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Headlines

Awards and Recognitions: August 2024

We congratulate these honorees and celebrate their contributions to our collective hospice and palliative care mission, vision, and compassionate care throughout our world. Do you know any of these leaders? We encourage you to forward this to them or to find another way to celebrate their success.

Organizations

- Partners in Care [OR] celebrates 45th anniversary.
- CareNu [a subsidiary of Chapters Health System, Tampa, FL], has earned Health Equity Accreditation from the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA), recognized for decreasing social risk and among Black and Hispanic individuals by 31% and 33%.
- VITAS Healthcare has been honored as the inaugural recipient of the prestigious Founders Spirit Award by the National Black Nurses Association (NBNA). The award ... recognizes VITAS for over two decades of dedicated support and innovative programming that align with the mission and vision of NBNA's founders. VITAS was the exclusive organization selected for this honor alongside five other individual recipients.

Individuals

- David Gehm, president/CEO of Wellspring Lutheran Services, is LeadingAge's 2024 Award of Honor Recipient
- Kaylan Jackobs, social worker, was chosen for the Alabama Spirit of Adult Protective Services Award for 2024 for her initiative and innovation in helping elderly and disabled adults (includes hospice neglect and abuse)
- Kylyn Mead, director product development at Careline Physician Services, has been named a 2024 Future Leader by Hospice News
- Vanessa Ramirez, RN, MSN, Ogeechee Area Hospice's Executive Director, was recognized with the Service Member Patriot Award from the Department of Defense's Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, for her exceptional support of employees serving in the National Guard and Reserves who have been called to active duty and regular assignments
- Karen Ruble, President and CEO of Nathan Adelson Hospice has been recognized with Community Achievement Award by the Asian-American

Group and Las Vegas Indian Chamber of Congress for her exceptional leadership and dedication to bettering the Southern Nevada community

Updated Care Compare for Hospice released

CMS website; 8/28/24

Publisher's note: See link above to access updated Care Compare for Hospice publicly reported quality measures.

Hospice Provider News

TCN podcast: Mapping the Future via the Mission with John McBeth

Teleios Collaborative Network (TCN); podcast hosted by Chris Comeaux, with John McBeth; 8/28/24

In this episode of the Anatomy of Leadership podcast, John McBeth, Former Co-founder and CEO of Next Century Corporation, shares his journey in the technology industry, from software engineer to CEO roles. McBeth emphasizes the importance of creating high-performance organizations and having a great and worthy purpose. He discusses his experience with Vistage where he met Dr. Lee Thayer and the profound impact of working with Dr. Thayer had on him and his organizations. McBeth also shares the inspirational story of starting Next Century Corporation and their mission to protect the country and save lives through real-time actionable information. The conversation emphasized the importance of mission and purpose in mapping the future for both individuals and organizations.



Accelerate Results
Accelerate Growth
Accelerate Learning

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Bon Secours Mercy Health partners with private equity-owned provider

[VA] VPM; by Adrienne Hoar McGibbon; 8/27/24

There is a growing demand for hospice care in Virginia. 40,000 people received hospice care in the state in 2023, according to the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. The joint venture with Compassus plans for expanded

hospice and home health care. Bon Secours Mercy Health's home health and hospice care division is teaming up with national home health care provider Compassus as part of a newly minted partnership. The home health and hospice program will now be called Bon Secours Home Care and Hospice by Compassus... The merger will also impact BSMH locations in Florida, Illinois, Kentucky, Ohio and South Carolina.

Clinical News

This was the year advanced practice nurses thought they'd get full practice authority in NC. They were wrong.

NC Health News - NC Board of Nursing; by TwumasiD-Mensah; 8/29/24

Every so often, Megan Conner, a nurse anesthetist in Greenville said she sees a patient who's driven for hours to come for a screening colonoscopy but who instead has to be sent to the emergency department. ... It frustrates Conner that so many patients, who have to travel sometimes hours for care in eastern North Carolina, end up not getting it because of common ailments they can't get treated closer to home. That's why Conner is a big believer in the Safe, Accessible, Value-directed and Excellent Health Care Act (SAVE Act), which would give advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) like her full practice authority. She argues the data show that more nurse practitioners would provide primary care in rural North Carolina if the state would give them autonomy to practice, bringing care to small burbs that often go without. And now, the demands for care are being driven by hundreds of thousands of patients newly eligible for care because of Medicaid expansion. Along with a growing number of lawmakers who believe the legislation is overdue, advanced practice nurses thought this would be the year that the SAVE Act finally passed. They were wrong. *[Click on the title's link to continue reading.]*

Editor's Note: Pair this with today's post, [Rounds with Leadership: Focusing on the outcomes of NP practice](#).

