

IN THE NEWS

News for LTC Professionals
in 100 Words-or-Less

Edited by Drew Vogel

drewvogel5255@msn.com

Vol 10

06/21/2026

They said it

"That scale is possible" Jason Asher, director of CDC's Center for Forecasting and Outbreak Analytics on the chance the Ebola outbreak in Africa could come to America and rival the 2014 eruption that killed 11,000 in Africa.

"When these types of nursing homes that are owned by private equity close ... Connecticut isn't left holding the bag financially" Connecticut State Sen. Jan Hochadel on the state's new private equity law

"States should take notice that they cannot require Americans to abandon their religious beliefs in the name of woke gender ideology" Assistant Attorney General Harmeet K. Dhillon of the Justice Dept's Civil Rights Division after DOJ joined a lawsuit by nuns that would require men and women to be housed together in a hospice facility

No Surprise, Infection Control Still Most Cited Deficiency

Infection prevention and control deficiencies remain the most cited compliance violation for nursing homes in the first half of 2026, with respiratory viruses, gastrointestinal viruses and multidrug-resistant organisms (MDROs) among the top concerns.

While many of these threats can be minimized through effective protocols and readily available vaccines, infection prevention efforts can also be complicated by resident attitudes and resistance to vaccination.

Among highly contagious – and potentially deadly – *Candida auris*, or *C. auris*, a fungal infection, and CRE infections caused by Carbapenem-resistant *Enterobacterales*, present some of the greatest risks.

Skilled Nursing News, 06/16/2026

More Support for MA Reform on Capitol Hill

Rep. Greg Murphy (R-NC) a surgeon and Republican congressman who once championed Medicare Advantage told providers at AHCA's Congressional Briefing Tuesday that insurers' "egregious, horrible practices" have made it more likely that Congress will substantially change how the program operates.

Murphy is co-sponsor of the Medicare Advantage Improvement Act of 2026, one of three core bills AHCA members championed as they took to Capitol Hill to meet with their federal lawmakers.

Monday evening, Murphy took to the House floor to decry MA plans that "deny patients care and rip off the American taxpayer."

McKnight's, 06/09/2026

Court: HHS, Not Jury, Has Final Discretion Over CMPs

A Maryland nursing home seeking a jury trial to contest civil monetary penalties imposed by CMS has struck out before a federal appeals court.

The Court ruled in a 3-0 decision against each of Sligo Creek Center's arguments that it had a constitutional right to a jury trial when facing a \$1.5 million CMP.

The court ruled that HHS has the final decision.

The provider remains on the hook for a \$1.5 million fine over infection control lapses related to a tuberculosis outbreak that officials said was not properly monitored.

There were no deaths, but one patient was hospitalized.

McKnight's, 06/08/2026

A U.S. Ebola Outbreak Could Rival Worst-ever

The CDC urged strong public health interventions against the current Ebola outbreak, citing their models that show it could otherwise rival the scale of the 2014 West Africa outbreak in which there were 11,000 deaths and 28,000 cases.

The worst outcomes could be avoided if "a larger proportion of patients were identified, isolated, and treated," the CDC said.

The CDC emphasized the models were "not a forecast" but "a planning tool."

"They're designed to support action, not to generate alarm."

The Daily Star, 06/06/2026

Montana Nursing Homes Left Holding an Empty Bag

Nursing homes have had many disappointments in reimbursement over the years. Those in Montana experienced another blow recently when the state rescinded a 3% rate increase for Medicaid providers the Legislature and Governor approved last year.

The official reason cited was "projected budget shortfalls."

The reason for the state's budget deficit comes from last year's legislative session.

During the 2025 Legislature, the health budget committee received two different caseload projections for Medicaid patients. It picked the lower on with which to budget.

It was the wrong decision.

Flathead Beacon, 06/15/2026

Kennedy Wants to Peek At Your Health Record

U.S. health secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. is pursuing federal government access to most Americans' medical records, in a quest to research a link between vaccines and autism -- a connection the medical establishment studied for decades and flatly rejects.

HHS is seeking data from little-known state systems that allow hospitals and clinics to exchange detailed, identifiable patient information.

In private meetings, some public health leaders have objected to giving Kennedy's team access to such data, raising doubts that it's legal or that the information would even be useful.

KFF Health News, 06/07/2026

IN THE TRENCHES

COVID-19, Flu, Measles, Vaccines, & Other Worldwide Outbreaks

WASHINGTON, D.C: Yet another leadership position at the National Institutes of Health appears to be vacant. Jeffery Taubenberger, who has been serving as acting head of the National Institute for Allergy and Infectious Diseases, has stepped down. The move was revealed by Sen. Tammy Baldwin during a hearing of the Senate Appropriations Committee. It was unclear when Taubenberger stepped down, or why, though for a couple weeks there has been chatter in infectious diseases research circles (*Stat*).

