Lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic in US nursing homes**

*Health Affairs; by R. Tamara Konetzka, David C. Grabowski, Vincent Mor; 7/24*

Nursing home residents and staff were disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, drawing attention to long-standing challenges of poor infection control, understaffing, and substandard quality of care in many facilities. Evolving practices and policies during the pandemic often focused on these challenges, with little effect. Despite the emergence of best practices to mitigate transmission of the virus, even the highest-quality facilities experienced outbreaks, indicating a larger systemic problem, rather than a quality problem at the facility level. Here we present a narrative review and discussion of the evolution of policies and practices and their effectiveness, drawing on evidence from the United States that was published during 2020–23.

## Today's Encouragement

**Just one small positive thought in the morning can change your whole day.**  
~Dalai Lama





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