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# HOSPICE NEWS NETWORK

*Reports on recent media to inform hospice, palliative care, and policy leaders*

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A Service of State Hospice Organizations

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## HOSPICE NOTES

~ **The “2025 Facts and Figures: Executive Summary” by the National Alliance for Care at Home provides a comprehensive overview of hospice care delivery in the U.S.** The report highlights a 4.4% increase in hospice enrollment, with 1.91 million Medicare beneficiaries receiving care in 2024. Notably, 53.1% of Medicare decedents utilized hospice services, marking a historic milestone. The report also details principal diagnoses, with circulatory conditions being the most common. The data underscores a growing preference for home-based care and the resilience of the hospice sector post-pandemic. (*National Alliance for Care at Home*, 10/23, <https://allianceforcareathome.org/resource/2025-facts-and-figures-executive-summary/>)

~ **“A Psychedelic ‘Renaissance’ in End-of-Life Care” explores the growing interest in psychedelic therapies for hospice and palliative care.** Dr. Michael Fratkin highlights the potential benefits of psychedelics like psilocybin and LSD in addressing spiritual, emotional, and physical needs of terminally ill patients. Despite promising research linking these therapies to improved outcomes and reduced costs, significant legal and ethical challenges remain. Fratkin emphasizes the need for professional education and an interdisciplinary approach to ensure safe and respectful use of these treatments. (*Hospice News*, 2/6, [hospicenews.com/2026/02/06/a-psychedelic-renaissance-in-end-of-life-care](https://hospicenews.com/2026/02/06/a-psychedelic-renaissance-in-end-of-life-care))

~ **“Hospice nurse reveals the ‘one sign’ that someone is going to die within 4 weeks” explores the phenomenon of ‘visioning’ experienced by patients nearing death.** Julie McFadden, a hospice nurse, shares that many patients report seeing deceased loved ones, which is a common occurrence documented in educational materials for families. This visioning is not due to low oxygen levels, as patients are often alert and oriented. The experience is described as comforting, with patients feeling welcomed by those who have passed. This insight aims to demystify the dying process and provide comfort to families. (*Upworthy*, 2/17, [upworthy.com/hospice-nurse-reveals-one-sign](https://upworthy.com/hospice-nurse-reveals-one-sign))

~ **“The Alliance and the Research Institute for Home Care Release 2025 Hospice Chartbook” highlights the critical role of hospice in the U.S. healthcare system.** The Chartbook offers a comprehensive overview of national patient and workforce data, emphasizing state-specific trends and Medicare spending on hospice. Jennifer Sheets, CEO of the Alliance, notes that the data is essential for understanding the current state and future potential of care at home. (*National Alliance for Care at Home*, 02/19, <https://allianceforcareathome.org/the-alliance-and-the-research-institute-for-home-care-release-2025-hospice-chartbook/>)

~ **“Leadership, Quality, and the Future of Hospice” is a podcast that explores the evolving landscape of hospice care with insights from Chris Comeaux and Cordt Kassner.** The discussion highlights concerning trends in hospice, such as the risk of losing a generation of junior researchers and the importance of leadership in navigating these challenges. The podcast also delves into Ira Byock’s framework for addressing waste, fraud, and abuse in hospice care, emphasizing the need for clinical standards and quality-driven competition. The conversation underscores the critical role of leadership and innovation in shaping the future of hospice and palliative care. (*GeriPal*, 03/05, [geripal.org/leadership-quality-and-the-future-of-hospice-guests-chris-comeaux-and-cordt-kassner](https://geripal.org/leadership-quality-and-the-future-of-hospice-guests-chris-comeaux-and-cordt-kassner))

~ **“Hospice Fraud Allegations Arise in Minnesota” reports on potential investigations into Favoured Hospice LLC for allegedly billing Medicare for unprovided services.** The allegations, which could violate the False Claims Act, were made by former employees and involve claims of fabricated documentation and billing discrepancies. Franklin Angwenyi, an owner of Favoured Hospice, denies any wrongdoing, asserting compliance with Medicare regulations. The Minnesota Department of Human Services has noted an increase in suspected healthcare fraud cases, highlighting the importance of accountability in the industry. (*Hospice News*, 02/09, [hospicenews.com/2026/02/09/hospice-fraud-allegations-arise-in-minnesota](https://hospicenews.com/2026/02/09/hospice-fraud-allegations-arise-in-minnesota))

