

## CEP Magazine – September 2019 Compassion in compliance

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I recently heard a radio program about a doctor and nurse who created the first ward for AIDS patients in the 1980s. The nurse noted how important it was to him to treat patients suffering from HIV and AIDS with compassion.<sup>[1]</sup> In nursing, compassionate care is defined as a “holistic approach to nursing—being present, doing for patients and forming a connection.”<sup>[2]</sup> Although nurses must have technical expertise, they also need to demonstrate compassionate care for their patients.<sup>[3]</sup>

Clearly, being a corporate compliance professional is not a life-or-death situation like nursing. However, listening to the nurse on the radio, I began to think that there may be more similarities between the professions than one might otherwise think. Like nurses, corporate compliance professionals hone and develop their technical expertise through years of work experience and study. Both work to help and educate their clients (or patients). Both care deeply about doing the right thing.

But what about compassion? Could corporate compliance professionals, like nurses, benefit from developing their skills in compassion? Some of the same concepts of compassionate care could be incorporated into the field of compliance and ethics. Using techniques based on the theory of compassionate care might allow compliance professionals to do their jobs even better—identify issues, help their business partners, and ultimately mitigate compliance risk.

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