

## Cordt Kassner

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## **Headlines**

### **[CMS is taking action to address benefit integrity issues related to hospice care](#)**

*CMS Newsroom; by Dara A. Corrigan and Dora L. Hughes, MD, MPH; 8/22/24 [posted 8/27/24]*

... Unfortunately, hospices are profiting from fraud at the expense of beneficiaries far too often. Recent media reporting, and research by CMS, have identified instances of hospices certifying patients for hospice care when they were not terminally ill and providing little to no services to patients. The media reports identified that these activities led to a rapid growth in potentially fraudulent hospices, particularly in Arizona, California, Nevada, and Texas. Some of the addresses listed for these hospices also appeared to be non-operational. ... In response to these findings, CMS revisited and revitalized our hospice program integrity strategy, focusing on identifying bad actors and addressing fraudulent activity to minimize impacts to beneficiaries in the Medicare program. As part of this strategy, CMS embarked on a nationwide hospice site visit project,

making unannounced site visits to every Medicare-enrolled hospice. [[Click here to continue reading this significant information from CMS.](#)]

## **World Alzheimer's Month: September 2024**

*Alzheimer's Disease International, London, UK and Lincolnshire, IL, USA; retrieved from the internet 8/26/24*

Each September, people unite from all corners of the world to raise awareness and to challenge the stigma that persists around Alzheimer's disease and all types of dementia. ... The 2024 World Alzheimer's Month will centre around the taglines 'Time to act on dementia, Time to act on Alzheimer's.' ...

*Editor's Note: Click here for [Alzheimer's Disease Internationals' 2024 campaign theme materials](#). Click here for the [Alzheimer's Association in your USA location](#).*

## **Hospice Provider News**

### **Determining the ROI of Change**

*Retail Touch Points; by Allison Torpey; 8/27/24*

... [While] most leaders readily accept that they need to spend money on things like system configurations, vendor contracts and project managers to oversee product rollouts, they're often hesitant to invest in the change management resources required to accelerate transformation and ensure adoption. And when belts are tightened, change management is often the first thing to go. In many cases, that's due to a lack of awareness of the return on investment (ROI) of change management and how to measure it. ... Here's how to get started.

- Align Around a Shared Vision and Goals ...
- Set Metrics at the Beginning of the Project ...
- Use Qualitative as Well as Quantitative Metrics ...
- Measure Over Time ...
- Be Ready (and Willing) to Pivot ...



**Accelerate Results**  
**Accelerate Growth**  
**Accelerate Learning**

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## **Austin architects unveil plans for rare pediatric respite and hospice facility**

*CultureMap Austin, TX; by Brianna Caleri; 8/26/24*

Few people want to think about the end of a child's life, but pediatric care is a need nonetheless — and it's an underserved one. According to Children's Respite Homes in America, as of 2023, there were only six of such homes in the United States, which makes the plans unveiled at the August 24 Abbey Lights Up COTA Gala incredibly unique. ... The first of its kind in Central Texas, Abbey House will serve as a pediatric respite and hospice facility, meaning that it will provide full-time care to children at various stages of their illness, giving family members a chance to catch up on life outside of medical settings. ... “What we have found is that the design has to find balance between two potentially conflicting concepts – respite and hospice,” said Dr. Patrick M. Jones of Dell Children's Medical Center in a press release. He's the section chief of pediatric palliative care.

## **VNA Hospice and Don Quijote supports Meals on Wheels with annual benefit dinner**

*GreatNews.Life, Valparaiso, IN; by Garrett Spoort; 8/27/24*

Don Quijote Restaurant hosted its fourth annual VNA Hospice NWI Meals on Wheels benefit dinner on Sunday, August 25. The event serves as a traditional fundraiser while educating the community and sharing stories about the program. Bob Franko, CEO of VNA Hospice NWI, has high anticipation every year as this event inches closer. “This is something that we look forward to every year,” Franko said. “We have about 250 people in our Meals on Wheels program. Every \$125 that we raise today will feed a senior for a month. Food scarcity has become more of an issue in our community for the seniors, so this event is really important for us.” Don Quijote has supported the mission for VNA Hospice's Meals on Wheels program. The restaurant covers all of the event costs, allowing all of the funds raised to go directly to feeding seniors in need.