~ **“Mass Layoffs’ at PeaceHealth Include Hospice Staff” reports on the significant workforce reduction at PeaceHealth, impacting hospice workers among others.** PeaceHealth announced the elimination of 94 positions across its Washington state facilities, effective April 12, 2026, including roles at PeaceHealth Whatcom Hospice House. The layoffs, described as a “necessary realignment,” are attributed to financial pressures and evolving community needs. The organization has faced previous layoffs and labor disputes, highlighting ongoing challenges in maintaining staffing levels. (*Hospice News*, 02/18, [hospicenews.com/2026/02/18/mass-layoffs-at-peacehealth-include-hospice-staff](https://hospicenews.com/2026/02/18/mass-layoffs-at-peacehealth-include-hospice-staff))

~ **CMS compares hospice care quality scores across states using the Hospice Care Index, measuring performance on several care indicators during a patient’s stay.** Overall scores for 2024 vary by state, with some states performing noticeably higher on quality measures than others. West Virginia and Rhode Island ranked highest in quality measures, with California, Nevada and District of Columbia ranking lowest. The article includes an embedded chart listing each state and its overall hospice care index score, allowing readers to compare performance nationwide. (*Becker’s Hospital Review*, 2/18, <https://www.beckershospitalreview.com/post-acute/hospice-spending-care-quality-scores-by-state/>)

~ **“CMS Renews ACHC’s Deemed Status as Hospice Accreditor” reports on the renewal of the Accreditation Commission for Health Care’s (ACHC) authority as a hospice accreditor by the U.S. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS).** This renewal, effective through 2031, confirms that ACHC’s standards meet or exceed Medicare Conditions of Participation. Susan Mills, ACHC’s senior program director, emphasized the importance of this status in empowering hospice organizations to deliver exceptional end-of-life care. The renewal allows ACHC-accredited hospices to comply with Medicare CoPs without routine state surveys. (*Hospice News*, 02/23, [hospicenews.com](https://hospicenews.com))

~ **“Kinderhook to Acquire Enhabit in \$1.1B Deal” reports on the acquisition of Enhabit Inc. by Kinderhook Industries LLC for \$1.1 billion.** The deal, expected to close by the second quarter of 2026, will see Enhabit stockholders receive \$13.80 per share in an all-cash transaction.

Enhabit President and CEO Barb Jacobsmeyer stated that the acquisition will provide “additional resources and expertise” to support long-term investments in clinical excellence and innovation. Enhabit will retain its name and continue operating its extensive network of home health and hospice locations across 34 states. (*Hospice News*, 02/23, [hospicenews.com/2026/02/23/kinderhook-to-acquire-enhabit-in-1-1b-deal](https://www.hospicenews.com/2026/02/23/kinderhook-to-acquire-enhabit-in-1-1b-deal))

~ **“Hospice Speaks on Medical Aid in Dying” discusses the implications of New York’s new legislation on medical aid in dying, signed into law by Governor Kathy Hochul.** This law mandates that hospice and end-of-life care options must be presented to terminally ill patients before they can choose to end their life. Mary Crosby, President & CEO of East End Hospice, notes that hospices can opt out of facilitating the medication used in this process, maintaining a neutral stance while respecting patient autonomy. The law includes a mandatory five-day waiting period and requires a mental health evaluation. (*WSYR*, 02/12, <https://www.localsyr.com/news/local-news/hospice-speaks-on-medical-aid-in-dying/>)

~ **“Building Momentum: How New National Alliance CEO Jennifer Sheets Will Propel Hospice Forward” discusses Jennifer Sheets’ vision and priorities as the new CEO of the National Alliance for Care at Home.** Sheets, with 25 years of healthcare experience, emphasizes the importance of listening to members and addressing issues like program integrity and inadequate reimbursement. She aims to unify advocacy efforts across hospice, home health, and palliative care, stressing that “we are stronger when hospice, when home health, when home care, when palliative care, speak with one voice.” Sheets also highlights the relaunch of the “We Honor Veterans” program and the importance of maintaining hospice as a carve-out benefit under traditional Medicare. (*Hospice News*, 02/24, [hospicenews.com/2026/02/24/building-momentum-how-new-national-alliance-ceo-jennifer-sheets-will-propel-hospice-forward/](https://www.hospicenews.com/2026/02/24/building-momentum-how-new-national-alliance-ceo-jennifer-sheets-will-propel-hospice-forward/))

