

## Compliance Today – June 2024



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### Meet Isabella Porter: Compliance takes a village

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by Isabella Porter and Adam Turteltaub

**AT:** Isabella, thank you for talking again. It was great conversing with you a little bit ago about business associate agreements for subscribers to the *Complete Healthcare Compliance Manual*, which you were an author of. However, before we talk about that, let's talk about you and your career. First, you are an attorney and worked as a legal associate in the office of General Counsel for the Governor's Office of the State of Arizona. There, you focused on Medicaid expansion, among other things.

Right after college, I spent two years working in a U.S. Senate office in Washington, where I discovered that people really have a lot of misconceptions about working for the government. What do you think is the greatest misconception people have about working in government?

**IP:** One prominent misconception I would like to get out of the way is that government employees do not care about the people they serve. This is just simply not true. In my experience, the individuals I was honored to work with were all very aware of who our constituents are; they were also very mindful of how their decisions and actions could potentially impact the most vulnerable members of our community. These considerations also included practicing good stewardship with the state's resources. My experience in the governor's office is why, all these years later, I have been extremely mindful of costs, recycling, and avoiding corporate waste.

Another falsehood I would also like to point out is the idea that the government is too siloed, and the agencies do not work together. In my experience, I witnessed several agencies collaborate and work together on many processes to develop solutions to potential issues and carry out functions in accordance with the law while, of course, respecting each other's boundaries. Overall, my experience made me admire those who make the commitment to devote their careers to public service.

**AT:** You currently work as the chief compliance officer and privacy officer at District Medical Group. Can you give us an overview of it?

**IP:** District Medical Group (DMG) is a large Arizona nonprofit physician practice group consisting of nearly 1,000 credentialed healthcare providers across all major medical and surgical specialties and subspecialties. DMG providers staff a multitude of healthcare facilities throughout Phoenix, including a 450-bed acute hospital, three inpatient behavioral health centers, an outpatient specialty center, 11 family health centers, an emergency department, and an internationally recognized burn center. Additionally, DMG also owns and operates the largest multispecialty interdisciplinary clinic in the state of Arizona to serve the unique healthcare requirements of

special needs children.

**AT: When I was looking through DMG's website, I found it notable that you are listed on the leadership team page. That's not something we see as much as we should. I have to believe that speaks a lot about the place of compliance there, yes?**

**IP: Yes, absolutely. I just celebrated my nine-year anniversary working at DMG, and I owe my tenure largely to our board of directors and leadership team's support of a culture of compliance. I am also very appreciative that the leadership team recognizes that it is crucial to include compliance in important decisions and designate a seat for compliance at the table. I believe that because of this support from the top, both our administrative employees and providers feel comfortable routinely reaching out to compliance directly for guidance.**

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