Health Plan Senior Executive Joins Nelson Hardiman



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Optum Vice President Lee Arian, an authority on healthcare fraud and abuse, has joined the Los Angeles-based healthcare law firm, Nelson Hardiman. Arian is the seventh attorney to join the firm in 2017, an expansion reflecting surging demand for healthcare regulatory expertise amidst the ongoing transformation of the U.S. healthcare system.

Over the past 25 years, Arian earned a national reputation as a leader in the fight for greater integrity in the U.S. healthcare system, overseeing efforts at leading health insurers to improve fraud detection and deterrence that cost the healthcare system billions of dollars annually. From 1991 through 2004, Arian served as an Assistant U.S. Attorney in the Central District of California, where he investigated and prosecuted health care fraud, serving as the U.S. Attorney Office's health care fraud coordinator while part of the Office's Public Corruption and Government Fraud Section. During his time as a federal prosecutor, Arian received commendations from, among others, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Defense Criminal Investigative Service (DCIS), and the Secret Service.

In 2004, Arian took over leadership of fraud and abuse compliance as a Vice President at Anthem, where he oversaw anti-fraud and abuse efforts for the nation's second largest insurer. In over a decade at Anthem, Arian drove significant improvements in Anthem's enterprise audit process, data mining, and fraud detection efforts. During that time, he also provided testimony before Congress on the battle against opioid abuse. For the past two years, Arian has served in a leadership role at Optum, where he served as Vice President for Optum's Advisory Services, delivering services to Medicare Advantage and Medicaid health plans, as well as advising United Healthcare on fraud and abuse issues.

Arian's decision to leave Optum for Nelson Hardiman was driven by the opportunity for a hands-on role taking on the most complex emerging issues in healthcare and life sciences regulatory compliance today. "It has been a privilege to fight the good fight on behalf of the government and leading health plans, and to build systems that have made a difference in improving healthcare integrity. In choosing my next challenge, I sought out the most innovative environment on the front lines of the challenges facing the healthcare industry. Nelson Hardiman was a compelling choice based on its involvement at a strategic and granular level in virtually every facet of healthcare transformation."

Nelson Hardiman managing partner Harry Nelson described the firm's recruitment of Arian in terms of an increasing need for expertise on payor compliance issues: "As more and more healthcare organizations are bearing risk and the lines have blurred between who's a healthcare provider and who's a payor, our clients needed someone who understands the issues from all sides," commented Nelson. "Lee offers a depth of experience and insight that healthcare organizations cannot live without."

Firm partner Rob Fuller added that the current healthcare environment has put a premium on hard-to-find experience and the credibility that comes with it: "Lee's quarter-century of exemplary service prosecuting

healthcare fraud and heading health plan compliance offers something pretty rare. When healthcare organizations need guidance and advocacy that comes with deep integrity and experience, it's tough to think of anyone better suited than Lee Arian."

In addition to Arian, Nelson Hardiman has added six other lawyers since the beginning of the year. Earlier this month, the firm added senior healthcare attorney Lara Compton, formerly in-house counsel to Sutter Health and Community Medical Centers. Compton joins the firm from King & Spalding, where she focused on health data privacy and security, Medicare compliance, and regulatory issues specific to telehealth ventures and other health tech start-ups. "Lara's experience in health care information technology and life science adds critical depth in areas that clients are clamoring for," said partner Mark Hardiman.

Five other experienced healthcare attorneys have joined the firm since January 2017: Kate Bowles, Miriam Mackin, Lisa Montague, Michael Newborn, and Kristina Sherry. "With our healthcare system undergoing massive change, we can barely keep up with the demand for advice," added Nelson. "In this environment, attorney retention matters more than ever."

With these additions, Nelson Hardiman's 24 healthcare lawyers are the second largest group of healthcare attorneys in the State of California. The firm has garnered recent attention after being named #14 on the Best Places to Work in Los Angeles by L.A. Business Journal for 2017 and #1 nationally for law firm culture in Vault's recent Top 150 Under 150 list.