

Compliance Today – November 2022



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Meet Jennifer McAleer: Her compliance and personal journey across the US and Africa

By Jennifer McAleer, MBA, MS, CHC, CHPC, CHRC, CCEP and Adam Turteltaub, CCEP, CHC

AT: You've recently joined Overlake Medical Center & Clinics as their chief compliance and risk officer. Your scope has expanded to include risk. How do you feel that your career in compliance has prepared you for this role? Any concerns about the dual role?

JM: Yes, after more than 20 years of focusing on compliance and privacy, I'm expanding my portfolio. Interestingly, I think my background in compliance has prepared me well for risk management, and I think I bring a unique perspective to a field that historically is dominated by clinical folks. I'm excited to continue to grow and bring value to Overlake in this capacity. Probably the most challenging part of this new role is the dichotomy between conducting thorough investigations prior to determining next steps in the compliance world and moving fast to report possible events to certain stakeholders, such as insurance, in the risk world. This is a balance that will surely take me some time to find naturally.

AT: You've been in healthcare compliance for more than 20 years. What do you think has made you successful?

JM: I think that one of the most important aspects that have made me successful in compliance is that staff and providers find me approachable. I focus on providing good customer service, being genuine, being a support to someone who may be struggling to be compliant, being consistent and persistent, and following through. But I do it all with a smile and with empathy. I've been told several times throughout my career that I was hired into the role because my personality was a good fit for the culture of the organization, compared to other candidates with more stern personalities. I think this makes me good at my job. Also, being the kind of leader that people will follow if you leave is something that I've always tried to be. I think I excel at finding and hiring amazingly talented individuals. I'm proud of this.

AT: What should you look for when assessing a new compliance opportunity?

JM: A classic compliance response: it depends. It depends on what you're looking for. I've had several jobs where I had to spend equal energy convincing the organization that compliance was important as I did doing actual compliance work. At this stage in my career, I'm really only interested in working in organizations that recognize the value of compliance and want me to come in and "do" compliance. I'm happiest when I'm doing the job I'm hired to do. I love doing compliance.

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