

IN THE NEWS

News for LTC Professionals
in 100 Words-or-Less

Edited by Drew Vogel

drewvogel5255@msn.com

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They said it

"The progress we are seeing is indicative of the never-ending commitment of nursing home caregivers to improve the lives of their residents, seek out the latest best practices, and continuously innovate" AHCA President and CEO Cliff Porter on nurse turnover and agency use dropping

"This funding could benefit aging services providers — particularly long-term services and supports — if states choose to prioritize LTSS occupations and if providers are able to connect with their state apprenticeship and workforce systems" Molly Carpenter, director of workforce strategy and development at the LeadingAge

"If you look at where we [the government] have invested over the past 50 years, it largely was in acute care, and you guys have [borne] the brunt of that. So, the question that we're looking at now is, 'How do we bring everyone else along?'" Mark Atalla, CMS' deputy national coordinator for health IT and policy on who will pay for technology advances in the future

An Old-New Face May Take Over the CDC

The White House has nominated Erica Schwartz, who served as deputy U.S. surgeon general during President Donald Trump's first term, as the new leader of the CDC.

The pick of Schwartz would be the latest attempt to fill a post that has sat largely vacant during Trump's second term amid political tensions over vaccines and the agency's role.

She left government in January 2021 after the incoming Biden administration told her that she would not be selected to serve as acting U.S. surgeon general.

The Washington Post, 04/14/2026

DC'ing to a Homeless Shelter? Be Careful, CMS is Watching

A woman using a walker showed up, incontinent and carrying "a large bag of medications." She was diabetic, managing a tibia fracture and alcohol-related dementia, and she was "dumped" by a nursing home at a homeless shelter. The staff called the life squad.

The incident was what industry experts described as a rare but increasingly common instance of a nursing home in Ohio transferring residents to homeless shelters.

CMS has faulted Eastland Rehabilitation and Nursing Center in Columbus and six others in the past few years related to efforts to discharge patients to homeless shelters.

The Associated Press, 04/13/2026

NY Penalizes for Not Having Staff That's Not Available

New York State has begun imposing penalties for not meeting specific staffing requirements, including maintaining a minimum 3.5 hours of direct care per resident day (HPRD).

Recently, over 20 facilities in the state have started receiving fines, which stem from staffing shortages that began in 2022.

And yet, more penalties are expected for New York nursing homes, creating additional financial strain for providers already dealing with tight margins and rising labor costs.

Geography further complicates compliance. While some facilities can attract staff more easily, others — particularly in competitive or rural markets — struggle to meet the same standards.

Skilled Nursing News, 04/08/2026

An 8th Lawsuit Connected To Nursing Home Explosion

Relatives of a Philadelphia-area nursing home resident killed in a natural gas explosion last year are among the latest suing the home operator and private utility company.

At least eight lawsuits alleging negligence have been filed in relation to the Dec. 23 blast and fire at the Bristol Health & Rehab Center.

The suits contain similar accusations of recklessness and negligence on the part of owner Saber, and power company PECO regarding their alleged failure to act on complaints from staff and residents about a strong gas odor in the building and the inadequate efforts to fix the gas leak.

Bucks County Courier Times, 04/13/2026

CMS Proposes Reforms to Speed Access to Meds

CMS is proposing changes to slash long waiting periods for drugs, reducing barriers to timely access to critical treatments.

The proposed rule would advance sweeping reforms to modernize prior authorization for drugs by establishing clear decision deadlines for impacted payers — no later than 24 hours for urgent requests and 72 hours for standard requests — and increasing transparency through full disclosure of claims denials and appeals outcomes.

"This proposal moves prior authorization into the digital age, replacing fax machines and fragmented systems with real-time electronic workflows," said CMS Administrator Dr. Mehmet Oz.

CMS News Release, 04/10/226

Proposed Help for Mentally Ill in Nursing Homes

New legislation to increase the frequency of required Department of Human Services (DHS) follow-up visits for residents of Illinois nursing homes who have been diagnosed with a serious mental illness.

Introduced by Rep. Nicolle Grasse, the bill makes changes to the state's Nursing Home Care Act.

DHS follow-up visits on patients checking into nursing homes are required after 60 days, not 90 days; DHS visits are required after a significant change in a physical or mental condition; and DHS is required to remove the need for unnecessary conflict-of-interest waivers for pre-admission screenings.

