

IN THE NEWS

News for LTC Professionals
in 100 Words-or-Less

Edited by Drew Vogel

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They said it

It is outright shameful. How we treat our most vulnerable is indicative of, really, who we are as a society"

Michigan Atty Gen Dana Nessel announcing a lawsuit citing the owner of a nursing home chain for failure to care for residents

"We're incredibly proud that nurses and the community came together in Portland to advocate for her, and now we need to figure out how to stop ICE"

Kelli Brennan, a nurse leader with Maine State Nurses Association after an RN detained by ICE was freed

Soon PBJ Will Switch to A New Reporting System

CMS continues to prepare nursing homes and vendors for the transition of PBJ submissions and reporting from the current Quality Improvement and Evaluation System (QIES) to the Internet Quality Improvement and Evaluation System (iQIES).

Beginning August 17, 2026, all PBJ submissions and reporting activities will transition to iQIES.

To support providers through this transition, CMS's QIES Technical Support Office has released resources to assist facilities:

Electronic Staffing Data Submission: Payroll-Based Journal (PBJ) User Manual; PBJ Error Message User Guide; and PBJ Error Message Reference Guide FINAL.

For technical assistance, contact the QIES Help Desk at:

igies@cms.hhs.gov or
(800)339-9313.

AHCA/NCAL, 08/04/2026

Nurses Rally to Protest RN Getting "ICE'd"

Nurses at Maine Medical Center held a protest outside the Portland hospital Wednesday morning, continuing to call for the release of a colleague who was detained by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

Maine's Total Coverage has confirmed that Debora Kapisha, a registered nurse from Zambia was detained by ICE as she was traveling through Boston's Logan International Airport.

ICE said her visa expired in November 2024. But Maine Health says Kapisha was authorized to work in the US until 2030.

The nurses are also calling on Maine Medical Center to sponsor Kapisha for permanent residency.

"Nurses like her are not easy to replace" said Abbey Nelson, an RN at Maine Medical Center about RN Debora Kapisha who is from Zambia, and has been detained by ICE.

WMTW-TV, 08/06/2026

FOLLOW UP: Nurse Freed From ICE Detention

One day after nurses and union members rallied in support of detained Maine Medical Center nurse Debora Kapisha, the union announced Thursday that she was released by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and is back home.

Maine State Nurses Association, organized the protest rally within 24 hours of learning Kapisha had been detained.

She is a Zambian national who had been granted asylum in the U.S.

ICE's online detainee database no longer shows Kapisha in the system.

Maine Morning Star, 08/06/2026

It Just Could Be Solution To the TPS Problem

Senators John Curtis (R-UT) and Mark Kelly (D-AZ) have introduced legislation, which would allow states to sponsor foreign workers.

States opt in to the program, and the Department of Homeland Security must approve any application for a state-

sponsored program that is adopted by the state legislature and meets a few other minimal requirements.

States could sponsor immigrants who were in the U.S. as of December 31, 2016, even if they are now in the country illegally.

The foreign workers would receive a status valid for 3 years, renewable, contingent on continuous residence in the sponsoring state.

Cato Institute, 08/03/2026

Sign of the Times Delivering Meds by Drone

Cleveland Clinic is now delivering certain medications to patients' homes via drones, marking the start of the first long-term deployment of a prescription drug drone delivery program by a U.S. health system.

The first successful deliveries were made last week in and around Beachwood. The service is operated by drone delivery company Zipline.

The service is currently focused on deliveries that are within a five-mile radius of Cleveland Clinic's Beachwood Administrative Campus, which serves as the drones' home base.

Over time, Cleveland Clinic plans to expand to additional locations and include delivery of other medications, lab samples and medically tailored meals

Cleveland Clinic news release, 08/03/2026

Like Fighting Fire with Fire Fighting AI with AI

Managed care has forever changed how nursing homes allocate resources.

AI-powered documentation and payment tools should actually reduce administrative burdens and let clinical experts get back to shaping and providing clinical care.

Nowhere may that be more true than in managed Medicaid and Medicare Advantage, where insurers are already putting AI to work for them.

Artificial intelligence may not immediately restore team members to the frontlines, but experts say it already is helping with case management.