~ **“New Alliance CEO Sheets Puts Spotlight On Home Health Fraud, Waste And Abuse” highlights Jennifer Sheets’ focus on addressing integrity issues in the home health industry.** As the new CEO of the National Alliance for Care at Home, Sheets emphasizes the importance of eliminating fraud, waste, and abuse, aligning with CMS Administrator Dr. Mehmet Oz’s priorities. Sheets advocates for a task force to tackle these issues and stresses the need for fair Medicare home health rates to combat workforce challenges. Her personal caregiving experience fuels her commitment to improving care delivery. (*Home Health Care News*, 03/05, [homehealthcarenews.com/2026/03/new-alliance-ceo-sheets-puts-spotlight-on-home-health-fraud-waste-and-abuse/](https://www.homehealthcarenews.com/2026/03/new-alliance-ceo-sheets-puts-spotlight-on-home-health-fraud-waste-and-abuse/))

~ **“Husch Blackwell’s Meg Pekarske: Hospices Facing ‘Huge Pendulum Shift’” discusses the significant regulatory changes impacting hospice care.** Meg Pekarske, a retiring hospice attorney, highlights the need for a comprehensive overhaul of hospice regulations to ensure program integrity and quality. She emphasizes the importance of revamping the Medicare Hospice Benefit to better align with current patient needs, noting that the current focus on eligibility standards is insufficient. Pekarske warns that without significant changes, the hospice benefit may become diminished, affecting the holistic nature of hospice care. (*Hospice News*, 02/27, [hospicenews.com/2026/02/27/husch-blackwells-meg-pekarske-hospices-facing-huge-pendulum-shift](https://www.hospicenews.com/2026/02/27/husch-blackwells-meg-pekarske-hospices-facing-huge-pendulum-shift))

~ **“National Alliance: DOE Proposed Rule Would Exacerbate Hospice Workforce Shortages” discusses concerns over a U.S. Department of Education proposal that could worsen staffing issues in hospice care.** The rule would reclassify post-baccalaureate nursing

degrees as ‘graduate degrees,’ reducing borrowing limits for students and potentially limiting the number of new clinicians entering the field. The National Alliance for Care at Home argues this could create financial hardships and exacerbate workforce shortages, impacting care for millions of Americans. The proposal has faced opposition from over 140 members of Congress. (*Hospice News*, 03/04, [hospicenews.com/2026/03/04/national-alliance-doe-proposed-rule-would-exacerbate-hospice-workforce-shortages](https://hospicenews.com/2026/03/04/national-alliance-doe-proposed-rule-would-exacerbate-hospice-workforce-shortages))

~ **Workers at University of Vermont Health (UVM) Home Health and Hospice have ratified their first union contract, marking a milestone after employees voted to unionize in 2025.** The agreement was approved by an overwhelming 72–1 vote following months of negotiations between staff and management. The contract establishes a transparent wage scale with average raises of about 17 percent over the next two and a half years and includes new pay differentials and workplace protections. It also creates a staffing committee and provides job security measures such as “just cause” protections. Union leaders say the contract will help improve both working conditions for staff and the quality of care for hospice patients and their families. (*MSN*, 2/10 <https://www.msn.com/en-us/society-culture-and-history/human-rights/first-union-contract-ratified-for-uvh-hospice-workers/ar-AA1W57aq>)

~ **“Geographic and Sociodemographic Disparities in Access to Hospice in Pennsylvania” explores the uneven distribution of hospice care across the state, highlighting significant access disparities.** The study identifies that 17% of Pennsylvanians live in ‘cold spots’ with limited hospice access, predominantly in rural and socioeconomically disadvantaged areas. These regions are characterized by lower income, less education, and higher reliance on public insurance. The findings emphasize the need for policy interventions to expand high-quality hospice services in underserved communities. (*American Journal of Hospice and Palliative Medicine*, 02/14, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/10499091261425959>)

~ **“Oregon Bill To Allow Medical Marijuana In Hospices Heads To Governor’s Desk” highlights a legislative move to permit medical marijuana use in hospices and other health facilities.** The bill, introduced by Rep. Farrah Chaichi, aims to provide an alternative to opioids in end-of-life care, enhancing patient interaction with loved ones. It mandates that hospice and palliative care organizations develop rules for cannabis use, exempting them from certain criminal laws. If signed, the law will take effect on January 1, 2027. (*Marijuana Moment*, 03/06, [marijuanamoment.net](https://marijuanamoment.net))

~ **“Croí Health receives \$2.5 million from Alan McKim to support hospice care” highlights a significant donation aimed at expanding hospice services.** Alan McKim, founder of Clean Harbors, has contributed \$2.5 million to Croí Health’s *Voices: The Campaign for Patient Care Access*, marking the largest gift in the campaign’s history. This donation is part of a broader effort to address the critical need for community-based healthcare amidst a national crisis. Croí Health CEO Renee McInnes emphasized the importance of this support, stating, “Beyond the complexities of the underfunded payer system and rising costs, our team must remain focused on the ethical mandate to care for as many patients as we can safely.” (*MassNonprofit News*, 02/10, [massnonprofit.org](https://massnonprofit.org))

