

Reflections from a Midlevel Associate

We are fortunate to be licensed and practicing health attorneys, and it is a privilege to serve clients in the health care industry.



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Late nights finishing memoranda, early mornings drafting agreements, the palpable stress caused by clients and partners wanting deliverables and answers from you, all at the same time ... I just described a typical Monday!

That said, take a moment to reflect, and I am certain that you will agree with me.

Just for a moment, focus on the power that we as health care attorneys wield to make this world a truly better place. Every day, we work alongside providers, life science companies, insurers, and other players in the health care industry to ensure that patients get the highest quality health care.

It is truly hard to keep this fortune at the forefront of our minds. Once this article is published, my friends and colleagues will surely print this piece and send it to me in jest. Without a doubt, they will remind me, ad nauseam, that I said that we are “fortunate” to be health care attorneys. I am certain that my best friend will tell me to tack this article to my office wall so that she can remind me of this fact each time I complain about my stressful life. And when she inevitably reminds me to re-read the article, I would like to remind myself to focus on this: As young health care attorneys, we are blessed.

What other profession allows us to learn for a living, while simultaneously providing us with the ability to make a tremendous impact on the lives of others?

For those of you who work to ensure that providers are paid for their services, you are ensuring that providers in our health care system can support their families. Accordingly, they choose to return to work every day to keep up the good fight!

For those of you who work in fraud and abuse, thank you for protecting patients from unnecessary care and ensuring that we as taxpayers do not pay for fraudulent services!

For those of you who work in data governance and privacy, thank you for ensuring that our medical records are used and disclosed only as we permit. Because of you, we can proceed with being honest in our medical appointments and records because we have trust in the system.

For those of you who review research agreements, thank you for being a part of the medical advances and research and development that saves lives.

So, please go forth and zealously advocate for your clients. Read the new Stark proposed rule. Become an expert in interoperability. Geek out about health care regulations in artificial intelligence. You have the unique ability to contribute to our profession and the U.S. health care system.

Elizabeth (“Beth”) Scarola is a health care and life sciences associate at Epstein Becker & Green PC. Ms. Scarola brings an insider’s perspective to her health care practice. In addition to her extensive work on strategic and operational projects for a large, statewide clinically integrated network, she has hands-on scientific research experience, having conducted research in pediatric endocrinology. As a BRCA+ “previvor” and health law enthusiast, Ms. Scarola is passionate about navigating the complexity of health care regulation and policy to promote the promise of precision medicine. Ms. Scarola holds a Master in Medical Sciences from Boston University School of Medicine, a Master in Health Services Administration from the University of Michigan School of Public Health, and law and undergraduate degrees from the University of Notre Dame.