

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

"Many residents may not even be aware of the technology and its capabilities. This is a direct erosion of patient trust" from a report by California Advocates for Nursing Home Reform on nursing home staff wearing Ray-Ban AI sunglasses to secretly record residents

"It is a situation that fills our souls with great sorrow and pain" local mayor of a rural city in Chile where a nursing home fire killed 16 residents

"I think it's dramatically worse, in particular, in healthcare. Foreign attackers are coming in" Shawn Lane, CEO of AP automation company Ottimate on AI-driven scams,

For Now, Whistles Can Keep Right on Blowing

A federal appeals court has rejected arguments that the False Claims Act runs counter to the Constitution.

Providers and healthcare defense attorneys around the country were likely disappointed by the ruling that whistleblowers who bring a case on behalf of the government are not federal "officers" and don't have to be appointed.

That reversed 2024 findings by a lower court that individuals who use the Act's *qui tam* provision are essentially appointing themselves government officials.

The Supreme Court could still weigh in on whether a whistleblower holds the power to sue healthcare providers on behalf of the government.

McKnight's, 09/08/2026

CCRCs See Best \$\$\$ Gains in a Decade

Continued occupancy gains and moderating expense growth, drove broad-based improvement in profitability for CCRCs in fiscal 2025. However, communities with a skilled nursing component tend to have lower ratings.

Fitch Ratings maintained the CCRC outlook as neutral for the second consecutive year.

Previously, the ratings agency had been unwavering in its "deteriorating" outlook for the sector, citing decelerating real estate price growth and inflationary operating expense pressure as its biggest impediments.

CCRCs are benefiting from national real estate trends, which show signs of stabilization. Because many older adults sell their homes to cover the initial entrance fee of a CCRC.

Senior Living, 09/09/2026

Half of Folks with HIV Will Be SNF-Ready Soon

A study by researchers at Johns Hopkins University predicts the median age of adults with diagnosed HIV will rise across 24 states from 51 in 2025 to 61 in 2040 and nearly half of people living with HIV will be 65+.

Those 65+ will total nearly 459,000, many with complex medical and social needs. Many will need nursing home care.

That means providers will increasingly need to consider HIV alongside chronic conditions, functional needs and other health issues that already drive demand for skilled nursing and long-term care.

McKnight's, 09/09/2026

Shades Your Staff Wear Could Be AI Recording

It's happening in California and might be happening in nursing homes in other states, as well.

Some employees are wearing Non-prescription Ray-Ban Meta AI sunglasses while on duty. The glasses are being used to record unsuspecting residents, a possible violation of privacy laws,

including those which address a resident's expectation of privacy.

There is no clear indication a recording is in progress - just a small white light that can be easily covered.

The California Advocates for Nursing Home Reform reported recently that the recording can be turned on with a simple voice command.

OB Rag, 08/31/82026

Skilled Nursing Showed Paltry Job Growth in August

Job growth at skilled nursing facilities essentially stayed unchanged in August compared to the previous month, adding just 100 new jobs.

Seasonally adjusted employment for SNFs rose from 1.5901 million in July to 1.5902 million in August.

On a longer-term basis, skilled nursing employment remains above year-ago levels.

Seasonally adjusted employment stood at 1.5574 million in August 2025, compared with 1.5902 million in August 2026, posting an increase of roughly 32,800 jobs, or 2.1%, over the year.

The August results mark a significant slowdown from July when SNFs added 3200 jobs.

Skilled Nursing News, 09/04/2026

Does CMS Need New Rule To Kick Out Providers? Nope!

A handful of the nation's leading consumer advocacy groups are joining a chorus of voices objecting to a proposed rule giving CMS expanded authority to remove providers from federal healthcare programs.

Changes would make it easier for regulators to remove skilled nursing providers from the Medicare program and extend the period for which CMS can claw back fraudulent payments.

Consumer Voice, et al told CMS in a letter that it already has the authority it needs under current Medicare regulations to prevent owners and operators of "chronically and consistently poor-performing nursing homes" from continuing to operate and expanding their networks.

McKnight's, 09/02/2026

IN THE TRENCHES

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

NEW YORK CITY: Mayor Zohran Mamdani accused previous New York City leaders of lying about air quality safety after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, resulting in people developing serious illnesses years later. "People got sick because the leaders they trusted lied and told them they were safe to breathe in toxic air," he said at a news conference at City Hall, surrounded by politicians, relatives of those who died on Sept. 11 and advocates for the health of those now suffering from illnesses that surfaced years after the attacks (*The New York Times*).