Rep, Nichole Grasse news release, 04/01/2026

IN THE TRENCHES

Vaccines, COVID-19, Flu, Measles & Other Outbreaks Around the Globe

THE WORLD: A heavily mutated variant of the virus that causes **COVID-19** appears to be affecting primarily children, scientists say, though it's not causing more severe disease – in kids or in adults. Rather, experts say the fact that the virus is breaking with its pattern of being a menace, primarily, of older adults is a telling detail. It's something to study and understand so that scientists can better predict the behavior of this ever-evolving virus (**CNN**).

SAN FRANCISCO: A **measles** outbreak in the Sacramento region, the third and largest in California so far this year, has brought the state's year-to-date measles cases to 39 — far surpassing yearly totals for the last several years. The ongoing outbreak in Sacramento and Placer counties, which began in late February and has grown to 17 cases — including four new cases over the past week — will likely continue another 21 days, the incubation period for measles (**San Francisco Chronicle**).

CALIFORNIA: The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health reported the highest-ever number of flea-borne **typhus** cases in 2025, with 220 cases. While cases were reported across the county, Three areas were most affected, including Central Los Angeles City, Santa Monica, and Willowbrook. The disease is treatable with antibiotics, but the county said that 9 out of 10 people identified last year with typhus required hospitalization (**CBS News**).

CHICAGO: Officials from the Cook County Department of Public Health warned of possible exposure to **measles** from a contagious individual at O'Hare International Airport and two other locations. In a press release, the department said people may have been exposed to measles if they were in Terminal 5 at the airport between 10:45 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. CT on Tuesday, March 24 (**The Hill**).

CONGO: The country declared the end of a two-year outbreak of the **mplex** disease that's believed to have caused more than 2,200 deaths in the country. Health Minister Roger Kamba told journalists that the government had made the determination that the outbreak was over and no longer a national emergency (**AP**).

SAN FRANCISCO: Health officials reported the first case of **measles** in the city in seven years — since 2019 The victim is an unvaccinated infant who was infected during a recent international trip. The child, who is less than 1 year old, was exposed while traveling and became infectious after returning. The infant is recovering at home, and other members of the household have been vaccinated (**San Francisco Chronicle**).

AMERICA: US flu activity keeps trending downward, according to the latest FluView report from the CDC. **Flu** cases are declining across most of the country, with influenza A viruses waning and influenza B viruses showing varying levels of activity. That trend follows the typical seasonal flu virus patterns. The proportion of tests that were positive for flu fell to 9.8%, down from 11.5% the previous week, and the proportion of outpatient visits for flu remained below the national baseline for the second straight week, falling from 2.8% to 2.6% (**CIDRAP**).

AMERICA: Infants born to mothers who received mRNA **COVID** vaccination during pregnancy had a 36% lower risk of COVID-related hospital contact in their first 6 months of life. The protective effect did not extend to other types of infections (**Pediatrics**).

BANGLADESH: The country is conducting emergency **measles-rubella** vaccinations while trying to contain an ongoing outbreak that has killed more than 100 children in less than a month. The government in partnership with the World Health Organization, the U.N. children's agency and the Gavi vaccine alliance began working to vaccinate children age 6 months to 5 years old in 18 high-risk districts and will expand nationwide in phases from next month (**AP**).

AMERICA: US measles cases climbed by almost 100 in the past week, reaching 1,671 infections, the CDC said in its weekly update. The vast majority of the 96 new cases are in Utah. The CDC said all but 10 of the 2026 cases are from 32 states and New York City, with the rest travel-related. The number of affected states grew this week by one. Of all confirmed cases, 94% are associated with one of 17 outbreaks, with one of those outbreaks being new (**CIDRAP**).

NEW YORK: Tops Friendly Markets of Williamsville, NY is recalling all codes of Christopher Ranch Peeled Garlic and Garland Peeled Garlic because it has the potential to be contaminated with **Botulism** due to the product being kept at insufficient temperatures. *Clostridium botulinum* is a bacterium which can cause life threatening illness or death. Consumers are warned not to consume the product even if it does not look or smell spoiled (**FDA**).

UTAH: With 19 new infections, Utah officials said the state has 602 **measles** cases in an outbreak that began last year and is ongoing. And though cases have been slightly declining in recent weeks, several preschools and elementary schools are now sites of recent exposures (**CIDRAP**).

FLORIDA: Governor Ron DeSantis added two new agenda items to the session: legislation aimed at protecting minors from artificial intelligence and a "medical freedom" bill that would provide a new way for students to opt out of certain **vaccines**. DeSantis asked lawmakers to return for up to four days, from April 28 until May 1 (**The New York Times**).

