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August 25th, 2024

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

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Headlines

TCN podcast: The need to know on the 2025 Hospice Wage Index

Telios Collaborative Network (TCN); podcast hosted by Chris Comeaux; 8/21/24

In this episode of TCN Talks, Chris interviews Annette Kiser, Chief Compliance Officer with Teleios and Judi Lund Person, Principal with [Lund Person & Associates LLC](#). The conversation covers the need to know around the final published 2025 Wage Index for Hospices. Some of the key points discussed are:

- The rate of increase of 2.9%
- CBSA ...
- CAHPS Hospice Surevey ...
- Hospice Quality Reporting Program ...
- Patient care preferences ...
- More ...

The conversation concludes with a discussion on the future of hospice care and the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. Annette and Judi are a wealth of experience and knowledge. So join us, this is a great listen for staff, leaders, and Boards of hospice and palliative care organizations to become more educated about the changes that are coming and the tracks being laid with the 2025 Wage Index. This is timely and relevant.

Editor's Note: TCN is a sponsor of Hospice & Palliative Care Today.

Mortuaries get a modern-day makeover

The Hustle; by Sara Friedman; 8/20/24

When window shopping in a city, it's often an aesthetic storefront that captures your attention and pulls you inside. But what if the handcrafted vase that caught your eye was actually an urn for human remains? That's the business model for the crop of trendy, modernized mortuaries popping up around the world, per The New York Times. ... Pretty enough to be spas or nightclubs, these new mortuaries bring some levity to customers looking for something different. In a Co-Op Funeralcare study of 4k people in the UK, 68% said they see funerals as celebrations of life, not sad occasions. [Examples given] ... These new mortuary models are tapping into a lucrative industry: The average funeral costs ~\$6.6k in London, while the median cost of a US funeral is \$8.3k.

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.



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YoloCares: Overregulated California skips key regulations

Our Community Now (OCN); by Craig Dresang, Special to The Enterprise; 8/17/24

California is the most heavily regulated state in the country. According to the Mercatus Center at George Mason University, the Golden State has 420,434 regulatory restrictions which is more than double the national average. ... So, it seems ironic that certain critically important sectors in California that impact the well-being, health and quality of life for millions of seniors are grossly unchecked and mis-regulated. My husband, who has owned and operated salons for nearly

30 years, pointed out that California's Board of Barbering and Cosmetology (BBC) appears to have more rigorous rules and regulations for nail technicians than it does for board-and-care (B&C) owners or privately owned hospice companies. ... [Click on the title's link to continue reading.]

Reimagining end-of-life practices: Setas Eternal Living's MyCoffin offers a sustainable legacy

Franklin County Free Press; 8/13/24

In the heart of Pennsylvania's countryside, a quiet revolution is taking place that promises to transform our end-of-life practices. At Setas Eternal Living, innovation and sustainability are at the forefront, offering an eco-friendly alternative to traditional burials through their unique MyCoffin. MyCoffin is designed to biodegrade the human body in under three years, and their pet coffin will biodegrade your pet in under two. This initiative aims to honor life while promoting environmental stewardship, reflecting a profound respect for nature's cycles. ... The eco-friendly burial market is gaining momentum as more people become aware of the environmental impact of traditional burial practices. According to industry projections, the U.S. coffin and casket manufacturing industry is shifting towards greener alternative. ...

A.L.S. stole his voice. A.I. retrieved it.

DNYUZ, originally posted in The New York Times; 8/15/24

Four years ago, Casey Harrell sang his last bedtime nursery rhyme to his daughter. By then, A.L.S. had begun laying waste to Mr. Harrell's muscles, stealing from him one ritual after another: going on walks with his wife, holding his daughter, turning the pages of a book. "Like a night burglar," his wife, Levana Saxon, wrote of the disease in a poem. ... Last July, doctors at the University of California, Davis, surgically implanted electrodes in Mr. Harrell's brain to try to discern what he was trying to say. ... Yet the results surpassed expectations, the researchers reported on Wednesday in *The New England Journal of Medicine*, setting a new bar for implanted speech decoders and illustrating the potential power of such devices for people with speech impairments.

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Hospice CARE Act would create reimbursement for high-acuity hospice services

Hospice News; by Holly Vossel; 8/19/24

If enacted, the Hospice Care Accountability, Reform and Enforcement (Hospice CARE) Act could open up reimbursement pathways for high-acuity palliative services during a time when demand and costs are rising. Developed by U.S. Rep. Earl Blumenaur (D-Oregon) and announced in June at the Hospice News Elevate conference, the bill proposed massive reimbursement and regulatory changes to the Medicare Hospice Benefit. Currently in a discussion draft phase, the bill includes ways for hospice providers to have clearer definitions and improved payment for more intensive forms of palliation, such as radiation therapy, blood transfusions or dialysis, among others.

John Oliver on US for-profit hospice care: 'too important to just hope the free market fixes it'

The Guardian; by Adrian Horton; 8/19/24

On the latest Last Week Tonight, John Oliver delved into the many issues with hospice care in the US. Doing so is "an almost offensive parody of this show", he acknowledged. "If somebody else did that, it would genuinely be hurtful. But I promise this is worth talking about." There are "lots of dedicated people work with hospices, providing huge relief for dying patients and their families, particularly those who want to remain at home", such as the 1.8 million Americans who received end-of-life care at home last year. But like anything, hospice is subject to fraud, mismanagement and abuse. One government report

estimated that hospice's inappropriate billing costs Medicare hundreds of millions per year. ... "Hospice care, when done well, is hugely beneficial to those that are dying and their families. It is too important to just hope the free market fixes it," Oliver concluded. "This industry badly needs reform. That's clear." [Click on links below for more information and responses.]

