



HCCA's interns built a robust library of 2,000 compliance documents for you

Rob Tungseth and Tescia Veldhouse

See page 16

23

**Audit
committee's
role
in
compliance**

Kelly Nueske

29

**Who "owns"
social media—
you or your
employees?**

Karen R. Glickstein and
Latrice N. McDowell

35

**Overpayments
and other common
reasons for denial
of Medicare
enrollment**

Lester J. Perling

39

**DOJ seeks reversal
of decision that could
significantly impair
False Claims Act
enforcement**

Adam S. Lurie and Jodi L. Avergun



Rob Tungseth, JD, HLC
Tescia Veldhouse

an interview by Brook Matthiesen

Meet HCCA's summer interns

This interview with **Rob Tungseth** and **Tescia Veldhouse** was conducted early in the summer of 2013 by **Brook Matthiesen** (brook.matthiesen@corporatecompliance.org), SCCE/HCCA Communications, Public Relations, and Public Affairs Specialist.

BM: Rob and Tescia, thank you for taking the time for this interview. Would you give us a general overview of your legal and healthcare compliance background?

RT: I graduated from Hamline University School of Law with a Health Law Certificate and completed internships at HealthPartners and the Health Care Compliance Association.

TV: I graduated from Hamline Undergrad in May 2011 with a major in Legal Studies, English, and a Paralegal Certificate. While working on my certificate, I interned at two separate law firms in and around the Twin Cities that deal mostly with

Family Law. After entering law school in the fall of 2011, I obtained a clerkship with a law firm in Minneapolis that specializes in Social Security and Disability. In addition to working with HCCA during the summer, I clerked for HealthPartners in its General Counsel's Office, as well as a law firm in Minneapolis. I have little-to-no practical experience in healthcare compliance, which is why I applied for the internship with HCCA. I wanted experience in the field before fully committing with a career. I wanted to get my feet wet, in a sense.

BM: Why was building the online library important to HCCA members and why did HCCA put importance on this project?

RT: Having the library open and easily accessible benefits everyone. The library is open

to everyone and organized in a manner that enhances members' experience. Now, whether a member is looking for a particular document or doing a cursory search for advice, they will be able to find what they are looking for.

TV: Building the library was important to HCCA members because it brings documents from a variety of folders into one central database. Also, search terms were attached to each document to aid members in searching the database for a document pertaining to a specific topic. The new library allows the documents to be accessed in an easier, more effective fashion. Rob and I also reviewed each document to make sure the information and content were relevant and up-to-date. Members are now able to access up-to-date, relevant documents simply by typing in a search term.

BM: What was involved with building the document library?

RT: A lot of reading, which thankfully law school prepares you for. Tescia and I read thousands of articles, summarized them, and attached key words for search engine optimization. This means that anyone can now use common words, acronyms, or phrases like "HIPAA" or "audit" to find articles.

TV: What Rob and I did in building the library was review documents that had been posted to HCCA's online library. We renamed each file so the file name appropriately represented the document, attached search terms, and noted the date and author of the document. We took this information and logged it on a spreadsheet that we then used to create the document library that members currently can access online.

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BM: Did your legal and/or healthcare compliance background help in discerning the value and merit of the documents?

RT: Absolutely! It was great to put my legal education to use. If I did not have education in health law and compliance, most articles and acronyms would have seemed like a foreign language. In order for the library to be useful

to the members, a background in health law and compliance was necessary.

TV: Absolutely! Being able to quickly identify the topic, coverage, and application of the document was key. Without this knowledge, the

process of categorizing the documents into specific topic and practice areas would have been much more difficult.

BM: What documents would you like to call attention to as most valuable and helpful to HCCA members?

RT: I found the surveys and articles relating to HIPAA especially helpful. I represented a client in law school where protected health information (PHI) became an issue. The laws and regulations concerning this area are complex, and I think the library is full of great information to help professionals tackle these issues with confidence.

TV: There are multiple great examples of policies and procedures on the website. If a compliance officer is attempting to implement or revamp a policy or procedure, the HCCA website is the place to look.

BM: You attended HCCA's Compliance Institute earlier this year. How did connecting with members and participating in the sessions help you with building the document library?

RT: Completing the library and attending the sessions taught me there is always more to learn. The professionals who attended the CI are successful for this very reason—their desire to learn has not decreased as their knowledge on healthcare compliance progressively increases.

TV: An aspect of the Institute that aided me in building the library is being able to put a face to the name of a document's authors. After reviewing document after document, it was helpful to have personally met the person who drafted the policy, PowerPoint, or article.

BM: How did connecting with members and attending sessions enrich your understanding of the compliance profession in the healthcare industry?

RT: Attending the CI really cemented my desire to work in healthcare. I met so many amazing individuals who were eager to learn more so that they could better serve their hospitals and, ultimately, their patients.

TV: Attending the Institute gave me a wonderful introduction into the compliance profession. Meeting so many great people who work in the field, and hearing their stories, gave me insight into the struggles and joys of the position.

BM: What's next in your careers and career development?

