



Susan C. Atkinson

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Areas of Practice

Administrative Law | Advertising Litigation | Corporate Law | Entertainment | Global Supply Chains and Onshoring | Health Care

Susan Atkinson is a Partner in the Health Care Practice of Smith, Gambrell & Russell, LLP.

Susan Atkinson is a partner at Smith, Gambrell & Russell, where she leads the Health Care and Life Sciences Practice Group. Prior to re-joining SGR, Ms. Atkinson served as Corporate Counsel for Saint Joseph's Health System (now Emory/St. Joseph's), one of the nation's top acute care hospitals and its affiliated real estate and management entities, employed physician group, charitable foundation, clinical research program, and indigent care program. Among her other duties, Ms. Atkinson participated in and/or supervised all litigation matters (including defense of a qui tam action targeting top cardiac hospitals nationwide), guided the creation and implementation of the Health System's initial compliance program and initial HIPAA policies and procedures, advised the Medical Staff, served as a member of and counsel to the Institutional Review Board, and advised on Saint Joseph's gainsharing program, the first in the country to receive a favorable Advisory Opinion from the OIG (AO 01-1).

While in private practice, Ms. Atkinson has advised hospitals, health systems, long term care facilities, sleep centers, ambulatory surgery centers, pharmacies (including compounding pharmacies), DME suppliers, FQHCs, health care management companies, medical device companies, medspas, individual physicians, and physician practices of every size on matters such as private equity transactions; corporate governance; peer review matters; physician recruitment; mid-level provider protocols; practice acquisitions; policy creation and implementation; management contracts; joint ventures; "do not resuscitate" orders and other end-of-life issues; operational compliance with the Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services; managed care; 340B compliance; FDA compliance; and interactions with investigators, research institutions, industry sponsors, and the NIH/National Cancer Institute for the conduct of pre- and post-market

drug and medical device clinical trials. She has also advised the CDC Foundation and is the former Chief Compliance Officer for a group of approximately 40 cardiologists.

Ms. Atkinson has also regularly advised on structuring merger, acquisition, and affiliation transactions within the requirements of the Stark Law, Anti-Kickback Statute, and requirements applicable to tax-exempt organizations; regulatory diligence on these requirements as well as licensure, provider enrollment, and FDA requirements; tax-exempt financing; Certificate of Need requirements and related administrative appeals; state licensing board matters; complex reimbursement issues (including Medicare and Medicaid appeals and self-disclosure protocols); responding to government investigations; drafting and negotiating clinical trial and study agreements; and HIPAA privacy and security matters (including risk assessments, policy development, facility audits, and training). She advised a Fortune 500 communications company on development of its telehealth platform; she regularly advises on FDA compliance matters; and she has extensive experience advising HRSA and CDC grant recipients and subrecipients on compliance with federal grant requirements and the 340B program. In 2023, she was engaged as a Specially Appointed Attorney General by the Georgia Department of Community Health to consult with all DCH stakeholders and create a new contract for use with Medicaid Care Management Organizations.

Ms. Atkinson received both her undergraduate (Music (voice), magna cum laude) and law degrees from the University of Georgia. In law school, she was a Castellow Scholar and served on the Editorial Board of the Georgia Law Review, which also chose for publication her Note, Medicare Cost Containment and Home Health Care: Potential Liability for Physicians and Hospitals. Ms. Atkinson is a member of the State Bar of Georgia (Health Law), the Georgia Academy of Healthcare Attorneys, the American Bar Association (Health Law), and the American Health Lawyers Association, and she has been recognized by Chambers USA. She has been actively involved with the Atlanta Bar Association's "A Courthouse Line" productions (a series of all-attorney musicals which are the largest fundraiser for the Atlanta Bar Foundation's charitable programs), and she is a Lifetime Fellow of the Atlanta Bar Foundation. Ms. Atkinson has also been active in the Atlanta arts community, serving on the Boards of several theatre companies; as a church musician; and as a working performer in local and regional choral, musical theatre, and cabaret performances.

Admissions

Georgia

Georgia Supreme Court

U.S. District Court Northern District of Georgia

Georgia Court of Appeals, Eleventh Circuit

Memberships

State Bar of Georgia (Health Law)

Georgia Academy of Healthcare Attorneys
American Bar Association (Health Law)
American Health Lawyers Association
Atlanta Bar Foundation (Lifetime Fellow)

Speaking Engagements and Publications

Panelist, Healthcare Fraud and the New Administration, *American Bar Association's Southeastern White Collar Crime Conference*, September 4th 2025

Recognitions

Chambers USA, Healthcare, Georgia (2024, 2025)