Rounds with Leadership: Focusing on the outcomes of NP practice

American Association of Colleges of Nursing - The Voice of Academic Nursing; by American Colleges of Nursing (AACN); 8/28/24

... In a synopsis of more than 50 research studies, the American Association of Nurse Practitioners found that patients under the care of NPs have fewer

unnecessary hospital readmissions, higher patient satisfaction scores, and fewer unnecessary emergency room visits than patients under the care of physicians only. Recent studies have shown that ... NPs engaging in end-of-life care had fewer hospitalizations and higher hospice use; ... Despite such compelling evidence, challenges to NP education and practice continue. More than 20 states have yet to grant full scope of practice authority to NPs, denying these expert clinicians the opportunity to exercise the full range of their clinical expertise. *Editor's Note: Pair this with today's post, [This was the year advanced practice nurses thought they'd get full practice authority in NC. They were wrong.](#)*

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Grief Memoir: 'It was my turn to do everything for her

We Are The Mighty; by Jessica Hall; 8/28/24

... I joined the phone call with the doctor where he told us all the worst news. The cancer was growing everywhere along the spine. ... He told us that it was time for hospice. ... Even though I had been preparing for this for months, I was truly not ready to go from child to caretaker. ... For my entire life, my mom had cared for me. She had been there when I was sick or hurt. She cleaned my house (sometimes to my chagrin). She cooked my favorite meals and she let me take breaks. Now it was my turn to do everything for her. It hit me like a ton of bricks, but I also just knew that I had to do it. We all had to do everything for her to make her final days easy for her. Hospice came by to get everything set up. ... *[Click on the title's link to continue reading this beautiful, personal story.]*

Editor's Note: Calling all hospice executive leaders who do not have clinical, direct patient care experience--read this article to grasp common family dynamics,

decisions, actions, emotions, and life-changing moments for each patient you serve. Multiply this out for the many family members of each patient you serve. How do your hospice services tune into and support these family members?

Regulatory News

\$83M fraud case against nursing home group may proceed, with no defendants excused

McKnight's Long-Term Care News; by Jessica R. Towhey; 8/27/24

A New York Supreme Court judge threw out all arguments from lawyers for an embattled group of nursing homes that sought to have charges dismissed in a case accusing the owners and operators of \$83 million in Medicare and Medicaid fraud. Judge Melissa Crane ruled that the owners of Centers Health Care, along with numerous other individuals, did not make sufficient arguments for dropping charges of fraud, “saddling” nursing homes with “excessive debts,” colluding to pay “sham vendors,” and paying themselves “inflated” salaries.

Public Policy News

Hospice care standards are important. Congress must be careful tinkering with them.

NorthJersey.com, Special to the USA TODAY Network; by Patrick Maron; 8/28/24

... As hospice care grows, real attention needs to be paid to the differences between nonprofit and for-profit centers. [A] staggering 73% of hospice programs today are for-profit and are driven by financial motives, ... Rep. Earl Blumenauer, D-Oregon, is drafting legislation that, if enacted, would represent the most significant reforms to date for hospice payment and oversight. Though Blumenauer’s bill, the Hospice Care Accountability, Reform, and Enforcement — or Hospice CARE — Act, is still in development, key provisions will likely include a new payment mechanism for high-acuity palliative services, changes to the per-diem payment process and actions to improve quality and combat fraud. The bill would also implement a temporary, national moratorium on the enrollment of new hospices into Medicare, to help stem the tide of fraudulent activities ... However, there are significant challenges for nonprofit freestanding inpatient hospice facilities like Villa Marie Claire in Saddle River. Most important, the proposed five-year moratorium on enrolling new hospice programs into