D.R. CONGO, et al: US-bound flights carrying passengers who were recently in an Ebola-affected region of Africa must land at Dulles International Airport outside Washington, where they will be screened for Ebola. As of May 20, all passengers who have recently been in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda, or South Sudan can only enter the U.S. through Washington Dulles International Airport. The CDC sent extra staff to Dulles to assist (*CNN*).

AMERICA: The number of people sickened by three multistate outbreaks of the Salmonella bacterium has rocketed to 184. The CDC reported there are 150 new cases since April 23, though the true number of sick people is likely higher. At least 54 people have been hospitalized and one person died in Washington state. (*CIDRAP*).

AMERICA: It's a drug that kills nearly 500 Americans every day and causes more deaths in a typical year than every infectious disease combined. It is manufactured abroad and domestically and sold by powerful multinational organizations. For decades — for centuries, really — it has destroyed lives, torn apart families, stunted the economy, and caused millions of deaths. It's alcohol - the most popular and most harmful mind-altering substance in the U.S. Yet it is not seen as a public health emergency (*STAT*).

CAPITOL HILL: Democrats say the Trump administration's deep cuts to federal health agencies have become a political liability after a deadly outbreak of hantavirus aboard a cruise ship and the spread of an even more fearsome disease, Ebola, in Africa. They have seized on the situation to charge that the U.S. is ill prepared to respond to outbreaks after President Donald Trump slashed jobs and funding for public health infrastructure and pandemic preparedness. Infectious disease specialists have called on the White House to reverse cuts and rejoin the World Health Organization (*KFF Health News*).

THE WORLD: Doctors battling a rare strain of Ebola in central Africa will probably need to wait many months for a vaccine to be ready for human trials, underscoring the challenges health authorities face in combating the outbreak. the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations and its partners will start the vaccine development process immediately for multiple candidates. However, lab testing and evidence from animal trials will be needed before human studies can begin (*Bloomberg*).

FRANCE: Artificial food dyes have long been suspected to be harmful to your health. But new research shows that some of the natural color additives are being turned to as alternatives with a more than 40% increased risk of Type 2 diabetes and certain cancers. The scientists, from several French universities and research institutions, looked at what more than 100,000 people ate and drank. (*The Wall Street Journal*).

NEBRASKA: A cruise ship passenger who was exposed to hantavirus in early May is still being held at a quarantine facility in Nebraska, against her wishes and against the recommendation of a medical review from the CDC. On Monday, Health Sec. Kennedy, a staunch proponent of medical freedom, signed an order to continue quarantining Angela Perryman, 47, even though others who had been held at the facility have, since May 31, been allowed to return to their homes if they wished to do so (*The New York Times*).

NIGERIA, S. SUDAN, YEMEN: Last week one circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 case was reported in each Nigeria and Yemen and one circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 1 case in South Sudan. Nigerian has reported 24 case this year; Yemen 31 cases and South Sudan three cases (*Global Polio Eradication Initiative*).

CALIFORNIA: San Quentin Rehabilitation Center is awaiting state and federal test results after an incarcerated person showed symptoms that could be consistent with hantavirus, the rare rodent-borne virus that has drawn renewed attention after a recent cruise ship outbreak (*San Francisco Chronicle*).

THE WORLD: Chinese researchers analyzed estimates on deaths and disability-adjusted life years associated with 22 pathogens and 84 drug-pathogen combinations across 204 countries. They focused on deaths attributable to methicillin-resistant *S aureus* MRSA contributed significantly to mortality. Deaths from MRSA in older adults (70+) rose from 22,481 in 1990 to 75,038 in 2021, more than 70-fold higher than in those aged 5 to 49 (*BMC Infectious Diseases*).

THE WORLD: Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Black children have been significantly more likely than White children to require intensive care, develop inflammatory syndromes, and experience other severe post-COVID complications. The studies included children from the U.S. Switzerland, the United Kingdom, Ecuador, Spain, France, Brazil, and Ireland. Compared with White children, Black children had nearly double the odds of ICU admission (*BMC Infectious Diseases*).

AMERICA: Dr. Vincent Munster, A Dutch virologist who has been honored for helping to advance the development of the COVID vaccine now finds himself under the microscope of U.S. federal investigators. Dr. Munster, has been charged with conspiring to smuggle vials full of deactivated mppox into the U.S. Dr. Munster, leads the virus ecology section at Rocky Mountain Laboratories, a National Institutes of Health center in Montana (*The New York Times*).

