

- **Steward HC saga in Mass continues.** On March 8, 2024, Senators Warren and Markey sent the following letter: "Steward's Massachusetts hospitals are in deep financial distress and appear to be in danger of closure because of years of mismanagement, private equity schemes, and executive profiteering. You have run this hospital system for 14 years, and reportedly have had access to two private jets while owning two luxury yachts," the letter said. "Meanwhile, suppliers were unpaid, the system piled on debt, and patients in Steward hospitals ... suffered because of inadequate care."
- **A physician resident is suing the health system (Tenet)** that owns his former employer, Detroit Medical Center, alleging he was fired in retaliation for notifying his supervisor of the mistreatment of a patient who became quadriplegic, the Detroit Metro Times reported March 8.
- **Sutter Health** recently purchased five GenesisCare radiation oncology centers, including two on the Central Coast. The radiation centers are located in San Luis Obispo and Templeton. The health care company purchased three more centers in Modesto, Santa Cruz and Stockton.
- **Medicare announced on March 9th** that it will make advance payments to physician groups, hospitals, and other health care facilities as part of its response to the February 21 **Change Healthcare cyberattack**.
- **UnitedHealth Group's acquisitions** have catapulted the company to the #5 spot on the Fortune 500 list of American companies, based on revenue. Only Walmart, Exxon Mobile, Amazon and Apple are bigger.
- **2023 study found that Medical Debt** contributed to 41% of personal bankruptcies in the U.S.
- **2023 Profits:** United Health Group \$22.4 Billion, CVS Health \$8.3 Billion HCA Healthcare \$5.2 Billion, Kaiser Permanente \$4.1 Billion, Tenet Healthcare \$1.3 Billion.
- **DOJ recovered approximately \$2.69 billion in False Claims Act cases in 2023.**
- **For-profit groups own about 72% of the roughly 15,000 nursing homes in the United States.** which serve more than 1.3 million residents. To boost profits, many for-profit operators set up a network of related companies to provide fee-based services such as management, physical therapy, and staffing. They also may sell a nursing home's real estate to a sister company, which then charges high rent. These payments cut into the available operating funds to provide adequate staffing and quality care.
- **Aledade Inc. that oversees the nation's largest independent network of primary care medical practices** is facing a whistleblower lawsuit alleging it cheated Medicare out of millions of dollars using billing software "rigged" to make patients appear sicker than they are.
- **A Chartis financial report** concluded that half of rural hospitals lost money in 2023, up from 43% the previous year. It also identified 418 rural hospitals across the U.S. that are "vulnerable to closure."
- **Physicians at Salem (Mass.) Hospital,** a Mass General Brigham facility, have voted to form a union with Council 93 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees. In 1998, the AMA estimated that between 14,000 and 20,000 physicians belonged to unions. That number appeared to grow to reach **67,673** in 2019.
- **CMS claims** that Asheville's Mission Hospital has violated the **Emergency Medical Treatment & Labor Act (EMTALA)**, and threatened to withdraw the system's federal funding, according to a letter obtained by Asheville Watchdog. **EMTALA ensures public access to emergency services regardless of ability to pay.**
- **MedPAC recommends** ASCs be required by Congress to submit cost data. The group contended that because ASCs are not required by Congress to submit cost data — it cannot accurately evaluate how Medicare's current fee for service rates match with the costs faced by ASCs.
- **AstraZeneca** is capping out-of-pocket costs for asthma inhalers and related medication at no more than \$35 per month.