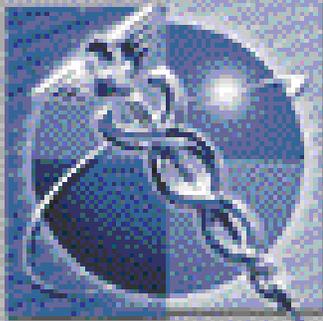


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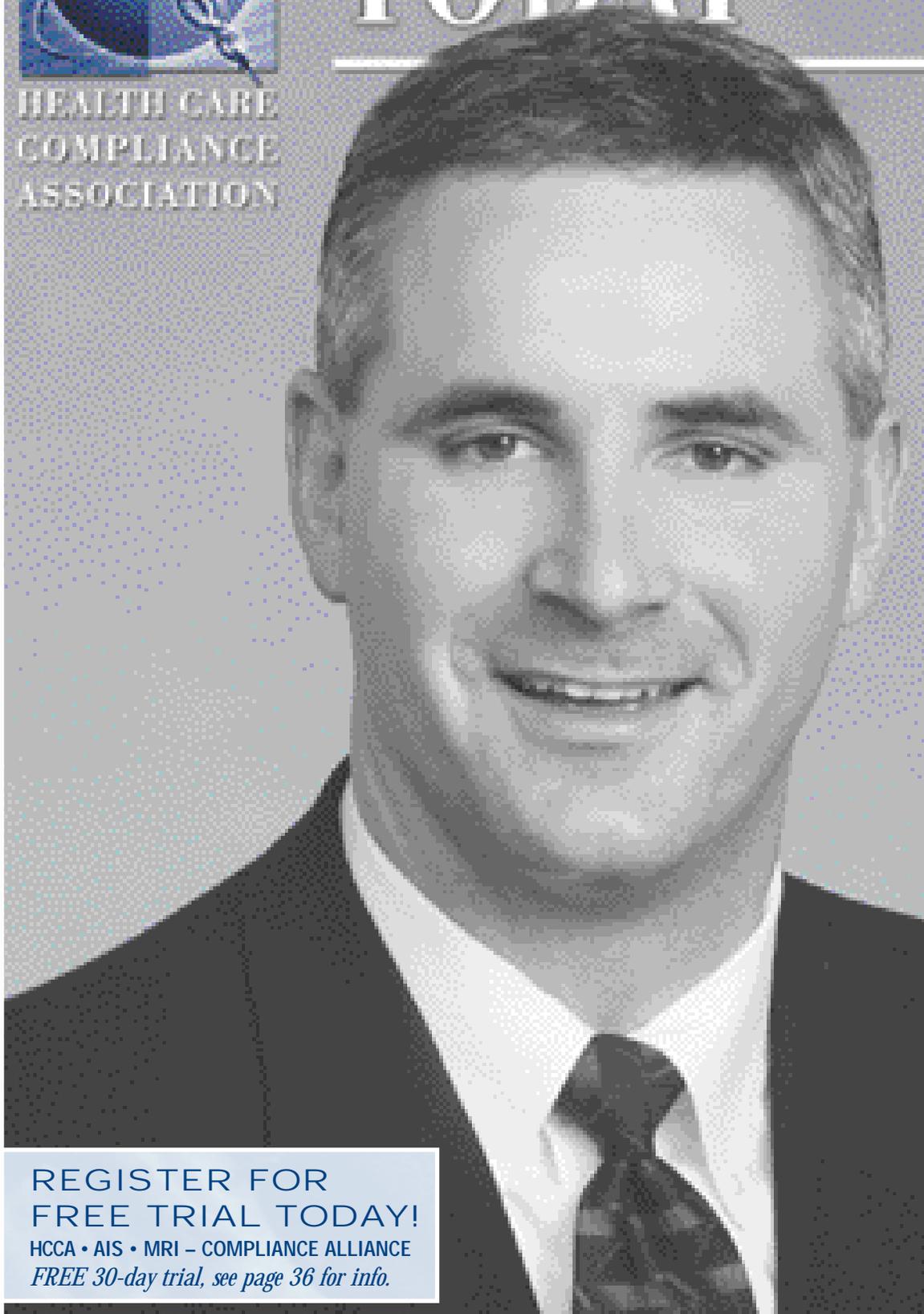


HEALTH CARE
COMPLIANCE
ASSOCIATION

COMPLIANCE TODAY

Volume Five
Number Seven
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Interview
with
Britt
Crewse



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Letter from the CEO

ROY SNELL

85% of surveyed compliance professionals do not have a law degree

Long arm of the law
We have surveyed compliance professionals each of the last five years looking for interesting trends. One number I found to be very interesting is that in each of the last five years less than 20% of those surveyed have a law degree. The number did not change much from year to year. Most assume that that number would be higher. Many assume that the law degree is a "natural prerequisite" for compliance professionals.

Why?

Why don't all compliance professionals have a law degree. The answer to that question could be that compliance professionals are often hired from within, and smaller organizations have few candidates with a law degree. When hiring from the outside we often go after billing or administrative experience. What ever the reason for this is, in compliance, a basic understanding of the law is very helpful.

Do we need a law degree?

In the early days of health care compliance billing was a major focus of our attention, legal experience was less important. Facilitating change was and has always been the tough part of compliance. As the compliance role expands beyond billing a law degree may not be mandatory, but a basic understanding of the law is very helpful. I have gained

a tremendous amount of understanding of the law through our outside legal counsel and by attending conferences.

Benefits of a basic understanding of the law

Here are some concrete advantages for possessing a basic understanding of the law:

- Communicating with outside legal counsel
- Communicating with inside legal counsel
- Highlighting legal issues for administration and the Board
- Monitoring risk areas
- Increasing job opportunities
- Greater credibility with staff
- Tracking enforcement activities

What is HCCA doing to help?

HCCA's biggest commitment to provide legal education to compliance professionals is our fall HCCA/AHLA Fraud and Compliance Forum in Washington, DC. We are in the planning process right now. We partner with the American Health Lawyers Association and have a planning committee made up of experienced lawyers and compliance professionals.

**AHLA/HCCA Fraud and Compliance Forum
September 21-23, 2003
WASHINGTON, DC**

Allison Maney, Al Josephs, and Suzie Draper have worked with several attorneys to develop a comprehensive agenda. From the "Legal Primer" pre-conference to the breakout sessions on False Claims, Attorney Client Privilege, Stark, and HIPAA, attendees

will get an opportunity to hone their skills. This is our third meeting together. It is an effective partnership. A good understanding of the law can make a difference. Conferences and networking are some of the best ways to cover a lot of material in an effective way. I hope to see you all there. ■

Compliance Today wants you!

Please email your article or topic ideas to **Compliance Today** editor, Margaret Dragon, at mrdragon@ziplink.net. Be sure to include your telephone number. Or call Margaret at 781/593-4924 to discuss your article ideas. Some topic ideas to consider: compliance and the Board, HIPAA compliance education and training, EMTALA compliance, conflicts of interest, and attorney/client privilege. ■