*Editor's Note: What a wonderful community partnership. Typically, nonprofit organizations are raising money for their own services. This initiative has a larger, collective purpose and community engagement that benefits all involved.*

## **Bonnors Ferry Class of 1991 celebrates classmate in hospice care**

*Coeur d'Alene/Post Falls Press, Coeur d'Alene, ID; by Staff Report; 8/26/24*

No amount of time or distance can weaken the bonds of true friendship. The

Bonnors Ferry High School Class of 1991 proved that recently when they gathered at Hospice of North Idaho's Schneidmiller House for a surprise reunion. Teresa Skeen, 52, is battling terminal cancer, ... buoyed by the support of family and friends who have visited day and night since she was admitted to hospice care at Schneidmiller House. She often spoke fondly of her high school years, reminiscing about the close-knit Bonnors Ferry community and the cherished friendships she forged at school. "When we heard about her diagnosis, we knew we had to do something special for her, something that would remind her of how much she means to us," said Laura, a friend and classmate. ... Unbeknownst to Skeen, her classmates worked with Schneidmiller House staff to plan a special celebration. ...

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## **Crafting holiday joy for Hernando Pasco Hospice patients**

*Hernando Sun, New Port Richey, FL; by Megan Hussey; 8/26/24*

It is the mission of Hernando Pasco Hospice and HPH Hospice Women of Giving to make this coming holiday season a brighter one for all patients served by HPH, and for HPH staff and team members, with the help of beautiful, jubilant holiday cards custom-made for them. It is their goal, in fact, to create at least 1,000 cards for these deserving individuals based in Hernando, Pasco and Citrus counties through the Crafty Christmas Campaign. ... "This is our second year for Crafty Christmas," said Andrea Arflack, Director of Philanthropy Chapters Health Foundation In support of HPH Hospice. "It was created by one of our staff members in the spirit of giving. We made more than 1,000 cards last year for HPH patients and workers and plan to do the same thing this year."

*Editor's Note: Now's the time to adapt this easy, meaningful community engagement with your volunteers and community partners.*

## **Community turns out for boy in hospice's 10th birthday**

*Cecil Whig, Cambridge, MD; 8/23/24*

On Aug. 19, Jeremiah Shaw had a 10th birthday bash for the ages. The town of Cambridge turned out in droves to make sure this boy felt appreciated with a parade down Foxtail Drive. There were bikers, school buses, fire trucks and tractor trailers. The whole point was to ride by and put a smile on Shaw's face. Shaw has struggled with Lennox-Gastaut Syndrome, a neurodegenerative disease that causes him to have seizures. His mother, Maschell Hines, said he has been recently put in to hospice care and that this could be his last fall season.

## **Palliative Care Provider News**

### **The surprising truth about who opts for palliative care**

*Psychology Today; by Jer Clifton, PhD; 8/23/24*

A study of 407 cancer patients says palliative care is a final act of hope. Key points:

- Many people avoid palliative care (non-curative pain relief at end-of-life) because they see it as giving up.
- In past studies, two beliefs were tied to giving up: seeing the world as ugly and where little can be changed.
- But new study of 407 cancer patients ties wanting palliative care to seeing a beautiful and malleable world.
- Researchers speculate: on even the final road to death, hopeful patients may see much to cherish, even enjoy.



## **New ASCO Guidelines stress importance of early palliative care**

*Hospice News; by Jim Parker; 8/26/24*

The 2024 update to the American Society of Clinical Oncology's (ASCO) clinical practice guidelines place renewed emphasis on palliative care. The guidelines are updated periodically by a multidisciplinary team, including a patient representative and experts in medical and radiation oncology, hematology and palliative care. For the 2024 revisions, this panel reviewed 52 randomized controlled trials that evaluated outcomes among cancer patients who received palliative care, ASCO reported. "This is a pivotal time," the panel's co-chair Betty Ferrell of City of Hope Cancer Care told the ASCO Post. "This guideline is a call to action for everyone to think about how they are integrating palliative care for all patients with cancer. There are great advances in cancer care, but none of these will be fully effective unless we fully integrate palliative care."

## **Regulatory News**

### **[CMS] Disparities impact statement**

*CMS press release; 8/20/24*

This tool can be used by health care stakeholders to promote efforts to identify and address health disparities while improving the health of all people, including those from racial and ethnic minorities; people with disabilities; members of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender communities; individuals with limited English proficiency; and rural, Tribal, and geographically isolated communities. This worksheet has 5 steps to be completed over time.