~ **The article “Private equity has ‘notable’ role in home health, hospice” highlights the significant involvement of private equity in the home health and hospice sectors in 2025.** According to the Private Equity Stakeholder Project, private equity investments in these areas remained robust, with 39 deals involving home health and hospice companies out of 1,029

healthcare deals tracked. The report raises concerns about the potential for private equity to prioritize returns over care quality, citing that “for-profit home healthcare and hospice companies have been linked to lower standards of care.” The report coincides with Sen. Elizabeth Warren’s reintroduction of legislation aimed at curbing corporate greed in healthcare. (*McKnight’s Senior Living*, 02/13, [mcknightsseniorliving.com/news/private-equity-has-notable-role-in-home-health-hospice](https://mcknightsseniorliving.com/news/private-equity-has-notable-role-in-home-health-hospice))

~ **An opinion article, “Florida’s hospice system works because standards matter,” highlights the effectiveness of Florida’s hospice care system, which ensures access and quality through a rigorous Certificate of Need process.** This system mandates that providers demonstrate community need, financial stability, and operational readiness, resulting in comprehensive coverage across all counties. The article contrasts Florida’s approach with California’s, where a lack of oversight has led to widespread fraud and coverage gaps. Proponents argue that Florida’s strict standards prevent such issues and maintain high-quality care. (*The News-Press*, 02/13, <https://www.news-press.com/story/opinion/2026/02/13/floridas-hospice-system-works-because-standards-matter-opinion/88633243007/>)

~ **“Medicare Crackdown on Hospice Affiliations Threatening Providers” highlights a new federal enforcement trend impacting California’s hospice sector and beyond.** The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) can revoke a provider’s Medicare enrollment based on affiliations deemed to pose an ‘undue risk’ of fraud, waste, or abuse. This aggressive approach has led to a cascade of revocations affecting various healthcare providers, often without due process. The article discusses the legal and political ramifications, including a civil rights complaint by California Gov. Gavin Newsom against CMS Administrator Dr. Mehmet Oz. (*Bloomberg Law*, 02/18, [news.bloombergtax.com/business-and-practice/medicare-crackdown-on-hospice-affiliations-threatening-providers](https://news.bloombergtax.com/business-and-practice/medicare-crackdown-on-hospice-affiliations-threatening-providers))

~ **“Terminally ill California woman, 69, on ‘mission’ to reach space before time runs out” highlights Pam Harter’s extraordinary journey to become the first hospice patient in space.** Diagnosed with pseudoxanthoma elasticum, a rare genetic disorder, Harter has chosen to embrace life fully rather than undergo risky surgeries. Her connection with Blue Origin, a private spaceflight company, has opened the possibility of space travel, despite recent delays in launches. Harter’s story challenges the perception of hospice care, emphasizing that it can be about living fully rather than waiting to die. (*New York Post*, 2/17, [nypost.com/2026/02/17/us-news/terminally-ill-napa-valley-woman-aims-to-become-first-hospice-patient-in-space/](https://nypost.com/2026/02/17/us-news/terminally-ill-napa-valley-woman-aims-to-become-first-hospice-patient-in-space/))

~ **“Our Hospice System Subverts the Very Point of Hospice Care” highlights the challenges faced by families when providing hospice care at home.** Dr. Sandeep Jauhar shares his personal experience with his father’s end-of-life care, revealing that the current hospice system places a heavy burden on families due to inadequate funding. He notes that Medicare’s average payment to hospice agencies is insufficient, forcing families to take on significant caregiving responsibilities. This situation often makes hospice care an unviable option compared to more costly hospital care. (*The New York Times*, 03/02, [nytimes.com](https://nytimes.com))

~ **“This Place Is Love: A Prison Unit for the Dying — in Pictures” explores the unique hospice program at California Medical Facility, which provides end-of-life care to incarcerated men.** Established in 1996, the hospice initially cared for AIDS patients but now primarily serves those with cancer, the leading cause of death in U.S. prisons. The unit, resembling a hospital ward, focuses on comfort care, with a dedicated team of medical staff and

incarcerated care workers. The program emphasizes dignity and compassion, ensuring no one dies alone, as highlighted by Allan Krenitzky, a care worker, who sees it as “an opportunity for us to be decent human beings.” (*Prison Journalism Project*, 02/11, [prisonjournalismproject.org](http://prisonjournalismproject.org))

