

## **Consultant Spotlight: Robbi-Lynn Watnik, Senior Consultant**

**Natalie S. Lesnick | December 2024**

A licensed attorney, certified in Healthcare Privacy Compliance, Robbi Watnik has been a part of the healthcare industry for several years. Beginning her career in health policy for a healthcare association, Ms. Watnik has worked closely with top regulators like the Health and Human Services Inspector General and has worked on several industry-altering legislative actions, such as the passage of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, and was able to provide input for the first Compliance Program Guidance documents published by the OIG. She notes that “being in the room when it happened made it much more real” and that “being at the very forefront of when the Inspector General began the compliance journey” is the professional accomplishment she thinks of most often. Ms. Watnik also served as the Acting Chief and Deputy Chief Officer for the Office of Compliance and Business Integrity, as the HIPAA Compliance Officer for the Defense Health Agency, and was a senior compliance consultant and project leader for TRICARE’s Uniform Business Office.

Since joining Strategic Management Services, Ms. Watnik has assisted various organizations, including physician practice groups, skilled nursing and long-term care facilities, and hospitals, in developing, implementing, and maintaining their compliance programs. She has served as an Interim Compliance Officer and Interim Privacy Officer for various organizations and notes that she is “very proud of the relationships I have built with clients. Helping them through the compliance or HIPAA ‘maze’ is rewarding, especially when they tell you they’re satisfied.” In reflecting on her time at Strategic Management Services, Ms. Watnik has enjoyed having “the ability to work with a variety of healthcare entities in many different capacities” through her interim services, conducting compliance program effectiveness evaluations, or providing advisory services. She also notes that she enjoys working with other knowledgeable professionals and states, “We can talk through complex issues, share knowledge, and even have some fun along the way.”

When asked what advice she had for individuals in the compliance space, Ms. Watnik emphasized using the elements of a compliance program as a method for tackling challenges as they arise: “The elements of a compliance program are simply a project management tool; [they] can help you address a challenge, problem, or issue in an organized way. Once you understand the elements, the next step is understanding the environment and the specific entity for which you may be serving in a compliance-related role. Dig into the environment before trying to apply the elements.”

Connect with Robbi Watnik at [rwatnik@strategicm.com](mailto:rwatnik@strategicm.com) and keep up to date with Strategic Management Services by following us on LinkedIn.

**About the Author:**



**Natalie Lesnick** is a Consultant at Strategic Management Services, LLC. Ms. Lesnick has expertise in assessing provider compliance with the federal healthcare program rules and federal healthcare laws, including HIPAA and the Affordable Care Act.