

Polsinelli Adds Federal Litigation Team in Charleston to the Firm's Reimbursement and Payor Disputes Practice

(Oct. 11, 2024) Am Law 100 firm Polsinelli has welcomed a team of experienced federal health care litigators focused on reimbursement and payor disputes to its top-tier nationwide [Health Care Practice](#). Located in Charleston, the group litigates nationally and is led by Shareholder Stephen Bittinger, along with Shareholder Alessandra Stewart, and Senior Associate Melissa Yates. Joining from an Am Law 50 firm, these accomplished attorneys focus their practices on health care reimbursement compliance, audit defense, government investigations, False Claims Act litigation and federal litigation with government payors. The team also includes industry-leading coding and compliance consultants Joan Gilhooly and Jess Franzese as well as experienced legal support staff. This team complements Polsinelli's nationwide practice advising providers across the full spectrum of [reimbursement audits, disputes and litigation](#).

"Stephen and his team have a robust national practice in government payor disputes and health care litigation, and we are thrilled they have decided to join us," said Matthew J. Murer, Chair of Polsinelli's Health Care Department. "They have a proven track record of winning complicated appeals regarding critical reimbursement for health care clients. Our clients will appreciate the additional bench strength and geographic coverage this group is providing."

Stephen Bittinger is excited to bring his practice to Polsinelli and said: "My team and I are very grateful to be joining the leading provider-side health care firm in the country and look forward to bringing our complementary skills into one of the most exceptional health care reimbursement litigation groups in the industry."

Stephen Bittinger (Shareholder) focuses his nationwide practice on health care reimbursement compliance, defense and litigation, with an emphasis on government and private payer disputes on behalf of providers, suppliers and manufacturers involved in the U.S. health care system nationally and from abroad. He has extensive experience representing large provider groups, home health agencies, medical facilities, ancillary service providers, medical labs, revenue cycle management companies, and drug and device manufacturers in matters including Medicare and Medicaid audits, private payer audits, federal regulatory termination and exclusion proceedings, False Claims Act defense, government investigations and health care revenue disputes. He is one of the leading attorneys in the country on the law regarding the use of statistical sampling and extrapolation in the review and analysis of health care claims. He has also served as an expert witness on federal reimbursement law in criminal, civil and bankruptcy federal litigation. Bittinger received his J.D. from the University of Akron School of Law, his M.A. from John Carroll University and his B.S. from Kent State University.

Alessandra Stewart's (Shareholder) practice focuses on health care reimbursement compliance, defense and litigation. Her experience includes managing Medicare and Medicaid audits, False Claims Act cases, criminal investigations and other disputes between payers and providers. She frequently addresses constitutional issues related to statistical sampling and extrapolation. With a background as a federal prosecutor and civil litigator, Alessandra brings a wealth of investigative, trial and appellate experience to her role. Her work encompasses a broad spectrum of matters, including parallel criminal and civil proceedings, Bank Secrecy Act (BSA) and money laundering investigations, Financial Institutions Reform,

Recovery, and Enforcement Act (FIRREA) and bank fraud cases, wiretap investigations, tax fraud and public corruption. Stewart received her J.D. from the University of Virginia School of Law and her B.A., *cum laude*, from Williams College.

Melissa Yates (Senior Associate) focuses on health care reimbursement litigation and compliance matters, with an emphasis on government and private payer disputes on behalf of providers, suppliers and manufacturers. She has successfully represented clients in Medicare and Medicaid audits, False Claims Act cases and other payer-provider disputes. Her matters often involve constitutional challenges to statistical sampling and extrapolation. Additionally, her background in representing non-health care clients in a broad range of complex civil litigation and arbitration matters rounds out her legal expertise. Yates received her J.D. from the University of Virginia School of Law and her B.A., *summa cum laude*, from Wake Forest University.

As one of the largest health care practices in the country, Polsinelli attorneys work as a fully integrated practice to seamlessly partner with clients on all facets of legal issues. The firm has built a team that is made up of health care industry experts, including former in-house counsel at national health care institutions, the FDA, CMS and the Department of Justice. Polsinelli Health Care Litigation attorneys combine their in-depth knowledge of the evolving health care industry with clients' business needs to devise practical litigation strategies. Polsinelli advises clients in managing risk and resolving complex disputes. When litigation is necessary, Polsinelli's attorneys collaborate with clients to effectively and efficiently protect their interests. They are experienced in litigating government investigations and health care disputes in different forums, including lawsuits, arbitrations, administrative hearings, audits and investigations.

Ranked nationally Tier One in Health Care Law by *Best Law Firms* and ranked in Healthcare: The Elite nationwide by *Chambers USA*, Polsinelli's team is well known and respected by judges, regulators, arbitrators, health care industry leaders and the legal community. Members include former Department of Justice attorneys, including Assistant United States Attorneys, former experienced state Medicaid fraud unit attorneys, a former realtor attorney and former in-house counsel to private and publicly traded health care companies.

About Polsinelli

Polsinelli is an Am Law 100 firm with more than 1,000 attorneys in over 20 offices nationwide. Recognized as one of the top firms for excellent client service and client relationships, Polsinelli is committed to meeting our clients' expectations of what a law firm should be. Our attorneys provide value through practical legal counsel infused with business insight, offering comprehensive corporate, transactional, litigation and regulatory services with a focus on health care, real estate, finance, technology, private equity and life sciences. Polsinelli PC, Polsinelli LLP in California, Polsinelli PC (Inc) in Florida.