WASHINGTON, D.C: HHS Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. recently hired Lt. Col. Theresa Long, MD, MPH, who has no training in vaccines or viruses, to investigate unsubstantiated claims about service members dying after being vaccinated against COVID. Long has a history of questioning the safety of COVID vaccines and parroting Kennedy's view that vaccines may cause autism. She's even testified that she knows of 28 service members who died as a result of the vaccines and many more who lost pregnancies (*New York Times*).

4 WESTERN STATES: The FDA and CDC are investigating illnesses in a multistate outbreak of Salmonella linked to recalled broccoli sprouts grown by Evergreen Fresh Sprouts, of Moyie Springs, ID. A total of 22 people infected with the outbreak strain of *Salmonella* have been reported from four states (ID, MT, UT, WA). Of 19 people interviewed, all 19 (100%) reported eating sprouts and 17 (89%) reported specifically eating broccoli sprouts. There have been two hospitalizations and no deaths (*FDA.gov*).

CONGO: Personal protective equipment is no longer in short supply. Humanitarian funding has poured in. New health centers are up and running, and vaccine trials are underway. Yet in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ebola continues to outpace

all efforts to contain it, and the deaths keep mounting (*NBC News*)

WASHINGTON, D.C: The International Monetary Fund is considering making pandemic preparedness reforms part of its financing program for the Democratic Republic of Congo, as the country's worsening Ebola epidemic exposes weaknesses in how it funds and responds to health emergencies. Discussions have focused on developing a strategy for financing pandemic prevention and response (*Bloomberg*).

WASHINGTON, D.C: The Supreme Court has denied a New York woman's bid to send her son to kindergarten without receiving state-required vaccines, in a case that highlights the limits of the court's push to expand religious rights. In a one-line order, the high court effectively sided with state and local officials, who argued that a religious exemption would undermine their attempts to prevent the spread of disease among children and the general public (*The Washington Post*).

NEW YORK CITY: The city released about 170,000 pages of documents related to post-9/11 air quality and health risks- a trove of paperwork containing some notes suggesting city officials knew of the potential environmental dangers and legal exposure in the early aftermath of the terror attacks. One undated internal document listed various potential grounds for lawsuits against the city, including health advisories that caused people to return to the area too soon, causing toxic exposure, rescue workers being provided with faulty equipment, and police failing to secure businesses from looters (*NBC News*).

MINNESOTA: Health officials are warning consumers not to eat certain brands of alfalfa sprouts that have been tied to an unusual outbreak involving different disease-causing bacteria. Officials say 23 people in Minnesota have become ill with either E. coli or salmonella infections, with two of them hospitalized. Three people had salmonella, and one of them also had a strain of E. coli bacteria called STEC O168:H8. Seven other people were sickened with a different version of E. coli and 13 more had yet another strain (*AP*).

AMERICA: The contaminated lettuce problem has not gone away. The FDA previously confirmed distribution of Taylor Farms tainted lettuce to 31 states. Now the FDA said recalled lettuce also may have been distributed in seven additional states – California, Delaware, North Dakota, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Vermont and Washington state, as well as the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico (*The Washington Post*).

THE WORLD: The COVID-19 vaccine may give brain cancer patients a bonus shot at survival. Patients who received the vaccine within 100 days before biopsy or tumor surgery lived twice as long as those who didn't get the shot, scientists report July 31 at medRxiv.org. This link existed only for COVID-19 vaccines, not other vaccines that the team investigated (*Science News*).

CALIFORNIA: The state will begin phasing out paraquat, a powerful weedkiller associated with birth defects, thyroid issues and other serious health problems. The California Department of Pesticide Regulation said last week all manufacturers of pesticide products containing the active ingredient have voluntarily agreed to withdraw the product from the market. Paraquat is banned in more than 60 countries due to its toxicity but is still allowed in the U.S., and no state uses more of it than California (*Los Angeles Times*).

WASHINGTON, D.C: Lawyers for Anthony Fauci have launched a legal defense fund for the former top U.S. infectious disease expert, saying that the need to respond to a growing number of state and federal investigations related to his handling of the COVID-19 pandemic will require substantial resources. His lawyers say the mounting investigations could result in lengthy and costly legal proceedings despite Biden's pardon (*Reuters*).

THE WORLD: The newer shingles vaccine has been turning heads since its link to lower dementia rates was reported two years ago. Now the same research team behind that observation has found an association between receiving the Shingrix shot and a reduced risk of heart disease and dementia (*Stat*).