Medicare could limit our ability to expand services, straining resources of the Villa ... What's more, the legislation mandates more frequent inspections and enhanced oversight, which could lead to operational stress and higher costs. *[Click on the title's link to continue reading.]*



Post-Acute Care News

Year-over-year health spending growth highest 'by far' for home healthcare

McKnights Senior Living; by Lois A. Bowers; 7/28/24

Year-over-year growth in national health spending in June was highest “by far” for home healthcare, at 20.9%, compared with other major healthcare categories, according to [a brief](#) issued late Tuesday by Altarum. Most of the growth, 18.5 percentage points, was due to changes in utilization rather than price, George Miller, PhD, Altarum fellow and research team leader, told the *McKnight's Business Daily*. “Nursing home care spending was a distant second, at 10.0% year-over-year growth,” Miller said. By comparison, year-over-year spending growth was 8.3% for prescription drugs, 8.2% for hospital care, 7.3% for dental services and 6.6% for physician and clinical services, according to the report. Overall, spending on healthcare goods and services grew by 8.1% between June 2023 and June 2024, with utilization growth continuing to outpace price growth.

Illinois Medicaid launches Program of All-Inclusive Care for the elderly

Open Minds, Gettsburg, PA; 8/28/24

On August 15, 2022, the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS) announced the launch of the Medicare-Medicaid Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) in five regions. The Illinois PACE contracts were awarded in June 2024 by HFS and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid

Services (CMS). PACE is a Medicare and Medicaid risk-based care program that offers comprehensive, team-based medical and social services for adults age 55 and older through collaborating health care agencies.

General News

'Keep going': Wish to ride horse granted for woman with cancer

WDTN Dayton, Huber Heights, Ohio; by Allison Gen; 8/28/24

A Miami Valley woman with terminal cancer got a little help to check a goal off her bucket list. She wanted to ride a horse again. Wednesday afternoon, her wish was granted at the Carriage Hill MetroPark Riding Center. Brenda Garramone has stage four bone cancer. ... "I'm out here for everybody else that's got cancer," Garramone said. A few weeks ago she was taken into the care of Grace Hospice. Garramone grew up around horses on a dairy farm in Oregon. That's why after her terminal diagnosis, she wanted to have a chance to ride again. "We learned through her interactions with her nurse that her last wish was to spend time with a horse again," Emily O'Flynn, Grace Hospice office manager and social work intern, said.



International News

Hospice patient publishes first poetry book

BBC News, Derby, United Kingdom; by Jude Winter; 8/26/24

A woman receiving end-of-life care has fulfilled an ambition by publishing a book of poems. Sarah Colina started writing the poems more than 40 years ago but never got round to getting her work published despite encouragement from friends and family. The 60-year-old has been receiving care at Ashgate Hospice since being admitted to its Inpatient Unit in Old Brampton, Chesterfield. ... he added staff at the hospice had been "so supportive" and is selling 50 of her books to raise money to support their work. "I'm hoping it will be nicely received and people will enjoy reading my poems", said Ms Colina. She added: "Some of the poems are very dark, but some make you laugh. "I'm hoping it gives people an insight into their inner person."

Meet Germany's biographer of the dying

WhatFingerNews, WhatFinger.com; YouTube video with English voiceover; 8/26/24

Sabrina Görlitz writes biographies about people on their deathbeds. In a hospice, she meets Gisela—an 87-year-old woman sharing her personal story for posterity.

Other News

Executive Personnel Changes - 8/30/24

- Amedisys Chief Information Officer Michael North is departing the home health and hospice company as of August 31
- Cornerstone VNA welcomes Lisa Nichols, RN, MSN, CCM, IQCER as their new Hospice Care Director
- Hospice of Ukiah in Ukiah, California has named Carole Brodsky as Executive Director
- Hospice of the Panhandle in West Virginia has named Chris Eader as Chief Financial Officer, in July
- Traditions Health recently appointed Jessica Hellwege as its new Vice President of Operations for its hospice business operations, serving hospice patients in Illinois, Indiana, Nebraska, Ohio, and Virginia



Today's Encouragement

There is no wisdom without leisure. ~ W. B. Yeats

Editor's Note: Hospice & Palliative Care News Today wishes you a wonderful Labor Day weekend.



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