~ **“Love Hurts: Leadership, Quality, and the Future of Hospice & Palliative Care | Part Two” delves into the challenges and opportunities facing hospice and palliative care today.** The discussion, featuring leaders from the GeriPal podcast and TCNtalks, highlights how isolated cases of waste, fraud, and abuse can damage the field’s reputation despite the majority providing excellent care. The panel questions whether ownership models or leadership and accountability have a greater impact on quality. They also address systemic issues like flawed quality reporting tools and the need for transparency and meaningful metrics. Leadership principles such as ‘gemba leadership’ and servant leadership are emphasized as crucial for navigating complex healthcare systems. (*Teleios Collaborative Network*, 3/6, [teleioscn.org](http://teleioscn.org))

~ **“Oregon lawmakers consider tightening hospice oversight over fraud, abuse concerns” discusses Senate Bill 1575, which aims to protect end-of-life patients from fraudulent hospice practices.** The bill seeks to prevent new hospices with a history of fraud from operating in Oregon by requiring the Oregon Health Authority to conduct background checks and financial reviews. This initiative follows reports of identity theft and neglect by for-profit hospices in other states. Supporters emphasize the need to safeguard vulnerable patients from exploitation. The bill is awaiting signature by the Governor. ““Hospice fraud is not a victimless crime,” said Barb Hansen, CEO of the Oregon Hospice and Palliative Care Association, in a statement. “Shoddy hospice providers harm patients and their families. With the Protecting the Dying Act, we can prevent fraudsters from opening up shop in Oregon.” (*The Lund Report*, 02/10, [thelundreport.org/content/oregon-lawmakers-consider-tightening-hospice-oversight-over-fraud-abuse-concerns](http://thelundreport.org/content/oregon-lawmakers-consider-tightening-hospice-oversight-over-fraud-abuse-concerns); Oregon State Legislature, <https://olis.oregonlegislature.gov/liz/2026R1/Measures/Overview/SB1575>; *Hospice News*, 3/9, <https://hospicenews.com/2026/03/09/oregon-passes-bill-to-combat-hospice-fraud/>)

~ **“Hospice Use Rising for Seniors Following ICU Stays” highlights a significant shift in end-of-life care preferences among older Americans.** A study from Boston University’s School of Medicine reveals that from 2011 to 2023, the percentage of Medicare beneficiaries discharged to hospice after ICU stays increased, reflecting a preference for comfort-focused care over aggressive medical interventions. Lead author Dr. Anica Law notes, “ICU care is intense and invasive...hospitals may be focusing more on helping patients at high risk of death choose comfort-focused care.” This trend underscores a broader change in American medicine towards aligning care with patient values. (*U.S. News & World Report*, 02/25, [usnews.com/news/health-news/articles/2026-02-25/hospice-use-rising-for-seniors-following-icu-stays](https://www.usnews.com/news/health-news/articles/2026-02-25/hospice-use-rising-for-seniors-following-icu-stays))

~ **A *Hospice News* webinar, available on demand, focuses on practical strategies for strengthening palliative care programs and supporting clinicians who care for patients with serious illness.** Presenters discuss operational and clinical approaches that help teams manage increasing demand while maintaining high-quality, patient-centered care. The session highlights ways organizations can improve coordination, staffing, and leadership practices to better support both patients and care teams. It also emphasizes the importance of education, measurement, and program design in demonstrating the value of palliative care within health systems. Registration is required but no fee is needed. (*Hospice News*, <https://event.on24.com/wcc/r/5185764/9F5249680F4E458F60F58DF4EB191E66?partnerref=p%20anelist>)

## PALLIATIVE CARE NOTES

~ **“HAP Foundation, Northwestern University Launch Palliative, Hospice Care Educational Initiative” highlights a new 12-month clinical training program aimed at enhancing palliative care in rural Illinois.** This initiative, a collaboration between the HAP Foundation and Northwestern University’s EPEC program, seeks to address educational gaps for providers in underserved areas. The program includes virtual and in-person training, focusing on end-of-life conversations, interdisciplinary team utilization, and culturally appropriate care. Dr. Joshua Hauser emphasizes the importance of this training in improving care delivery and addressing isolation challenges in rural settings. (*Hospice News*, 3/2, [hospicenews.com/2026/03/02/hap-foundation-northwestern-university-launch-palliative-hospice-care-educational-initiative](https://hospicenews.com/2026/03/02/hap-foundation-northwestern-university-launch-palliative-hospice-care-educational-initiative))