Americans Trust Their Docs But Not their Government

A five-year poll conducted by the Annenberg Public Policy Center from April 2021 to August 2026 shows Americans' confidence in their personal healthcare providers to inform them about matters of public health remains high.

In August 2026, 87% of poll respondents say they are confident that their doctor, nurse, or other primary healthcare provider is providing trustworthy information about matters of public health.

But confidence in the CDC (72% to 61%), FDA (73% to 59%) and NIH (74% to 61%) has dropped precipitously since February 2025, when Robert F. Kennedy Jr. was named head of HHS.

CIDRAP, 09/02/2026

N.C. May Get Land from Feds for New Vets Home

The N.C. State Veterans Home in Fayetteville was closed in 2024, after state officials identified "significant repair needs and structural deficiencies." Now a new bill in Congress would provide the state with federal land to build a replacement home.

A replacement for the now-shuttered state-run nursing home for veterans in Fayetteville could bring residents back onto familiar ground for many: Fort Bragg.

Congressman Richard Hudson, a North Carolina Republican, has filed a bill to give the state a tract of about 20 acres of federal land that's now part of the north end of the sprawling base.

WUNC News, 09/03/2026

Insurer Sanctioned for Cutting AL Bennies to Thousands

California ordered Health Net to fix how it's handling the termination of assisted living services for low-income residents after the insurer's abrupt decision left patients and providers scrambling.

The state's action requires Health Net to extend services for all members until the end of the year, rather than stopping some as soon as October.

Providers and family members said they got little or no warning, leaving them confused and panicked about finding other arrangements.

If Health Net does not extend benefits and create individualized transition plans for each affected member, the state may levy \$25,000 per member per day fines.

Mendocino Voice, 09/10/2026

LTC Surveys in NJ Falling 'Significantly Short'

In a situation that is reflected in other states, nursing home surveys in New Jersey have fallen behind state and federal regulatory requirements.

The state auditor reported the Department of Health is "falling significantly short" of the required survey at least every 15 months with an average of 12 months.

As of February, NJ facilities were inspected every 20 months on average, and more than a quarter of nursing homes hadn't been inspected in at least two years.

State officials say the delays are due to Covid backlogs, hiring freezes and loss of staff.

Skilled Nursing News, 09/09/2026

Social Worker Accused Of Stealing \$12K from Client

Genna Louise Christian, 41, a former employee at two Duluth, Minn. adult care homes, is accused of stealing more than \$12,000 from a client's account.

The client is described as having "severe intellectual disabilities, limited communication skills, and does not read, write, or recognize letters or numbers."

The investigation found Christian made a "multitude" of purchases at fast food establishments, convenience stores, Chinese buffets and Mexican restaurants while the victim was documented by staff as eating at the facility.

Christian, a licensed social worker is scheduled to appear in court Sept. 21.

Duluth News Tribune, 09/10/2026

ONE COLUMN

It's Open Season on Private Equity Companies

The number of private equity-involved healthcare deals has declined since last year, and the value of those deals in the first half of 2026 is lower than it was for the same time in 2025 - possibility due to recent state laws.

In the past decade, private equity (PE) investors have spent \$1 trillion acquiring healthcare companies. Yet, a 2022 Moody's Investors Service report found that almost 90% of financially stressed health care companies are owned by private equity.

In recent years at least 25 states have proposed or passed laws increasing oversight of healthcare transactions restricting the power of companies that are not run by physicians to control medical practices, or limiting how PE can operate. And state oversight has made purchases take longer and cost more.

California, Oregon and Rhode Island each had new measures take effect this year that require more documentation and transparency on the various deals among healthcare companies.

Lawmakers in Hawaii, Indiana, New York, Pennsylvania, Vermont and Virginia all proposed bills this year that would add oversight of healthcare transactions or limit how PE is allowed to operate.

Some states have targeted PE in specific areas of healthcare: Connecticut passed what may be the strongest law in the country to address accountability and transparency for private equity-owned nursing homes.

Proponents of private equity say its investments fill critical gaps in the U.S. health care system, providing much-needed capital to help providers upgrade technology and streamline their processes. But research has found few positive effects.

One large 2023 study found that PE involvement increased the nursing home death rate by 11%. Other studies have linked PE involvement to increases in emergency room visits and rising Medicare costs.

PitchBook, August 2026

Success Story: Special Focus Facility to 5-Star Rating

In January, Majestic Care of Columbus (Ohio) graduated from the Special Focus Facilities list after a 31-month stint on the federal watch list.