RT: Now that I have successfully completed law school, I look forward to a career in health law and compliance. My education and employment experience have prepared me to take this next step, and I am eager for new opportunities.

TV: Since interning at HCCA, I obtained an internship with the General Counsel's Office at HealthPartners for the summer. Once school starts up again, I'll start a Judicial Clerkship at the Tax Court here in Minneapolis. After the clerkship wraps up, I'll start the journey of preparing for and taking the Bar exam. After that, I'm open to any experience God decides to bring my way.

BM: Are you currently or are you planning to become CCB Certified in Healthcare Compliance?

RT: Upon passing the Bar, I will need to take one more class at Hamline University School of Law in order to sit for the certification. I have been in discussions with professors at the school to complete these steps, so that I may sit for the exam.

TV: I am planning on becoming CCB Certified after graduation, since it's an additional certification that will open doors and bring new opportunities. Hamline Law offers a certificate in healthcare, as well as a certificate in compliance, both of which I'll be obtaining during my time as a law student. If a student obtains both certificates, they're adequately prepared to become CCB certified.

BM: Are you planning to continue in the healthcare compliance profession? If so, how?

RT: I am eagerly looking for placements within the healthcare compliance profession. My previous supervisor at HCCA, Eric Newman, recently moved to a Privacy Officer position and has spoken highly of this opportunity, so I look forward to taking the next step as well.

TV: To be completely honest, I'm not sure. I'm at a place in my life where I have a better idea of what areas of law I don't like, rather than the ones I like. So, I'd be lying if I said I knew exactly what practice area I would like to go into, yet that being said, the career opportunities offered in compliance are unmatched by any other practice area. It's a booming industry, and students are silly not to note this increase of job opportunities.

BM: On a personal note, what book that you have read left the biggest impression on you?

RT: *The Purpose Driven Life* by Rick Warren has helped me cope with some of the most challenging moments in my life. The advice and guidance it offers has taught me that life

is not always fair or good, but the way one deals with these trials makes you who you are. It has also shown me that time is precious, and deciding what to do with this gift is something that should not be taken for granted.

TV: This is probably the easiest question of the entire interview, and will probably yield the most cliché answer. For me, the book that has had the biggest impression on me is *The Bible*.

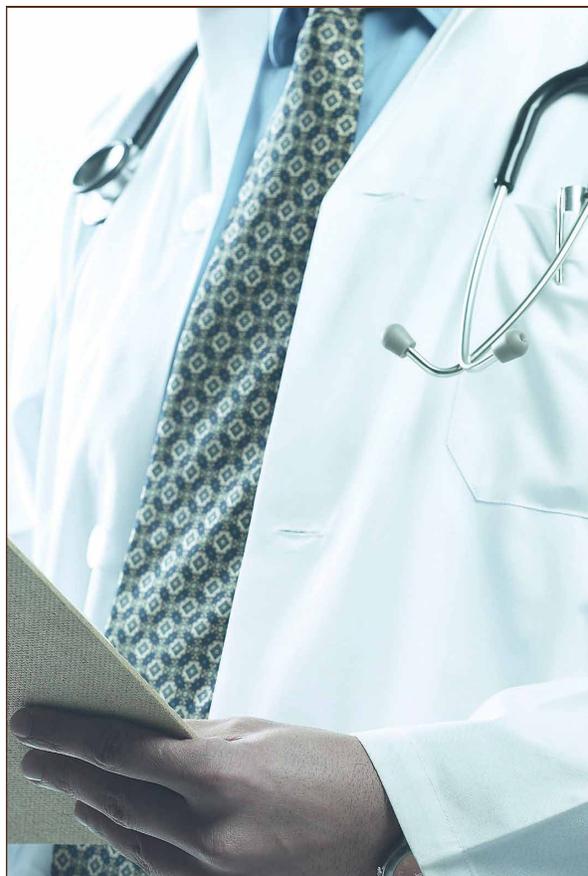
BM: How has your internship with HCCA helped you to attain or clarify your future goals?

RT: I could not be more thankful for my time at HCCA. The people are amazing and all truly do their work altruistically. Because it is a non-profit, HCCA has the advantage of serving its members above everything. CEO, Roy Snell, has shown me how an effective leader can make or break a company. There was not a time I was worried about asking a question or seeking advice from him, because he cares about every employee. His leadership has clarified my goal to pay my dues and earn people's respect within the profession, without sacrificing my personal beliefs.

TV: My internship at HCCA has given me a unique look into the operations and dynamics of the compliance industry. A person working at HCCA's headquarters cannot help but interact and learn the "behind the scenes" operations that occur. This experience is invaluable. Being an intern at HCCA has also given me an opportunity to explore my interests in healthcare compliance, for which I'm truly grateful! ☺

Since the interview, Rob Tungseth has passed the bar, and has been offered a position with Minnesota-based United Health Group.

HCCA's new document library can be accessed at www.hcca-info.org by clicking on "Resources" and then "Library." The library contains more than 2,000 compliance-related documents, and is organized into more than 20 topical areas. It is also keyword searchable.



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