~ **“Tuesday Health Expands Footprint to Ohio With Buckeye Health Plan Partnership” highlights a new collaboration aimed at enhancing palliative care services in Ohio.** Tuesday Health, known for its person- and family-centered care model, has partnered with Buckeye Health Plan to provide comprehensive palliative care to those with serious illnesses. This partnership will offer interdisciplinary care teams and 24/7 clinician access, aiming to reduce caregiver strain and avoid unnecessary hospital visits. The initiative is part of a broader effort to integrate palliative care early, improving quality of life for patients and caregivers. (*Hospice News*, 3/2, [hospicenews.com/2026/03/02/tuesday-health-expands-footprint-to-ohio-with-buckeye-health-plan-partnership](https://hospicenews.com/2026/03/02/tuesday-health-expands-footprint-to-ohio-with-buckeye-health-plan-partnership))

~ **“Positive Experiences of Seriously ill Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Persons and Their Partners With Healthcare Providers: Project Respect” highlights the importance of culturally competent care for LGBTQ+ patients.** The study, involving 290 seriously ill LGBTQ+ individuals and their partners, reveals that respectful and affirming healthcare practices, such as using correct pronouns and inclusive intake forms, significantly enhance patient satisfaction and trust. The article emphasizes the need for healthcare providers to be informed about LGBTQ+ care to improve communication and treatment outcomes. (*American Journal of Hospice and Palliative Medicine*, 01/24, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/10499091251415558>)

~ **The article “Community-Based Palliative Care” outlines a new benefit for NJ Family Care members, effective April 1, 2026, aimed at supporting individuals with serious health conditions.** Signed into law by Governor Murphy, this initiative emphasizes symptom management and care coordination without requiring a terminal diagnosis. It offers a personalized care plan through a team of professionals, enhancing existing treatments. Providers interested in offering these services can enroll in the NJ Medicaid Management Information System starting February 2, 2026. (*Department of Human Services*, 12/21, <https://www.nj.gov/humanservices/dmahs/info/cbpc.html>)

~ **“We are caring for the whole person”: A qualitative study of social work’s role in palliative cancer care explores the multifaceted roles of social workers in oncology settings.** This study highlights eight key themes, including holistic needs assessment, counseling,

psychoeducation, resource referral, communication facilitation, shared decision-making, grief counseling, and team resilience. The findings underscore the importance of social workers in delivering comprehensive care to enhance the quality of life for cancer patients and their families. This research may inform training curricula and practice standards for oncology-focused palliative social work. (*Palliat Support Care*, 01/16, <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/41540824/>)

## END-OF-LIFE NOTES

~ **“Ohioans share agony of end-of-life choices” explores the complex emotions and ethical dilemmas faced by individuals dealing with end-of-life decisions in Ohio.** The article highlights personal stories of anguish and gratitude, with many expressing that society is often more humane with pets than with humans. A reader shared, ‘I was able to humanely send my dog off... Then I had to literally sit by and watch my sister wither away.’ The series aims to examine current options, ethical challenges, and advocacy efforts in Ohio, where laws remain unchanged. (*cleveland.com*, 02/22, <https://www.cleveland.com/news/2026/02/ohioans-share-agony-of-end-of-life-choices-the-readers-write.html>)

~ **“Never Can Say Goodbye: The Life of a Death Doula with Darnell Lamont Walker” explores the impactful journey of a death doula inspired by his grandmother to provide end-of-life care.** Darnell Lamont Walker, an Emmy-nominated writer and producer, shares his experiences in his memoir, emphasizing the innate ability to care for the dying and the importance of storytelling in healing. The discussion highlights systemic challenges within the Black community regarding end-of-life decisions and advocates for early education on death to overcome fear. Walker’s work underscores the value of listening to build trust and facilitate difficult conversations. (*End of Life University*, 02/10, [eolupodcast.com](https://eolupodcast.com))

~ **“Physicians only modestly more likely than others to die at home or in hospice” explores the end-of-life preferences of physicians compared to the general population.** The study reveals that 44.2% of physicians die at home or in hospice, slightly higher than other healthcare professionals and the general population. Despite their medical training, physicians’ end-of-life choices are not significantly different, suggesting that factors like socioeconomic resources and caregiver support may play a role. The findings highlight the importance of goals-of-care discussions in improving end-of-life experiences. (*Healio*, 2/24, [healio.com/news/hematology-oncology/20260223/physicians-only-modestly-more-likely-than-others-to-die-at-home-or-in-hospice](https://healio.com/news/hematology-oncology/20260223/physicians-only-modestly-more-likely-than-others-to-die-at-home-or-in-hospice))