Closures Led to Mostly Rural Access Problems

A study found 1,440 nursing homes closed from 2016 through 2025, amounting to about 0.9% of facilities during the pre-pandemic period, and 1.1% from 2020 through 2025.

There were also 849 new operations – offsetting about 58% of the closures.

About 14.5% of closures resulted in no nursing home within 10 miles, and for an additional 14.4% of closures, nearby facilities had insufficient capacity to absorb displaced residents, resulting in access shortages in nearly 29% of closures.

These effects were concentrated in rural communities in the Midwest and Great Plains, where nearly 37% of closures led to access problems for residents.

JAMA, 06/17/2026

Closures Led to Mostly Rural Access Problems

A study found 1,440 nursing homes closed from 2016 through 2025, amounting to about 0.9% of facilities during the pre-pandemic period, and 1.1% from 2020 through 2025.

There were also 849 new operations – offsetting about 58% of the closures.

About 14.5% of closures resulted in no nursing home within 10 miles, and for an additional 14.4% of closures, nearby facilities had insufficient capacity to absorb displaced residents, resulting in access shortages in nearly 29% of closures.

These effects were concentrated in rural communities in the Midwest and Great Plains, where nearly 37% of closures led to access problems for residents.

JAMA, 06/17/2026

R.I. Program Axed- Would've Kept Seniors Out of SNFs

A nonprofit is sounding the alarm over a last-minute funding cut from Gov. Dan McKee's proposed budget that would eliminate a program designed to help older adults avoid costly nursing home

stays after getting discharged from hospitals.

McKee officials insist the cut is necessary because the program is no longer eligible for matching federal funding amid increased scrutiny over what services are covered by Medicaid under the Trump administration.

The services are provided by the nonprofit RIPIN. Its executive director, Sam Salganik, said he disagrees with the state's assessment and called on lawmakers to restore the funding with general revenue.

WPRI-TV, 05/29/2026

Man Charged in Two Nursing Home Murders 36-Years Ago

A 69-year-old man faces two counts of deliberate homicide in connection with murders in a Missoula, Montana nursing home thirty-six years ago.

Missoula County prosecutors charged Nickie Dean Gardiner in the 1990 deaths of Bertha Scott and Nancy Lagerquist at Riverside Health and Rehabilitation after DNA evidence linked him to the crimes.

Nickie Dean Gardiner was charged in the 1990 deaths of two elderly residents of Riverside Health and Rehabilitation after DNA evidence linked him to the crimes.

Gardiner is in the county jail with bond set at \$5million.

KPAX-TV, 06/09/2026

Nurse Corp RNs May Be Headed to Nursing Homes

If congressional negotiations hold up, Registered Nurses who commit to work in nursing homes could for the first time be included in a national Nurse Corps program that repays their educational loans in exchange for service.

The House Appropriations Committee added \$20 million to the Nurse Corps Scholarship and Loan Repayment program, bringing proposed fiscal 2027 funding to \$112.6 million.

An amended version of the spending bill also requires the Health Resources and Services Administration to spend at least 5% of the Corps' funding to create a long-term care pathway.

McKnight's, 06/10/2026

ONE COLUMN

Jobs With the Highest and Lowest Divorce Rates

Divorce rates vary dramatically by occupation, ranging from just 14.2% among actuaries to nearly 50% in several service and healthcare support roles.

The average divorce rate among the 20 highest divorce occupations is 46.8%, versus 20.1% among the 20 lowest divorce occupations.

The occupations at the low end of the ranking share a unique set of characteristics, i.e., irregular schedules, shift work, public-facing responsibilities, or emotionally demanding working conditions.

A surprising finding is that healthcare occupations appear on both sides.

In healthcare occupations with the highest rate of divorce are ambulance drivers (47.3%), psychiatric aides (47.2%) and LPNs (47.1%).

The most likely group to get divorced is "Other Healthcare Practitioners" at 48.3%.

America's lowest-divorce occupations are remarkably similar. Most require years of advanced education, professional licensing, or specialized technical expertise. Among healthcare occupations physical therapists (19.0%) physicians (20.1%) and pharmacists (20.3%) all rank in the top ten for the lowest rates of divorce

Education appears to be one factor. Census-based research shows divorce rates generally decline as education levels rise.

Individuals with only a high school diploma experienced a divorce rate of 38.8%, compared with 30.1% with an associate degree and 25.9% for those holding at least a bachelor's degree.

A landmark study of more than 3,400 married couples found that irregular schedules, such as night shifts, were associated with significantly higher odds.

Other research has linked night-shift work to greater marital instability and work-family conflict, particularly for new parents.

