

Report on Medicare Compliance Volume 28, Number 37. October 21, 2019 OIG: CCO Falsely Certified About CIA Requirement; Health System Is Fined

By Nina Youngstrom

Less than a year after it settled a false claims case and entered into a corporate integrity agreement (CIA), Kalispell Regional Healthcare System (KRHS) in Montana was fined \$65,000 because its former compliance officer “falsely certified” about completing one of the CIA requirements, according to an Aug. 28 letter from the HHS Office of Inspector General.

The CIA required KRHS to train its board members 90 days after its effective date or by Dec. 23, 2018. “KRHS failed to comply with this requirement for six of its Board members,” OIG said in its letter to KRHS, which announced the “stipulated penalties.” But the then-compliance officer sent OIG an implementation report that falsely certified all KRHS board members had completed board training on time, the letter contends.

OIG found out about the false certification because the new compliance officer came clean, says Nicole Caucci, deputy branch chief in OIG’s Administrative and Civil Remedies Branch. “There was a transition in the compliance officer,” she tells *RMC*. When the new compliance officer couldn’t find documentation to show that all board members completed training, he reached out to the former compliance officer, who revealed that not everyone had been trained. “No good explanation was provided for that,” Caucci says. “As I understood it, there was an initial group session done on one date, and other members couldn’t attend, and the plan was for them to have a follow-up training session.” For whatever reason, the other board members were not trained by the deadline, she says.

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