COVID-19, 04/10/2026

World Total Cases
779,207,696

World Total Deaths
7,114,028

U.S. Total Deaths
1,237,230

World Health Organization

Nurse and Agency Turnover Down Since Pandemic

Citing a range of government data and members' proprietary information, the American Health Care Association reported that overall and registered nurse turnover are down an average of 11% since mid-2022, with agency use cut by 45%.

Amid that improved stability and the availability of more consistent caregiving teams, AHCA pointed to Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services data that showed significant, sector-wide quality improvements for both post-acute patients and long-term residents.

The association said 95,000 more patients have increased functional abilities, and nearly 30,000 more have successfully returned home over the last three years.

McKnight's, 04/14/2026

States Hit Roadblock With PDM Laws

State efforts to regulate pharmacy benefit managers are colliding with federal law, reviving a power struggle over who can police the companies that manage drug benefits for most Americans.

The states are trying to rein in the middlemen that negotiate drug prices and pay pharmacies, but they're running into a federal law that has the final say over employer health plans.

A federal appeals court last week ruled against Tennessee in a case over whether the state could require PBMs to partner with any pharmacy that's willing to accept their terms and conditions.

Axios, 04/14/2026

Trump Wants Haitians Out of South Florida, Providers Don't

Several south Florida LTC organizations have filed a friend-of-the-court (*amicus*) brief in the US Supreme Court addressing the potential effects of the Trump administration's efforts to end temporary protected status for Haitian immigrants.

Removing "indispensable" immigrant workers from the labor force due to "abrupt" immigration policy changes

would destabilize senior living and care providers already operating under critical staffing shortages.

The brief warns that ending TPS for Haitians and others will have a "devastating impact" on healthcare in the nation, particularly the senior living and care industry.

Senior Living, 04/14/2026

Nursing Homes Greenlighting Admissions with AI

Late last month, the Texas nursing home chain, Creative Solutions in Healthcare, rolled out a solution that makes most responses across its 162 nursing homes nearly instantaneously.

Its new artificial intelligence-led admissions platform can give the green light to ideal patients automatically, following a set of criteria developed by Creative's operational and clinical teams.

The system, operated by ExaCare AI, processed 1,500 referrals in its first 48 hours, with about 62% automatically approved. The system works across multiple hospital portals, meaning nursing home staff no longer have to navigate those individually to find, evaluate and respond to admissions requests.

McKnight's, 04/13/2026

SNF Incident Reporting Bill Passes Illinois House

By a 111-0 margin legislation has passed in the Illinois House dealing with issues within skilled nursing facilities not reporting incidents of abuse properly.

House Bill 4868 is designed to clarify reporting requirements for skilled nursing facilities when there's an incident or accident in the facility.

The legislation requires each facility to notify the appropriate regional office of the Department of Public Health within 24 hours, or by the end of the next business day, after each reportable incident or accident; and to send a narrative summary of each incident or accident to the Department within 5 days.

WBGZ-FM, 04/16/2026

ONE COLUMN Senior Living Must Focus on Retention

The senior living industry is sitting at the outer band of a rising storm said Ron Hetrick, principal economist with Lightcast at the recent NIC conference.

There's an older adult population growing faster than the workforce, which can be addressed by retaining workers.

Care is transitioning from nursing homes to assisted living and home care as older adults declare their preference to age in place.

Hetrick called assisted living "a growth industry looking for a labor force."

His assertion is backed up by a report from Argentum.

By 2040, 3 million workers will be needed in senior living, with more than 20 million needed across long-term care, according to the 2026 update of the association's "Value of Assisted Living for America" report. Total long-term care employment is projected to reach almost 8.3 million, a 42% increase from 2021.

Needed will be more than 12 million home health and personal care aides, more than 1 million RNs and LPNs more than 2 million CNAs, more than 1 million food service workers, more than 300,000 housekeepers, and more than 700,000 administrators and office workers, according to Argentum.

Beyond new job creation, the report stated that an additional 18 million positions are anticipated as current employees exit the labor force or transition to other occupations.

The problem is that the workforce is disappearing, Hetrick said.

The COVID-19 pandemic, he said, "pushed the accelerator pedal down" on workforce trends. People left the labor force faster than anticipated, with 5 million people exiting overnight at the height of the pandemic. That figure now exceeds 9 million, with 80% of those leaving the workforce aged 55 or more years.

Senior Living, 4/03/2026

LTC Tech Gap: Who Will Foot the Bill?