Visual Capitalist, 06/06/2026

DOJ Going to Bat For the Sisters

The Justice Department intervene in a lawsuit filed by an order of Catholic nuns — the Dominican Sisters of Hawthorne — against the State of New York, challenging a state law that requires housing biological men with women in the Sisters' residential hospice care program.

The United States' supports the Sisters of Hawthorne's argument that the New York law violates the U.S. Constitution's equal protection of religious groups.

DOJ said the state requirement violates the Fourteenth Amendment's Equal Protection Clause by requiring religious facilities to meet requirements that violate religious beliefs, while excusing non-religious facilities from those same requirements.

DOJ news release, 06/18/2026

More IJs Cited in Connecticut Nursing Homes

Connecticut nursing home residents were increasingly found to be in "immediate jeopardy" in a state health department report.

Connecticut health officials issued a total of 14 immediate jeopardy citations in the first quarter of the 2026 federal fiscal year, which ended on Dec. 31, compared to 8 in the same period in 2025, 5 in 2024 and 7 in 2023.

The total number of immediate jeopardy citations reported for all of fiscal 2025 was 26. The state has 191 nursing homes.

The individual Connecticut facilities that were cited were not identified in a special report.

CT Insider, 06/05/2026

Mandates Background Checks, Bans the Unlicensed

A 24-bill legislative package recently passed by Louisiana lawmakers included two bills that are important to senior living providers.

The bill mandates that employers conduct criminal history and security checks before hiring non-licensed individuals and prohibits the hiring of individuals who have been convicted of certain offenses.

Another bill passed by lawmakers prohibits the practice of renting group homes to at-risk individuals who receive assistance with activities of daily living. Proponents argued that bad actors were taking victims' assistance dollars as rental payments while providing overcrowded or unsafe living arrangements under the guise of consent.

Senior Living, 06/05/2026

SNF Goes to Trial For Alleged Racial Acts

A federal judge in Vermont ruled that Elderwood of Burlington can be held liable under Title VII for a hostile work environment if it is shown it didn't take steps to remediate resident's alleged racial threats toward black staff.

The ruling means that Elderwood must face an Equal Employment Opportunity Commission lawsuit.

Plaintiffs alleged management failed to take appropriate measures to stop physical assaults and racial slurs from residents toward black staff members.

The complete "factual record" will prove that a Vermont nursing home did not create a hostile workplace by allowing physical and racial harassment of workers by patients.

VT Digger, 06/12/2026

Pedal It Forward And Brighten a Life

Schylar Arthur in Madison, Wisconsin dedicates her weekends to the wedding circuit.

After "I do's" she eventually gathers up the left over flowers and takes them to nursing home residents.

"I thought there's got to be something better that we can do with these flowers that people spend so much money on," Arthur said.

With the help of volunteers, Arthur created her nonprofit *Petal It Forward*, repurposing donated wedding flowers to reduce waste and bring joy to those in need.

With each wedding *Petal It Forward* books, Arthur picks a new nursing home or care facility in the Madison area.

WMTV-TV, 05/25/2026

Briefly in the News

Signs of Alzheimer's disease may be hidden in middle aged brains. Alzheimer's disease pathology was detected in midlife and was tied to minor changes in cognitive performance in people without dementia. Kristine Yaffe, MD, of the University of California San Francisco, and co-authors reported that this pathology, measured by amyloid and tau blood biomarkers, was uncommon in middle age, and was associated with a higher likelihood of cognitive decline over 5 years (***The Lancet***).

Although there's variation across states, the American Council on Aging reports that the average annual cost of a shared room in a nursing home is \$119,340. As for assisted living, SeniorLiving.org estimates the current average is about \$75,756 per year (***American Council on Aging***).

The New England Journal of Medicine is investigating allegations of research misconduct in a key study used to approve Amgen Inc.'s drug *Tavneos*. The US Food and Drug Administration recently proposed pulling the drug from the market, alleging that the medicine was approved based on manipulated data. European health regulators are also reviewing the drug (***Bloomberg***).

In 2023, lawmakers passed a measure requiring the state's Medicaid program to pay for services provided by community health workers who help patients navigate the medical system. The law passed but didn't specify an implementation date, and the budget didn't earmark funding for the initiative. Today, community health workers and advocates are still waiting for the state to come up with the money to make the measure a reality (***CT Mirror***).

Allegations that Medicaid is losing billions of dollars to fraud have sent Ohio Republicans racing to overhaul the state's home-care system before their summer break. But as conservatives rush forward with a sweeping reform bill, critics are questioning whether lawmakers are moving too quickly to understand how the changes could harm elderly and disabled Ohioans who depend on this kind of care to live independently (***The Cleveland Plain Dealer***).