But the 120-bed nursing home was just getting the turnaround started. In April, it earned a coveted 5-star overall rating from CMS cementing a true recovery.

Now, Majestic CEO Paul Pruitt said, comes the truly hard part: converting the strategies that helped transform Majestic's operations into repeatable, systemic changes that drive quality across the chain's 41 nursing homes.

"Characters can change, location can change. All those factors can change, but the systems have to be sustainable."

McKnight's, 08/2026

Neb. Law Changes Payments For Complex Medical Needs

Gov. Jim Pillen has signed a bill to help Nebraskans with complex medical needs.

Under the new law rehab centers and nursing facilities that treat severe brain and spinal cord injuries will no longer have to go through the state's Medicaid managed care organizations. Instead, payments will come directly from the state or federal government.

The Legislature passed the law unanimously earlier this year.

Officials say the change will impact fewer than 150 Nebraskans.

WOWT-TV, 09/11/2026

Ohio Provider Hit with Medusa Ransomware Attack

Atrium Centers, a Columbus, Ohio-based skilled nursing care provider, has alerted patients about an October 2025 cybersecurity incident.

Assisted by third-party cybersecurity experts, Atrium Centers determined that an unauthorized third party accessed, viewed or copied files containing patient and employee data.

The files were reviewed and found to contain names, contact information, demographic information, dates of birth, Social Security numbers, driver's license numbers, patient ID numbers, medical record numbers, medical information, health insurance information, financial account information, claims information.

The file review is ongoing, and the number of affected individuals has yet to be publicly disclosed.

HIPAA Journal, 09/01/2026

Neighbors Help Evacuate Residents in ALF Fire

Seven people were hospitalized as a precaution after a fire tore through an assisted living facility in Glendale on Friday, gutting the home and displacing its residents.

Dramatic video from the scene showed neighbors and first responders helping evacuate elderly residents from the house as flames and heavy smoke engulfed the building.

Firefighters said two nurses and six elderly patients were inside the home when the fire started. All were taken to the hospital and are expected to recover.

Firefighters extinguished the blaze, but the home was destroyed by the fire.

KABC-TV, 09/12/2026

Fire Kills 16 in Chilean Nursing Home

A fire at a nursing home in the Araucania region of Chile – 400 miles south of the capital Santiago – killed 16 elderly residents and left others hospitalized.

A total of 26 elderly residents were in the nursing home. The ten that survived were taken to the local hospital, the statement said.

An official at the regional health secretariat said there had been previous operational problems at the care home. "It was an unregulated facility; it had faced administrative proceedings and fines since 2019, and was a repeat offender," he said.

The cause of the fire remained unclear.

Bangkok Post, 09/12/2026

Briefly in the News

Medicare paid an estimated \$380 million over a 6-year period for acquiring organs that weren't transplanted in Medicare enrollees. Fifty-five of the 180 sampled organs were not used even though they were reported as "Medicare usable organs," which resulted in \$2,847,855 in Medicare reimbursement to certified transplant centers. Medicare reimbursed the transplant centers more than \$3 billion for the acquisition of approximately 39,000 organs in calendar year 2023 (*HHS-OIG*).

Aetna's Medicare Advantage, the CVS Health subsidiary will not pay commissions to marketers for selling 123 Medicare Advantage plans in 33 states for the 2027 plan year. The freeze affects policies in nearly 780 counties, about one-fifth of which are located in Georgia. Aetna also will not compensate agents and brokers for new enrollments into standalone Medicare Part D prescription drug plans, the notice says (*Modern Healthcare*).

An Eli Lilly weight-loss drug called *retatrutide*, that hasn't even been submitted for FDA review is already spawning a rash of cheap knockoffs that are being heavily touted on social media. Eli Lilly recently filed six lawsuits against med spas, at least one compounding pharmacy and other vendors that the drugmaker said are stoking a black market for counterfeit *retatrutide* by pitching it as a weight-loss "hack" (*Axios*).

A group of Democratic lawmakers is calling for the Trump administration to suspend a new surveillance program it quietly launched to collect the personal and identifiable health data of Americans who visit emergency rooms. KFF Health News first reported that the Consumer Product Safety Commission - a federal agency tasked with monitoring injuries from household items - was pressuring hospitals to provide a private company with personally identifiable health information for analysis. The rollout of the program has inspired broad pushback from hospitals and privacy advocates (*KFF Health News*).