The demographics of aging and a federal focus on paying for data-backed results will likely combine to bring more technology capabilities to long-term care providers. But who will pay for it?

Skilled nursing still lags most of its healthcare peers in electronic transmission of data for referrals, discharges and more.

Mark Atalla, deputy national coordinator for health IT and policy at HHS said his office is thinking of ways it can better weave non-acute care providers into the technology journey shaping modern healthcare. That's critically important as CMS advances new clinical and reimbursement models that depend on information-sharing.

McKnight's, 04/17/2026

DOL Apprentice Grants May Boost the LTC Workforce

The availability of approximately \$85 million in grants for registered apprenticeships announced Monday by the Department of Labor offer a potential solution to workforce challenges in LTC.

All 50 states and territories are eligible for the funds, meant to increase the capacity of the apprenticeship programs.

Although the initiative ties into the federal government's goal of reviving US manufacturing, LeadingAge Director of Workforce Policy Amanda Mead previously said that it also could help alleviate critical workforce shortages in the aging services sector.

Senior Living, 04/15/2026

Another Fake Nurse Is Sentenced in Florida

A woman who posed as a nurse and treated more than 4,400 patients without a license has been sentenced in Flagler County Florida.

After pleading no contest to unlicensed practice of healthcare and fraudulent use of identification, Autumn Bardisa, 29, was sentenced to probation and community

service and may not work in health care during her probation period.

Authorities said she treated more than 4,400 patients between June 2024 and January 2025, while falsely presenting herself as a licensed nurse at AdventHealth.

Bardisa also forfeited a nursing license she obtained after her arrest.

Fox News, 04/09/2026

In a Dozen Years 30% More LPNs Will Be Needed

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) projects the U.S. supply of LPNs to be short by 30% by 2038.

About 4 in 10 LPNs work in skilled nursing facilities and residential care facilities, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Hospitals are the second-largest employer in the U.S., employing 16% of the nation's workforce.

HRSA workforce projection shows the U.S. will have 565,690 LPNs by 2038 but will need 811,640, equaling a shortage of 245,950.

Health systems say they are taking a measured approach — selectively integrating LPNs into care teams without significantly altering RN-dependent acute care models.

Becker's Hospital Review, 04/09/2026

Let's Party! Happy Hour Bill Headed for Governor's Desk

Residents of nursing homes and assisted living facilities in Minnesota are one step closer to enjoying happy hour at their facilities.

The so-called "Grandparents' Happy Hour" bill was included in the omnibus liquor bill that passed the Minnesota House. The proposal would allow these facilities to serve alcohol to residents and their guests during activities or events if the facility notifies the state first.

The bill passed the House 129 to 1. Today, the bill passed the Senate by a vote of 56 to 10. The bill is now headed to the governor's desk for his signature.

Learfield Wire Service, 04/15/2026

Briefly in the News

The City of Baltimore's public water system cut fluoride levels in its drinking water nearly in half last week. Baltimore isn't alone. U.S. water systems are facing a shortage of hydrofluorosilicic acid, a chemical used to fluoridate drinking water to prevent cavities and tooth decay. The specialized chemical is mainly sourced from a small pool of international producers. And the conflict in the Middle East is disrupting the supply chain (**NPR**).

More than five million people annually are admitted to intensive care across about 5,000 American hospitals. research shows that more than half physical, psychological, or cognitive after-effects known as "post-intensive care syndrome," or PICS and can persist for months or years. Older age increases the odds (**The New York Times**).

The Honduran family of an 8-year-old girl with a heart condition who died in U.S. custody after crossing the border in 2023 sued the federal government. The girl who had chronic heart problems and sickle cell anemia, got sick with flu-like symptoms and died after being detained for eight days in a U.S. Customs and Border Protection facility in Donna, Texas then later Harlingen, Texas (**AP**).

Contrary to stereotypes, many older adults improve in cognitive and physical abilities in later life — and having a positive mindset about aging may play a key role. The findings, published last month in the journal *Geriatrics*. In a Yale study the common narrative that physical and cognitive declines are inevitable with aging are rejected. It found that about 45% of U.S. adults 65 and older showed improvement in cognition or walking speed, or both, during the 12-year study period (**San Francisco Chronicle**).

A Cook County jury has decided that Abbott Laboratories should pay \$17 million in punitive damages — on top of \$53 million in compensatory damages awarded in four cases in which mothers alleged the company's formula for premature infants caused their babies to become severely ill (**Chicago Tribune**).