- [Continue reading the article above about this HBO/MAX episode, Aug 18, 2024, Season 11, Episode 11](#)
- NAHC-NHPCO Alliance:
 - [Public response](#)
 - [Member Guide- Talking Points for Hospice Providers - Last Week Tonight with John Oliver](#) [membership may be required to login]
- [National Partnership for Healthcare and Hospice Innovation \(NPHI\): HBO's Last Week Tonight Shines a Spotlight on Medicare Hospice Fraud](#)
- [Hospice News: As media delves into hospice fraud, providers must step up advocacy, by Jim Parker](#)

5 DEI expectations organizations should have of all leaders

Forbes; by Julie Kratz; 8/18/24

Without leadership support, diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) efforts do not work. ... For organizations wrestling with holding leaders accountable for DEI, consider these questions:

1. What are leaders' fears (real or perceived) about DEI? ...
2. What is holding leaders back from supporting DEI? ...
3. What would help to create more leadership buy-in to DEI efforts? ...

Consider the following expectations as a starting point:

- Listening (even if I disagree) to perspectives other than my own: ...
- Modeling inclusive behavior: ... This includes valuing differences, fostering a welcoming environment and challenging biases.
- Calling on other leaders to model inclusion: Leaders should hold each other accountable for promoting inclusion. ...
- Supporting cultural celebrations for employees of historically marginalized groups: ...

- Accepting organizational commitments to DEI even if they are different than my beliefs: While leaders may have personal beliefs or opinions that differ from the organization's DEI commitments, it's essential for them to accept and uphold these commitments. This demonstrates a commitment to the collective goal of creating a diverse and inclusive workplace.



3 of the fastest growing hospice companies

Hospice News; by Jim Parker; 8/16/24

Three of the nation's for-profit hospice companies have hit the accelerator on revenue growth, achieving triple-digit percentages. Each of these organizations — Traditions Health, Fortis Health and HealthFlex Hospice — appeared on Inc. magazine's 2024 listing of the fastest-growing private companies in the United States. ...

- Fortis Health ... 417% growth between 2020 and 2023 ... [Utah based] offers home health, hospice, palliative and personal care services under four brands, Valeo Home Health and Hospice, Select Home Health, Physiocare Home Health and Physiocare Hospice ... 417% growth between 2020 and 2023 ...
- HealthFlex Hospice ... Oakland, California ... home health and hospice provider serves the entire San Francisco Bay area, as well as Santa Clara, Solano, and Contra Costa counties. Healthflex expanded last year to Sacramento ... 302% growth rate ...
- Traditions health, Franklin, Tennessee ... 218% growth ... acquired San Diego-based Sonata Hospice, as well as Cadence Hospice, Pacific Crest Hospice and Sonata Hospice of Riverside County, all in California ... Sonata Hospice of Las Vegas ... [and] Kansas-based Serenity Health Management ...

Navigating the complexities of life and caregiving

WorldHealth.net; by Pat Baker; 8/16/24

As individuals advance through different life stages, especially when tasked with caregiving or managing the challenges of aging, they encounter a complex web of intertwined challenges. ... This article explores the multifaceted nature of caregiving and aging, offering insights and strategies that can help individuals manage these demanding situations effectively. ... As the population ages and the demand for caregiving increases, it is crucial to continue developing strategies and policies that support caregivers and enhance the quality of care. *Editor's Note: [Examine 75+ caregiver education and support videos designed for hospices to use with the primary caregiver and family members they serve. Designed and delivered via our newsletter's sponsor, Composing Life Out of Loss.](#)*

Transformational leadership: The how and why

Forbes; by Akin Akinpelu; 8/13/24

The ability to inspire and motivate a team isn't just a nice-to-have; it's a necessity. That is why transformational leadership goes beyond traditional management tactics, to driving innovation and fostering a culture where everyone feels valued and empowered. Here's why it matters and how you can cultivate it within your own organization. At its heart, transformational leadership is about creating a vision that motivates and inspires your team to achieve more than they ever thought possible. There are a few key elements that really set transformational leaders apart:

- **Inspirational Motivation:** The best leaders paint a vision so compelling that it pulls everyone together. It's not just about setting goals; it's about making sure everyone understands the "why" behind those goals. ...
- **Intellectual Stimulation:** Encouraging your team to think outside the box is crucial. ...
- **Individualized Consideration:** Recognizing that each team member is unique is key. ...

Editor's Note: Teleios Collaborative Network's (TCN) next 5-day Leadership Immersion Course will be November 4-8, 2024. [Click here for information.](#) TCN is a [sponsor for our newsletter](#), and provides the monthly podcast--hosted by Chris Comeaux--for the monthly hospice leadership podcast, "Top Stories of the Month." [Click here for July 2024.](#)

Today's Encouragement

**It's a poor sort of memory that only works backwards... ~Lewis Carroll,
Through the Looking-Glass, And What Alice Found There**



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