McKnight's, 07/31/2026

IN THE TRENCHES

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

AMERICA: Bank of America CEO Brian Moynihan said the company is spending more than \$250 million annually to provide GLP-1 weight loss medications to its workforce. Moynihan told CNBC the expense has surged from zero about five years ago, but called it a "good investment." Moynihan cited potential near- and long-term health benefits for employees, such as reduced incidents of heart issues, as key drivers for absorbing the costs (*CNBC*).

ENGLAND: More than 150 deaths have been linked to weight loss shots, according to figures published by the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA). Patients using weight loss medication have filed about 150,000 reports of adverse reactions (*The Independent*).

THE WORLD: Chronic viral infections are ubiquitous in humans, with individuals carrying multiple viruses that can reactivate during physiological stress, including severe illness. Notably, SARS-CoV-2 infection has been shown to reactivate chronic viruses. Severe COVID may awaken dormant viruses, leading to autoimmune disease, long COVID, and other long-term conditions (*Nature*).

NEW YORK CITY: A judge has given John Gotti's grandson, Carmine Agnello, an ultimatum: go through with his oft-delayed kidney transplant to his mom, Victoria Gotti, by Monday, or report to prison to start his sentence. Agnello was supposed to start serving a 15-month sentence for COVID fraud back on June 20, got a two-month reprieve so he could give his ailing mother a kidney (*Union Bulletin*).

CALIFORNIA: This year has the potential to be the worst in the U.S. in two decades for West Nile virus, a pathogen that mostly lives and breeds among birds and mosquitoes but can cause a deadly neurological disease in humans. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has reported 113 cases of

West Nile virus in humans this year – the highest midyear count in more than two decades (*The San Francisco Chronicle*).

PORTLAND, Ore: This spring, two children attended a Portland-area school while infected with measles. Both were exposed at home and were showing symptoms. The kids were contacts of a known measles case that public health officials were monitoring. Adults in the household were told to keep the children home from school if they developed symptoms. But, according to Multnomah County Health Officer Dr. Richard Bruno, that didn't happen, and the children were sent to school without public health's knowledge (*OPB*).

THE WORLD: Climate change and rapid urbanization are reshaping how dengue spreads in low- and middle-income countries. Dengue virus is spread by *Aedes* mosquitoes. Researchers led by a team from Georgetown University reviewed 65 published studies 65% of which tied rising temperatures to increased disease risk (*PLOS Neglected Tropical*).

NEW YORK: Health officials in New York City have confirmed a seventh death in the Legionnaires disease outbreak in two neighborhoods on Manhattan's Upper East Side. A total of 92 people have been sickened in the outbreak of the severe type of pneumonia, which is caused by breathing in water vapor containing *Legionella* bacteria. Five people remain in the hospital. No new cases have been identified since July 21. Fifty-nine cooling towers have tested culture positive, confirming the presence of live *Legionella*. All have since been cleaned and disinfected (*NYC Health*).

AMERICA: West Nile virus was the most commonly reported mosquito-borne disease in the U.S. in 2024 accounting for 92% of all arboviral diseases. Powassan virus infections, which are transmitted to humans from ticks, hit a new record high that same year but accounted for only 3% of the arboviral illnesses. Arboviral diseases are caused by bites from mosquitoes or ticks (*CMS Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*).

PENNSYLVANIA: In the past week, the state had the lion's share of new measles cases, at 28 (183 overall). There were also 7 new cases in Washington (65 overall), 5 in Oregon (38 overall), and 2 in Utah (713 overall). The Pan American Health Organization will assess the situation in the U.S., and if the analyses show that measles has spread continuously for a year, the country will likely lose its measles-free status (*MedPage Today*).

CONGO: A plan to repurpose an existing Ebola vaccine to help protect frontline health workers in the Democratic Republic of Congo is moving ahead as researchers seek ways to blunt a fast-spreading outbreak for which no approved shot exists. The Africa CDC plans to present evidence to the World Health Organization's vaccine advisers as it seeks to test whether Merck & Co.'s Ebola vaccine, *Ervebo*, can provide at least partial protection against the Ebola virus (*Bloomberg*).

CONGO: The Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo has expanded to become the country's largest ever, with infections continuing to accelerate and the virus spreading across five provinces. As of July 30, a total of 3,605 cases and 1,587 deaths have been reported. The outbreak has now surpassed the country's devastating 2018-20 epidemic, which was previously its biggest outbreak, it said (*Bloomberg*).