~ **“As aid-in-dying laws come to more states, nursing homes face tough new decisions” explores the implications of New York becoming the 14th state to legalize aid-in-dying, highlighting the ethical and legal challenges for nursing homes.** The article discusses the legal risks and necessary safeguards for facilities and physicians, emphasizing the importance of mental capacity in patients opting for aid-in-dying. Illinois’ upcoming law, effective September 12, outlines strict eligibility and procedural requirements, including self-administration of medication. The trend reflects a broader movement towards patient autonomy in end-of-life care. (*McKnight’s Long-Term Care News*, 02/21, [mcknights.com/news/aid-in-dying](https://mcknights.com/news/aid-in-dying))

~ **“Hospital Chaplain Shares What End-Of-Life Patients Regret Most”** explores the insights of chaplain Sumreen Chaudhry on the regrets and reflections of patients nearing the end of life. Chaudhry notes that patients often express grief over “unfinished relationships and or unexpressed parts of the self,” rather than fear of death itself. Many regret time spent on unimportant tasks, leaving words unsaid, and not becoming their true selves. The article highlights the chaplain’s role in helping patients find meaning and connection, emphasizing that even those without formal religious beliefs often seek love and continuity beyond life. (*Religion Unplugged*, 02/24, [religionunplugged.com/news/what-hospital-chaplains-offer-patients-at-the-end-of-life](http://religionunplugged.com/news/what-hospital-chaplains-offer-patients-at-the-end-of-life))

~ **“What Can We Learn from Death in the Age of Longevity?”** explores the profound lessons mortality offers in a world increasingly focused on extending life. Arianna Huffington discusses how the pursuit of longevity might overshadow the valuable insights death provides, such as clarifying values and fostering connections. Death doula Alua Arthur and author Bronnie Ware emphasize the importance of living authentically and valuing connections over material gains. Research on hospice patients highlights a shift in values towards gratitude and service as death approaches. These reflections suggest that embracing mortality can enrich our lives now. (*TIME*, 10/02, [time.com/7377516/what-can-we-learn-from-death/](http://time.com/7377516/what-can-we-learn-from-death/))

~ **“Here’s why some baby boomers are talking about assisted suicide”** explores the growing conversation among baby boomers regarding assisted dying, emphasizing personal autonomy and the right to choose one’s end-of-life path. The article highlights that while a majority of Americans support the legality of assisted dying for terminally ill patients, opinions on its morality remain divided. Personal stories shared in the comments section reveal experiences of prolonged suffering, underscoring the desire for ‘death with dignity.’ (*The Washington Post*, 02/24, [washingtonpost.com/health/2026/02/22/assisted-suicide-boomers](http://washingtonpost.com/health/2026/02/22/assisted-suicide-boomers))

## GRIEF AND ADVANCE CARE PLANNING NOTES

~ **“Grief and the Widowed Mom with Krista St-Germain”** is a podcast that explores the unique challenges faced by widowed mothers raising children while navigating grief. Krista St-Germain, a life coach and grief expert, shares insights on coping with unexpected effects of grief, debunking myths about what is ‘normal,’ and the importance of community support. The episode highlights the dual-process model of grief and emphasizes how hearing others’ experiences can be healing. St-Germain’s work aims to help widows find joy in life again. (*End of Life University*, 02/16, [eolupodcast.com](http://eolupodcast.com))

~ **“The impact of religious and spiritual care on parents or caregivers in pediatrics: a scoping review”** explores the often-overlooked role of spiritual care in pediatric settings. This review highlights the positive effects of spiritual and religious care on parents and caregivers, particularly in emotional coping, grief, and bereavement. It underscores the beneficial perception of chaplains and external spiritual guidance during medical decision-making. The study calls for more research to address the lack of data on this topic. (*J Health Care Chaplain*, 01/04, <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/41486092/>)

~ **“Passageplans.com Turns End-of-Life Planning Into an Act of Love for Families” introduces a new online platform designed to simplify end-of-life planning.**

PassagePlans.com offers a guided checklist tool to help families organize essential documents, healthcare decisions, and funeral wishes in one secure place. The platform aims to transform the perception of end-of-life planning from a morbid task to a meaningful act of love. With 21 tasks across six categories, users can complete the process at their own pace and share plans with family members. The service is free, with premium features available for a subscription. (*Globe Newswire*, 02/09,