## **Post-Acute Care News**

### **Health systems brace for the 'silver tsunami'**

*Becker's Hospital Review; by Laura Dyrda; 8/23/24 [posted 8/25/24]*

Around 10,000 Americans turn 65 years old every day, gaining access to Medicare benefits. The number of Medicare beneficiaries is expected to continue growing in the next five years, and health systems are making changes to keep up. In 2020, around 73 million Baby Boomers were eligible for Medicare benefits, and by 2030 all Baby Boomers will be Medicare-eligible, according to the Census Bureau. Advances in medicine and healthy lifestyle mean people are living longer and demanding more from their care. "In the next five years, the most signif



icant disruptor to healthcare will be the capacity challenges associated with the 'silver tsunami' of baby boomers hitting the age of healthcare consumption," said Jonathan D. Washko, MBA, FACPE, NRP, AEMD, Assistant Vice President, CEMS Operations, Northwell Health; Assistant Professor, Department of Emergency Medicine, Pre-hospital and Disaster Medicine, Zucker School of Medicine at Hofstra, Northwell Health. "In this environment, coupled with lowering revenues, staffing shortages and higher expenses, healthcare is being forced from an abundance mindset to one of scarcity."



## Ethics

### **Leaving your legacy via death bots? Ethicist shares concerns**

*Medscape; by Arthur L. Caplan, PhD; 8/21/24*

I heard recently about a fascinating, important development in artificial intelligence (AI)... It has entered into a space where I think patients may raise questions about whether they should use it or seek opinions from doctors and nurses, particularly those involved with seriously ill people. That space is grieving, and what might be called "death bots..." This would allow not only spouses but grandchildren and people in future generations to have some way to interact with an ancestor who's gone. It may allow people to feel comfort when they miss a loved one, to hear their voice, and not just in a prerecorded way but creatively interacting with them. On the other hand, there are clearly many ethical issues about creating an artificial version of yourself. One obvious issue is how accurate this AI version of you will be if the death bot can create information that sounds like you, but really isn't what you would have said, despite the effort to glean it from recordings and past information about you. Is it all right if people wander from the truth in trying to interact with someone who's died?

*Publisher's note: The article includes several thoughtful ethical questions regarding this use of AI via "death bots."*

## General News



## What is C-level (C-suite)?

*TechTarget - CIO; by Rahul Awati and Mary K. Pratt; 8/27/24*

... In recent years, positions like chief diversity officer (CDO), chief compliance officer (CCO), chief risk officer (CRO) and chief information security officer (CISO) have also emerged as part of the C-suite. Officers who hold C-level positions are typically considered the most powerful, influential members of an organization; consequently, they set the company's strategy, make high-stakes decisions, and ensure that daily operations align with fulfilling the company's strategic goals.

... Depending on the company type, size, country of operation and industry, the C-Suite might include some or all the following positions: [Explore this article for long-standing roles and new, emerging C-suite roles: CEO, COO, CFO, CMO, CIO, CTO, CHRO, CCO, CSO, CISO, CDO, CAO, CXO, CGO, CITA, CKI, CLO, CMIO, CPO, CPIO, CPO, CRO, CSS, CSO, CTO.]

## A leadership exodus looms as HR leaders consider leaving their jobs

*HR Dive; by Carolyn Crist; 8/23/24*

About 57% of CHROs and 75% of people leaders are considering leaving their roles in the next 8-12 months, which could damage business continuity and growth, according to an Aug. 20 report by Blu Ivy Group. Major HR attrition could destabilize organizations due to a drop in institutional knowledge, a decrease in productivity and a weakening culture, according to the report. ... In more than 500 surveys and 50 interviews with CHROs and people leaders in the U.S. and Canada, 43% said they spend less than 10% of their time on long-term strategic planning. Continuous crisis management compromises strategic oversight and undermines growth, the report found.



## 10 CEOs transforming healthcare

*Becker's Hospital Review; by Kelly Gooch; 8/21/24*

The CEO Forum Group, a media and marketing company focused exclusively on CEOs, has unveiled its latest list of the "Top 10 CEOs Transforming Healthcare in America" for 2024. CEOs on the list were selected after interviews with Robert Reiss, *Forbes* contributor and founder and CEO of the forum group, and then criteria-based evaluation and approval by the forum group's editorial board. The criteria is based on "creating new value that helps advance healthcare in America," Mr. Reiss told *Becker's*. Each CEO on the list was awarded by the editorial board a specific category where they led the transformation of healthcare. [These categories include:] Holistic health... Community impact... Culture... Innovation... Vision... Behavioral health... Urban healthcare... Leading with humanity... Patient-centered care... Leadership...

*Editor's Note: These categories alone indicate healthcare values that are considered to be transformative for now and ahead. Click on the title's link to read the names and their organizations.*

## Today's Encouragement

**My motivation lies in the fact that I truly love what I'm doing. ~ Trischa Zorn-Hudson, U.S. Paralympics Swimming, most-decorated Paralympian of all time with 55 medals**



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