

Compliance Today – December 2020 Meet Betsy Wade: A lifelong learner

Betsy Wade, MPH, CHC, CNA, Chief Compliance and Ethics Officer, Signature HealthCARE, Louisville, KY

Betsy Wade was interviewed in late summer by Debbie Troklus (debra.troklus@ankura.com), member of the SCCE & HCCA Board of Directors and Senior Managing Director at Ankura in Chicago, IL.

DT: Thanks for taking the time to be interviewed for *Compliance Today*. What is your background, and how do you feel it has prepared you to work in compliance?

BW: My path to becoming a compliance officer was unique, and that diverse background was critical to helping me be a successful compliance professional. I graduated from the University of Kentucky (UK) in 1991 with a bachelor of arts degree in communications and worked for a number of years as a newspaper reporter covering business, higher education, healthcare, and public policy in Florida, Ohio, North Carolina, and Kentucky. Later, in the mid-1990s, I left journalism and worked as an adjunct instructor at the UK College of Communications and as a public relations professional for the UK Chandler Medical Center in Lexington, Kentucky, where I handled internal and external communications. (They have since been renamed as College of Communication and Information and Albert B. Chandler Hospital, respectively.)

While at the UK Chandler Medical Center, the chancellor at the time assigned me to help the organization's new attorney Robert Benvenuti III establish a compliance program. The two of us were charged with creating a communications plan and materials, developing and implementing a compliance department website, writing policies and procedures, creating and providing education, and setting up two hotlines: one for the medical center called "Comply-Line" and one for the department of athletics called "Comply CATS." At the time, the university was experiencing some compliance issues with the football program. To complete my assignment, I also had to learn compliance. And by the time we had put in place the compliance program, we were approaching the implementation deadline of what was then the new Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) privacy and security regulations. So, I made the transition from public relations and became the organization's first privacy officer. In that role, I was involved in several state and hospital organizations focused on implementing the new privacy regulations and eventually was recruited to join Jewish Hospital Health Care Services, a regional integrated health system located in Louisville, Kentucky, as a result of that collaboration.

I remained with that healthcare system for about 17 years and over the course of a decade survived a number of mergers with CARITAS, Saint Joseph Health System, Catholic Health Initiatives, and the University of Louisville. During the first mergers, I was promoted to compliance officer and privacy officer, and after the last merger, I became vice president for corporate responsibility for Catholic Health Initiatives.

Throughout my career, I also have not stopped learning. For the last 20 years, I routinely have attended regional and national Health Care Compliance Association (HCCA) conferences. While working at UK and Jewish Hospital Health Care Services, I completed my master's in public health at UK with an emphasis on health law and healthcare administration. My capstone project focused on the impact of privacy laws on research and how researchers could navigate the HIPAA privacy regulations. A few years later, I earned my Certified in Healthcare Compliance designation. In 2016, I felt like I won the lottery when I was selected to attend the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Compliance Academy that was sponsored by HCCA and the Society of Corporate Compliance and

Ethics. And about two years ago, I went back to school online and became a certified nursing assistant (CNA), which is required of all senior management in my current organization.

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