<https://www.streetinsider.com/Globe+Newswire/Passageplans.com+Turns+End-of-Life+Planning+Into+an+Act+of+Love+for+Families/25966443.html>)

~ **A proposed policy from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services could create reimbursement challenges for home health providers when conducting advance care planning conversations with patients.** Industry leaders say the proposal may not provide adequate compensation for the time clinicians spend discussing patients’ goals of care and treatment preferences. Providers warn that without clearer payment structures, home health agencies could be discouraged from offering these important conversations despite their value in guiding care decisions. Stakeholders are urging CMS to revise the proposal so that home health clinicians are properly reimbursed for advance care planning services. “The National Alliance for Care at Home voiced support for the spirit of the measure but raised questions about how it would be implemented.” Advocates argue that appropriate compensation would support better care coordination and ensure patients receive meaningful discussions about their care preferences. (*Home Health Care News*, 3/6, <https://homehealthcarenews.com/2026/03/cms-advance-care-planning-proposal-could-leave-home-health-providers-without-appropriate-compensation/>)

## OTHER NOTES

~ **A report from the Center to Advance Palliative Care highlights caregiver support as a critical factor in improving patient outcomes while lowering health care costs.** The report argues that health systems should formally recognize family caregivers as part of the care team and create structured programs to support them. With millions of Americans providing unpaid care for people with serious illness, caregiver stress is linked to worse patient outcomes, greater health care utilization, and higher mortality. The report also finds that hospital-based caregiver support programs can be financially sustainable while improving quality metrics and patient experiences. Overall, the publication makes the case that investing in caregiver support benefits patients, families, and health care organizations alike. The second link below goes directly to the CAPC report. (CAPC, 2/20, <https://www.capc.org/about/press-media/press-releases/2026-2-20/new-capc-report-identifies-caregiver-support-as-key-to-better-outcomes-and-lower-health-care-costs/>; <https://www.capc.org/documents/download/1301/>)

~ **“Labor & Employment Lawyers, at Blumenthal Nordrehaug Bhowmik De Blouw LLP, File Suit Against Sutter Visiting Nurse Association and Hospice, for Underpayment of Employees’ Wages” highlights a class action lawsuit alleging labor law violations.** The lawsuit claims that Sutter Visiting Nurse Association and Hospice failed to provide legally required meal and rest periods and underpaid sick wages by not adhering to the correct rate of pay. These alleged practices violate the California Labor Code, and the case is pending in the

Sacramento County Superior Court. (*Benzinga*, 02/12, [benzinga.com/pressreleases/26/02/n50601379/labor-employment-lawyers-at-blumenthal-nordrehaug-bhowmik-de-blouw-llp-file-suit-against-sutter-vi](https://benzinga.com/pressreleases/26/02/n50601379/labor-employment-lawyers-at-blumenthal-nordrehaug-bhowmik-de-blouw-llp-file-suit-against-sutter-vi))

~ **“Southern California businesses say they’re hurting after viral Dr. Oz video alleging health care fraud in area” highlights the economic impact on local businesses following a controversial video by Dr. Mehmet Oz.** The video, which accused Armenian American businesses of being involved in health care fraud, led to a significant drop in customer traffic, with some businesses reporting a 20% to 30% decrease. Critics, including local officials, have condemned the video as ethnic profiling and racism. The incident has sparked a civil rights complaint and calls for an investigation. (*East Bay Times*, 02/09, [eastbaytimes.com/2026/02/09/van-nuys-businesses-say-theyre-hurting-after-viral-dr-oz-video-alleging-health-care-fraud-in-area](https://eastbaytimes.com/2026/02/09/van-nuys-businesses-say-theyre-hurting-after-viral-dr-oz-video-alleging-health-care-fraud-in-area))

~ **“How an Ethics Course Can Prep You for Med School” explores the integral role of ethics education in preparing medical school applicants.** The article highlights that ethics courses are not just peripheral but central to medical training, helping students navigate complex decisions, enhance communication, and understand justice within healthcare systems. It emphasizes that ethical literacy is crucial for clinical practice, research, and policy, as it fosters nuanced thinking and empathy. Engaging with ethical dilemmas prepares students for real-world medical challenges. (*U.S. News & World Report*, 02/10, [usnews.com/education/blogs/medical-school-admissions-doctor/articles/ways-an-ethics-course-can-prepare-you-for-medical-school](https://usnews.com/education/blogs/medical-school-admissions-doctor/articles/ways-an-ethics-course-can-prepare-you-for-medical-school))

NOTE: Some URL links require subscription, membership and/or registration.

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