MARYLAND: The Maryland Department of Health announced Friday an individual living in Maryland tested positive for the West Nile virus. This is the first confirmed human case in the state this year (*Fox 45 News*).

MICHIGAN: Two people have died in the cyclospora outbreak in Michigan, the first deaths confirmed in the U.S. related to the microscopic parasite. The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services said both people had underlying health conditions that may have been impacted by the intestinal illness and dehydration. The department said it would not provide additional information about the deaths (*AP*).

Senate Finds Fauci In Contempt of Congress

A Senate committee voted to hold Anthony Fauci, in contempt of Congress and refer him to the Justice Department for potential prosecution over his refusal to answer questions at a hearing last week focused on his handling of the COVID-19 pandemic.

At that hearing Fauci invoked his Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination more than 100 times.

Sen. Rand Paul, MD (R-Ky.), the committee chairman, has said that constitutional protection did not apply since Fauci last year received a pardon from Democratic President Joe Biden and thus did not have to worry about the threat of prosecution.

MedPage Today, 08/06/2026

Pandemic-Popular Air Filters May Not Work

Air purifiers had a moment during the COVID-19 pandemic. Interest in the devices spiked when research found that high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filters could reduce levels of the virus that causes COVID-19 up to 99%.

Many schools, medical facilities, and businesses installed air purifiers to reduce the risk of illness.

Studies of air filters in the real world, however, have been less promising. A new study from the United Kingdom found that portable air purifiers didn't prevent respiratory infections in nursing home residents.

CIDRAP, 08/02/2026

More Surveyors Put Iowa Back in Compliance

An audit released Monday shows the state has made "substantial improvements" in efforts to inspect nursing homes and now meets federal requirements, state Auditor Rob Sand said.

In 2024 SNFs in Iowa were inspected by the state on average every 17.1 months.

But according to state Auditor Rob Sand Iowa's nursing homes are now being inspected on average every 12 months,

bringing the state into compliance with CMS requirements.

The main reason Iowa came into compliance is that there was a substantial increase in the people doing state surveys.

Iowa Capital Dispatch, August 4, 2026

Adamere Getting Out - 129 Employees to Get the Axe

Oregon-based Avamere plans to lay off 129 employees as a result of its planned exit from the skilled nursing business and the Oct. 1 transition 26 of its facilities to Cascadia Healthcare, Ensign and Sabra Healthcare REIT.

CEO Mary Kofstad said the senior living and post-acute care company has been involved in "restructuring activities over the past several months."

The company anticipates laying off 129 employees starting Sept. 1 and more on Oct. 1 and over the next several months on a rolling basis.

The separations are expected to be permanent. The jobs appear to be mostly administrative.

Portland Business Journal, 08/04/2026

Suspicion of DWI After Crash Into an ALF

A driver is in custody on suspicion of driving while intoxicated after he crashed his van into a senior living facility in Galloway Township, NJ Sunday night.

The initial call to the fire Department indicated a vehicle was on fire in the parking lot of Ridgewood Senior Living. When the trucks arrived, a van was up against the building with fire spreading.

The fire was quickly extinguished. More than 100 residents of the facility were evacuated.

The driver, 40-year-old Eliel Vazquez-Hernandez was charged with DWI, assault by auto, criminal mischief, and causing or risking widespread injury or damage.

CBS News, 08/03/2026

ONE COLUMN

Michigan Atty Gen Sues Owner of Nursing Home Chain

Following a two-year investigation, owner Fahim Uddin of Pioneer Health Care, d/b/a Legacy Healthcare Management, a nursing home chain with nine facilities, has been sued by the Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel.

Nessel said that as a nursing home chain whose residents' care is reimbursed by Medicaid, Uddin's facilities are responsible for tracking hours and reporting costs to the state and to the US Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

The review of employees' time sheets revealed that some employees appeared to have worked more than 24 hours a day or were in two places at once. Pioneer's facilities were chronically understaffed 96% of the time.

Due to the understaffing, the lawsuit alleges, residents "sustained injuries without staff present, developed pressure injuries that went unidentified and untreated, were abandoned and were refused readmission, were ignored when calling for help, were left in soiled linens and briefs,"

From a staffing perspective, the lawsuit specifically alleges Uddin's facilities between 2020 and 2025:

- Failed to meet shift ratios at least 496 times,
- Failed to provide at least 2.25 hours of nursing care PPD at least 1,454 times
- Failed to staff a registered nurse for at least eight consecutive hours a day, seven days a week, as required by federal law on at least 4,658 occasions

The lawsuit also charges Pioneer facilities collected \$111 million in taxpayer dollars even as it left residents untended and unsafe – so much so that some required hospitalization.

Michigan also alleges Uddin funneled nearly \$22 million to his related businesses.

Further, the Attorney General accused Uddin of violating the Michigan Medicaid False Claim Act.

Bridge Michigan, 07/30/2026

Booze in the Building And a Spot on "Today"

Seniors in SNFs and ALFs across Minnesota are raising a glass to Anita LeBrun after her successful push to create what is known as the "Grandparents Happy Hour" bill.

Sheinelle Jones and Craig Melvin honored LeBrun in person with a toast of their own on NBC's TODAY Aug. 3, clinking glasses with the grandmother of five after she received a generous pour of her favorite Barefoot pinot grigio.

LeBrun, 82, fought to change a law after learning that her assisted living facility in Champlin, Minnesota, couldn't legally serve its residents alcohol without securing an additional liquor license first.

Today, 08/03/2026

One Year Ago the CDC Was Under Fire

One year ago, from across the street, a 30-year-old man who believed that the Covid-19 vaccines were harmful and blamed the CDC, sprayed the agency's main campus with more than 500 rounds of ammunition.

A policeman who was first on the scene was killed. The gunman later killed himself.

Today many CDC employees don't feel safe coming to work and say they still feel targeted and undermined by HHS Sec. Kennedy and other federal officials who they say should have had their backs.

President Trump, they note, has never made a statement or issued condolences on the shooting.

CNN, 08/06/2026

The Latest CDC Director Has Been Confirmed

The Senate has confirmed Erica Schwartz for CDC director giving the beleaguered agency its first full-time leader in almost a year.

While the 51-44 vote marked a step toward refilling the depleted ranks of the Trump administration's health care leadership, it didn't fully resolve questions about whether Schwartz could steer clear of political interference.

Senate health committee Chair Bill Cassidy (R-La.), who had been skeptical of Schwartz, said he decided to support her after being assured through their conversations that "she knows what she is doing and will stand against those who do not."

Axios, 08/06/2026

'tis the Season – Better Brush Up on Res. Rights

On July 20, CMS issued a memo regarding the protection of voting rights and autonomy of residents in long term care facilities.

In this newly released memo, CMS reminds providers that residents retain all constitutional and statutory rights, including the right to vote and the right to decline participation in elections.

Providers are reminded that federal regulations prohibit facilities and their staff from interfering with, coercing, or improperly influencing the exercise of resident rights.

And finally, activities surrounding voting should not pressure residents about their voting choices or preferences.

AHCA/NCAL, 07/21/2026

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CBS News, 08/03/2026

Briefly in the News

According to a 2025 federal survey, the number of Americans using marijuana daily or almost daily rose about 21% between 2022 and 2025 - from 17.7 million to approximately 21.4 million. The same survey reveals that 19.9 million people smoke cigarettes and 17.2 million consume alcohol, Fox News (***Fox News***)

The Food and Drug Administration has approved the first mRNA flu vaccine, enabling use of a technology that will make it easier to rapidly target a widely prevalent or particularly virulent strain of the virus. The approval of the vaccine which is manufactured by Moderna, follows a series of blows to mRNA research directed by Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr., including the cancellation of 22 projects meant to develop vaccines (***New York Times***)

Researchers conducted a realist review to determine whether person-centered cultures contribute or do not contribute to the management of depression among older persons. They found that implementing person-centered care cultures in nursing homes helped contribute to the management of depression among residents (***International Journal of Nursing Studies Advances***).

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A study of U.S. children found no evidence linking neonatal male circumcision with autism spectrum disorder, prospective data from the ECHO cohort showed. Among nearly 2,800 boys in 14 ECHO sites, 6% of those who were circumcised had autism compared with 9% of uncircumcised males (***JAMA Pediatrics***).

A peptide vaccine targeting KRAS mutations in pancreatic cancer showed preliminary evidence of activity in a small study of high-risk patients. The vaccine elicited KRAS-specific T-cell responses in 18 of 20 patients with mutations associated with pancreatic ductal adenocarcinoma (***MedPage Today***).